Sample Pages

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Series: Applying Common Core

Title: **World War II**

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Code: Z341

Contents

Introduction

Goals

The main goal of this book is to help students develop skills outlined in the Common Core Standards by clarifying what the standards are asking for and by giving teachers specific activities they can use to address the standards.

Organization

The book is mostly organized by the categories into which Common Core places its standards. The first three chapters are "Key Ideas and Details," "Craft and Structure," and "Integration of Knowledge and Ideas." Because "Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity" is addressed every time students read, it does not have its own chapter. Also, because it is common for many writing categories to overlap on a paper, the fourth chapter covers all the writing standards and is divided into the three main paper types: argumentative, informative, and narrative.

Activities open with an introductory page that includes every standard covered by the activities, directions, estimated lesson length, and additional teaching ideas. At the back of the book are selected answers for the reading activities.

Tracking Common Core Standards

On page 3, there is a chart that can help you track which Common Core Standards you have addressed and with which activities.

Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is not required for social studies teachers, which is why there is no WHST.6-8.3. However, this form of writing was included in this book because numerous social studies teachers also teach language arts, for the many educators who find creative writing a valuable way to explore history, and because other required writing standards can be covered with narrative writing.

Common Core Standards

If a teacher covers the six reading activities and three papers outlined in this book, he or she will have addressed every 6–8 History/Social Studies Common Core Standard at least once. Although it is not expected that teachers cover every standard in each unit of study, this gives teachers a great way to see examples of every standard and have numerous assignments to choose from.

Common Core Standards

READING

Key Ideas and Details

RH.6-8.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RH.6-8.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
» *Summarize primary or secondary sources.*

RH.6-8.3
Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).
» *Summarize the steps of a process or historical event.*

Craft and Structure

RH.6-8.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
» *Use context to decipher the meanings of difficult words.*

RH.6-8.5
Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
» *Determine how the author has ordered the information.*

RH.6-8.6
Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RH.6-8.7
Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
» *Interpret a reading with a visual.*

RH.6-8.8
Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

RH.6-8.9
Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RH.6-8.10
By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.8.1
Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6–8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

WHST.6-8.1
Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific content*.
» *Argumentative writing.*

WHST.6-8.2
Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.
» *Informative writing.*

W.6-8.3
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
» *Creative writing. (This is not required for social studies teachers.)*

Production and Distribution of Writing

WHST.6-8.4
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
» *Write for a specific audience.*

WHST.6-8.5
With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.
» *Use writing process.*

WHST.6-8.6
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.
» *Publish writing for an audience.*

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

WHST.6-8.7
Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
» *Research to answer a question.*

WHST.6-8.8
Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
» *Use multiple credible sources when researching and summarize findings in own words.*

WHST.6-8.9
Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
» *Support essays with information or quotes from texts.*

Range of Writing

WHST.6-8.10
Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

RH.6-8.3
Identify key steps in a text's description of a process re-
lated to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes
law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

RH.6-8.10
By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/
social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity
band independently and proficiently.

DIRECTIONS

- The teacher shows on a map where the Battle of the Bulge took place and shares how it got its name.
- The class reads the first three paragraphs of "Battle of the Bulge" together, recording details under the applicable event category on "Battle of the Bulge Key Events."
- Students read the rest of "Battle of the Bulge" independently, recording details under the applicable event category on "Battle of the Bulge Key Events." Students share what they wrote with a neighbor, then the class.
- The teacher presents "Battle of the Bulge Assignment" to the class. The teacher may want to give students time to brainstorm in class, but most of the work will need to be done as homework.

EXTENSIONS

- Show students more images of the Battle of the Bulge. A slideshow and newsreels are available at the U.S. Army's website "Battle of the Bulge": http://www.army.mil/botb /newsreel.html.
- Have students learn details about Operation Overlord.
- Assign students to explore similarities among the other three offensives that Germany led in the Ardennes, in 1870, 1914, and 1940.

IMPORTANT/DIFFICULT VOCABULARY

There are many ways to review vocabulary. Below are some words you may choose to create a review activity with.

- Allied Powers
- Ardennes
- Axis Powers
- Casualties
- Churning
- Complacency
- Divisions
- Front
- Fuel Stocks
- Infiltrators
- Line
- Tether

BATTLE OF THE BULGE 1/3

By December of 1944, it appeared to be just a matter of time before Germany suffered defeat. Earlier that year, the Allies had gained footing in the European continent and had been making steady progress ever since. Even worse for Germany, its forces were low on fuel and ammunition, and the Allied air force dominated the skies.

However, Adolph Hitler had one last trick up his sleeve. The Allies were gaining territory so quickly that they were having trouble protecting their entire line. U.S. military commander Dwight D. Eisenhower chose to allow the Ardennes area, a thick forest, to be lightly defended.

Soldiers at the Battle of the Bulge

Eisenhower assumed that because of the area's few roads, dense woodlands, hills, and winter snow, the Germans would not attack there. He thought wrong.

Hitler's overall scheme was to launch a surprise attack into the Ardennes, splitting the British and American troops. Once through their lines of defense, Germany intended to cross the Meuse River and eventually capture the important Belgian harbor, Antwerp. This was clearly a gamble that could pay huge dividends. As the 11th Armoured Divisions' *History* described it, "If it succeeded . . . the war might yet be won, or the end might be indefinitely postponed. If it failed, nothing could stop defeat."

An attack through the Ardennes was not without precedent; in 1870 and 1914 Germany had attempted such an attack. Even earlier in World War II, in 1940, Germany had mounted a successful offensive through the Ardennes. This led to the fall of France. Still, Hitler's top officers were against the plan, believing it would be impossible to advance all the way to Antwerp. They proposed various alternatives with more reasonable objectives, but Hitler insisted on the full plan. Believing that the element of surprise was essential, they moved troops at night and did not discuss their plans over the radio. Germany also made sure to attack on a cloudy day so the Allied air force would not be able to defend the area.

At 5:30 a.m. on December 16, 1944 Germany attacked with more than 250,000 troops. The four divisions defending the Ardennes were not prepared for what was coming. Besides being outnumbered, the divisions had been placed there to train or to recuperate. Commanders were just as stunned, with one saying, "I don't think I have ever been so surprised in my life. Here were the Germans, whom we imagined almost at the end of their tether, and whose air force had been practically shot out of the skies, pulling off the biggest surprise of the war and launching a large-scale counter-attack."

Image source: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

By the second day of fighting, many German divisions had broken through parts of the Allies' line. This would eventually extend to about 60 miles long, creating a projection within the Allies' line and earning the offensive the name "Battle of the Bulge." The reaction around Europe was both shock and dismay that Germany was not to be counted out. A British soldier stationed in Belgium, said, "A further jolt to our complacency was delivered with news of a German counter-attack in the Ardennes. . . . This information shattered my dream world of peace and security . . . I had no desire to become involved in active warfare again and the churning sickness of fear in my stomach told me so."

The Germans also added to the confusion with Operation Greif. Operation Greif entailed having English-speaking Germans wear American uniforms (taken from dead soldiers) and pretend to be part of the American army. While behind enemy lines, they tried to cause general chaos by switching road signs, misdirecting traffic, laying mines, and felling trees across roads. Possibly the Nazi infiltrator's most significant accomplishment was cutting telephone cables, resulting in the American command being cut off from important information.

Still, despite some early successes, it became clear this would not be like the 1940 Ardennes offensive. First of all, in 1940 the Germans attacked in the spring. As Eisenhower had hoped and the German officers had feared, the snowy terrain made progress slow. Also, the inexperienced and recovering American soldiers fought better than expected. As Danny Parker put it in his book *Battle of the Bulge,* "It was only the desperate resistance of isolated American units, fighting often without orders or information from above, which saved the day for the Allies." Both of these factors quickly put the Germans behind the tight schedule Hitler had planned. Additionally, in this campaign, the Germans were desperate for fuel; if they were to actually make it to Antwerp, they needed to seize Allied fuel. Knowing this, as Americans retreated they moved or burned fuel stocks.

One of the most important battles within the Battle of the Bulge was over the town Bastogne. Seven main roads crossed in Bastogne; controlling these was crucial to the German troops if they were going to push further and seize Antwerp. From December 20 to December 27, the Germans held Bastogne under siege. A major turning point occurred when the fog lifted on Christmas Eve. With clear skies, Allied planes were able to airdrop reinforcements, food, ammunition, and medicine. The American soldiers in Bastogne were actually holding their own when General Patton arrived, who had turned his army division 90 degrees to come to Bastogne's aid.

In January the counterattack began in earnest. Through air power and the support of additional troops, the Allied troops retook territory. Due to the rough terrain and deep snow, progress was slow. But by January 25, 1945, the bulge was all but eliminated.

Despite the odds against the Germans, it was still a notable victory for the United States. The Allied troops under attack were almost entirely Americans. The United States suffered more than 70,000 casualties, making it one of the bloodiest battles the United States ever engaged in. Winston Churchill, the prime minister of the United Kingdom at the time, said, "This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever-famous American victory."

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For the Germans, this would be their last major offensive. Besides losing all of their gains from the battle, Germany had used much of their limited resources in the process. The Soviet Union, knowing that Germany was weakened, started their winter offensive from the Eastern Front earlier than planned. It now really was just a matter of time before Germany would be defeated. Still, Germany had managed to put one last scare into the Allies. One German soldier summarized the affair as, "It was incredible . . . on a shoe-string how far we did advance." Fortunately for the Allies, the bulge was short-lived.

Map source: Data from Durand School District, Battle of the Bulge
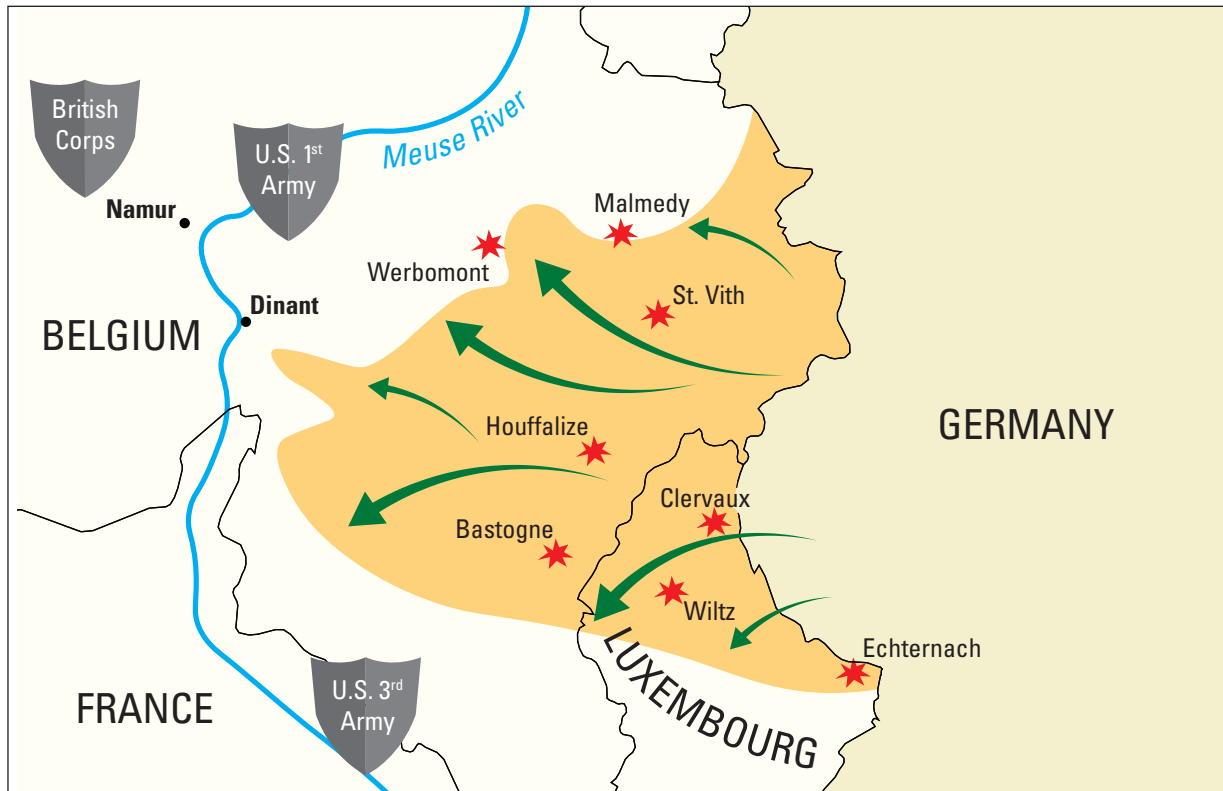
BATTLE OF THE BULGE KEY EVENTS

As you read the text, record three to five key details under each event.

1. Situation before the Battle of the Bulge

2. Hitler Plans a Counterattack

3. German Attack Surprises Allies

4. German Siege at Bastogne

5. Allies Counterattack

6. The Battle's Aftermath

BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSIGNMENT

Overall

For this assignment, your job is to summarize the key events of the Battle of the Bulge in an engaging manner, using the medium of your choice. Below each option are recommended parameters for each. The reading should provide you with enough information about the topic, but feel free to do any additional research to answer questions that arise.

Options

Video
No more than five students in a group
At least 3 minutes long
All group members must be in it
Other people can guest star

Letters Home
Can be done individually or with a partner
Write 3 to 5 letters (for one person)
Write 6 to 10 letters (for two people)

Journal Entries
Done individually
3 to 5 entries

Cartoon Panels
Done individually
Number of panels depends on size and detail

Song
Can be done individually or with a partner
3 verses and a chorus (for one person)
6 verses and a chorus (for two people)

Animation
Can be done individually or with a partner
At least 3 minutes long

Rubric

	Exceeding	**Proficient**	**Developing**	**Beginning**
Product	Highly engaging product	Engaging product	Product is engaging at times	Not engaging *or* Quality affects understandability
Information	Comprehensively informs about topic with specific accurate details.	Informs about topic with sufficient accurate details.	Informs well at times, but needs to go into more detail or has significant factual errors.	Contains little accurate information about topic.