

The Pacific Theater

Use your America: History of Our Nation text book pages 812-813 and 824-825 to fill in the blanks below. When you are finished, you will have a summary of the end of the war in the Pacific.

I. The Philippines Fall

- a. The defense of the U.S. in the Philippines was weakened because Japan bombed airfields - destroying most Pacific planes.
- b. General Douglas MacArthur commanded the Filipino-American force when the Japanese invaded the key Philippine island of Luzon. FDR ordered him to withdraw to Australia.
- c. After several months of fighting, the Allied troops left at Bataan were forced to surrender. 70,000 were captured by the Japanese. Their forced trek to a prison camp is called the "Bataan Death March" because many died of starvation, disease or violence.

II. The Tide Turns in the Pacific

- a. In May 1942 at the Battle of Coral Sea, American and Japanese navies used a new form of warfare that involved attacking ships miles away by launching aircraft.
- b. Aircraft launching from ships was successful in this battle.
- c. In June, the Japanese tried to invade the island of Midway, which was an important U.S. military base.
- d. After this battle, Japan no longer ruled the Pacific.

III. The U.S. on the Offensive

- a. The U.S. now began the strategy of Island Hopping, when U.S. forces would capture some Japanese-held islands and go around others. They were making their way toward Japan.
- b. In 1942, the U.S. landed on the island of Guadalcanal. The soldiers faced 6 months of hard fighting as well as hunger and disease before they were able to control the island.
- c. General MacArthur was able to recapture the city of Luzon in the Philippines in January 1945.

IV. Japan Holds Firm

- a. The Americans incurred huge losses when they took the last two islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa on their way to Japan.
- b. The Japanese were now using a form of fighting called Kamikaze. With this fighting, suicide pilots crashed their planes into U.S. troops. Most Japanese soldiers would rather die rather than surrender.

V. The End of War in the Pacific

- a. Americans lost huge numbers of men while capturing the islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.
- b. Japan's Kamikaze missions, or suicide pilots, and tradition of never surrendering convinced Americans that the only way to force Japan to surrender is to invade the mainland.
- c. Just as President Truman made plans to invade the island of Japan, he learned of the successful test of the Atomic Bomb.
- d. On August 6th and August 9th of 1945, American planes dropped atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- e. The emperor of Japan surrendered on August 14, 1945.
- f. That days is known as V-J Day, Victory in Japan.
- g. MacArthur formally accepted the surrender.