

The War in North Africa and Europe

Soon after the United States entered the war, the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union (at war with Germany since June 22, 1941) decided that their primary military effort was to be focused in Europe.

1. Which of the following countries was **not** at war with Germany?
 - a. Great Britain
 - b. Italy
 - c. United States
 - d. Soviet Union

Throughout 1942, British and German forces fought inconclusive back-and-forth battles across Libya and Egypt for control of the Suez Canal. But on October 23, British forces commanded by General Sir Bernard Montgomery struck at the Germans from El Alamein. Equipped with a thousand tanks, many made in America, they defeated General Erwin Rommel's army in a grinding two-week campaign. On November 7, American and British armed forces landed in French North Africa. Squeezed between forces advancing from east and west, the Germans were pushed back and, after fierce resistance, surrendered in May 1943.

2. In northern Africa, the Germans sought to gain control of the _____.
 - a. city of Cairo
 - b. Mediterranean Sea
 - c. pyramids
 - d. Suez Canal

3. Who led German forces in northern Africa?

The year 1942 was also the turning point on the Eastern Front. The Soviet Union, suffering immense losses, stopped the Nazi invasion at the gates of Leningrad (St. Petersburg) and Moscow. In the winter of 1942-43, the Red Army defeated the Germans at Stalingrad (Volgograd) and began the long offensive that would take them to Berlin in 1945.

4. The Germans were defeated by the Russians at ____ after intense fighting during the winter of 1942-1943.
 - a. Leningrad
 - b. Moscow
 - c. Stalingrad
 - d. Vladivostok

In July 1943 British and American forces invaded Sicily and won control of the island in a month. During that time, Benito Mussolini fell from power in Italy. His successors began negotiations with the Allies and surrendered immediately after the invasion of the Italian mainland in September. However, the German Army had by then taken control of the peninsula. The fight against Nazi forces in Italy was bitter and protracted. Rome was not liberated until June 4, 1944. As the Allies slowly moved north, they built airfields from which they made devastating air raids against

railroads, factories, and weapon emplacements in southern Germany and central Europe, including the oil installations at Ploesti, Romania.

- 5. Mussolini fell from power in 1943.
 - a. True
 - b. False
- 6. What Italian city was liberated on June 4, 1944?
 - a. Florence
 - b. Genoa
 - c. Milan
 - d. Rome

Late in 1943 the Allies, after much debate over strategy, decided to open a front in France to compel the Germans to divert far larger forces from the Soviet Union.

U.S. General Dwight D. Eisenhower was appointed Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe. After immense preparations, on June 6, 1944, a U.S., British, and Canadian invasion army, protected by a greatly superior air force, landed on five beaches in Normandy. With the beachheads established after heavy fighting, more troops poured in, and pushed the Germans back in one bloody engagement after another. On August 25 Paris was liberated.

- 7. Who was appointed Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe?

- 8. On what day did Allied forces storm the beaches of Normandy?

- 9. What French city was liberated on August 25, 1944?
 - a. Besançon
 - b. Marseille
 - c. Paris
 - d. Valentigney

The Allied offensive stalled that fall, then suffered a setback in eastern Belgium during the winter, but in March, the Americans and British were across the Rhine and the Russians advancing irresistibly from the East. On May 7, Germany surrendered unconditionally.

- 10. On what day did the Germans surrender unconditionally?

