Name_____

The Great Depression

The Great Depression began in 1929, in part, as a result of the crash of the stock market. As stock prices dropped, people lost the money they had invested. Others made a run on the banks to try to take out their money until the banks were forced to close due to lack of funds. Unemployment in America soared, and people found themselves with no way to support their families. Many lost their jobs and their homes.

President Hoover was in office during the beginning of the Depression. Hoover attempted to help the failing economy, but his efforts were not enough. As people were forced to live in makeshift homes, they began calling these places Hoovervilles. Anxious for a new leader and hopes for a better future, Americans voted in Franklin D. Roosevelt, or FDR, as the new president.

Roosevelt was what the American people needed. He communicated to Americans through radio talks known as "fireside chats," and he used these weekly conversations to build confidence in his ideas for America. The president offered his idea of a New Deal for the people. The New Deal was designed to bring relief, recovery, and reform to the struggling country. Roosevelt's programs helped the nation's economy and helped citizens find work. However, the start of World War II would be the eventual turning point in the economy as materials and items were needed as the country went back into war.

Text Questions

1. Which adjective best describes the economy during the Great Depression?
   a. strong
   b. struggling
   c. steady
   d. corrupt
2. What can the reader infer about Roosevelt's ability as a leader?
   a. He elicited confidence in the American people.
   b. He was often unsure of his next move.
   c. He relied heavily on his advisors.
   d. He was not as charismatic as President Hoover.
3. Which event most likely contributed to America's economic growth?
   a. the crash of the stock market
   b. the election of President Hoover
   c. the constructing of Hoovervilles
   d. the start of World War II
4. Which paragraph from the text helps you to explain your answer for question three?
   a. first paragraph
   b. second paragraph
   c. third paragraph
   d. none of the paragraphs
5. Why did people begin calling their makeshift homes Hoovervilles?
   a. They wanted to honor President Hoover.
   b. They hoped President Hoover would help them if they named their makeshift housing after him.
   c. They blamed President Hoover for their lack of jobs and homes.
   d. They believed only President Hoover could help them.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

World War II

America joined the Allied Powers of Europe to fight against the countries of Germany, Italy, and Japan in World War II. Despite the war already raging in Europe, America attempted to stay neutral. However, on December 7, 1941, that position was no longer possible. Pearl Harbor, Hawaii—which housed a United States naval base—was attacked by the Empire of Japan. America declared war against Japan and was brought into World War II.

During the war, Germany was controlled by the Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler. Italy was also ruled by a dictator, Benito Mussolini. Both leaders held order by using violent and brutal means. Hitler also hoped for a holocaust, or complete extermination, of the Jewish people. Despite their atrocities, many Americans wanted to stay isolated from European problems. President Roosevelt insisted, even before the bombing by Japan, that America could not remain isolated from the events in Europe. After a meeting with Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, Roosevelt brought back the idea to the American people that we were fighting for "Four Freedoms," which included freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from fear and want.

For America, World War II was fought on two fronts, both the Pacific and the Atlantic. Ironically, supplying materials for the war effort had one positive effect for the country. The nation was lifted out of the economic depression as jobs became readily available. Women filled in the gaps of workers left by men fighting on both fronts.

Victory in Europe happened before the Pacific front was won. President Truman was in office at the end of World War II and was faced with making the decision to use new atomic weapons on the Empire of Japan. With the support of Great Britain, America dropped two atomic bombs. The first was on the city of Hiroshima; the second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Japan surrendered on August 15, 1945, ending World War II for America.

Text Questions

1. Why did Americans want to remain isolated?
   a. to stay out of the war
   b. to keep all spending money inside the country
   c. to stop the growth of factories
   d. to support tourism in America

2. Why did Roosevelt use the idea of fighting for freedoms to convince Americans they could no longer remain isolated?
   a. He wanted to convince America that those in Asia needed to be free.
   b. He wanted to remind Americans how they fought against slavery.
   c. He wanted to convince the American people that freedom was worth fighting for.
   d. He knew that freedom was a gift from Great Britain that America could easily lose.

3. Which event forced America to join World War II?
   a. bombing raids on Great Britain
   b. the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan
   c. the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor
   d. the continuation of the Great Depression

4. List three things in sequential order that happen in the passage.
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____

5. Based on the text, which statement is most likely true?
   a. Dropping the atomic bombs led to the Japanese surrender.
   b. Roosevelt's meeting with Churchill halted all threat of war.
   c. If Truman had been president at the start of the war, the United States would not have gone to war.
   d. Hitler ended the war after America dropped the atomic bombs.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

The Iron Curtain

At the end of World War II, many Americans believed the Soviet Union was America's ally. The Soviets had fought on the side of Germany at the beginning of the war but had later left the Axis forces and joined the Allies in fighting against Germany, Italy, and Japan. But by 1946, the Americans realized a friendship between the Soviet Union and the United States of America was not to be the case. Then Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin began a deliberate campaign to spread Communism to other nations in Europe and Asia. In a country ruled by a communist government, the citizens do not have the same freedoms as in a democracy. This act of aggression—the refusal to leave the countries occupied after the war by the Soviet Union—began a conflict with the United States known as the Cold War.

After World War II, Soviet troops refused to leave countries they had liberated, despite America's insistence that the countries be allowed to hold free elections. Winston Churchill, Britain's prime minister, said an "Iron Curtain" had come down on Europe, and behind this curtain people's basic freedoms were disappearing. One clear example of the Iron Curtain was the Berlin Wall—a wall that separated West and East Berlin in Germany. Those on the western side were free, while those in East Berlin were under Soviet control.

President Truman believed the United States should support those people who wanted to be free. This policy and belief would later lead the United States into wars such as the Korean War and Vietnam in an effort to stop the spread of communism.

Text Questions

1. Which adjective best describes America's relationship with the Soviet Union after the start of the Cold War?
   a. friendly
   b. open
   c. affable
   d. hostile

2. Why did the Soviet Union refuse to leave any of the countries occupied by them at the end of World War II?
   a. They wanted to spread communism to other European countries.
   b. They wanted to continue Germany's mission of dominance.
   c. They wanted to go to war with the United States and Great Britain.
   d. They wanted to become a democratic nation.

3. Which statement is <u>not</u> a fact about the story?
   a. After World War II, the Soviet Union attempted to spread communism.
   b. The United States and the Soviet Union engaged in a conflict known as the Cold War.
   c. The Cold War is the most frightening time in America's history.
   d. After World War II, the Berlin Wall separated East Berlin from West Berlin.

4. At the end of World War II, why could the United States no longer remain allies with the Soviet Union?
   a. The Soviet Union wanted to take over the United States.
   b. The Soviet Union's refusal to withdraw from European countries it had occupied near the end of World War II was seen as an act of aggression by the United States.
   c. The Soviet Union's dictator was not friends with the president of the United States.
   d. The Soviet Union was unstable and could not be counted on economically for any help the United States might need.

5. Which part of the text helps you to explain your answer for question four?
   a. first paragraph
   b. second paragraph
   c. third paragraph
   d. the title

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