

Teacher's Guide For Cobblestone: *Behind the Scenes of Ken Burns's The War*

September 2007

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MATERIALS:

September 2007 Cobblestone issue: Behind the Scenes of Ken Burns's The War; Computer; Internet connection; printer; people from the community; world maps; encyclopedias; tradebooks (fiction/nonfiction) on World War II on the homefront and about W.W.II; posters; markers; chart paper; CD player

BUILD PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:

Brainstorm with the students what they think they know about World War II.

Divide it into categories such as:

1. People involved
2. Places involved
3. Events that happened
4. Reasons it happened
5. Any other things known

Put each category on chart paper and post around the classroom.

READING:

1. Divide class into small groups, assign one of the articles to each group to read. After reading have groups discuss their article. Then do a jigsaw activity. Have students number the members in each group then put all the ones together, the twos together, etc., in new groups. Have each student share the article they read within his/her new group. Circulate from group to group listening to the discussions. Then have a whole group discussion over the articles.

2. Read a tradebook (fiction/nonfiction) about life on the American Homefront or World War II.

RESEARCH

Have students research some aspect of World War II that interests them. They might pick from the following:

1. people of the war
2. music of the war
3. USO
4. U.S. Savings Bond
5. Rationing
6. Victory Gardens
7. Places of the war
8. Events of the war

Create a report from the research and present to the class.

Research Sascha Weinzheimer and Anne Frank. Create a venn diagram to compare and contrast the girls.

INTERNET

Websites:

- www.teacher.scholastic.com/activities/wwii/ click on American Homefront
www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wartwo

www.archives.gov/research/ww2/photos/
www.nationalww2museum.org
www.pbs.org/thewar/
www.wwiimemorial.com/

Have students surf this sites for information to use in their reports or essays.

GEOGRAPHY

Using the World War II Map, 1942, mark the countries involved with WW II. Locate where the interviewees in the magazine were in World War II.

WRITING

Write a story about being a child during WW II in the American Homefront and what you do to help the effort. (Reread Kids Count, Too, p. 7)

Write a 5 paragraph essay describing what was learned about The War.

ART

Research poster art from WW II on U. S. Saving Bonds, Victory Gardens, Loose Lips Sink Ships, Black Outs, USO, Rationing, Recycling-Collecting Scrap Metal then create a poster on one of them.

Create cards for veterans to send to VA hospitals.

MUSIC

Research music from the WW II era. Bring some in to play in the class room. In small groups write a jingle using the music tunes to advertise the need to help on the American Homefront. Perform for the class

GUEST SPEAKERS/INTERVIEWS

Invite a veteran or someone who lived during 1940-1945 to come speak to the class about that time of his/her life.

Have students use tape recorders and interview someone who lived during 1940-1945. Some of the questions might be:

1. Were you in the military between 1940-1945?
2. If not in the military, what did you do?
3. Can you tell us what it was like to be in the war/on the American Homefront?

After the interview, use the information to write a report to share with the class.

OTHER ACTIVATES

Read the interview with Ken Burns and discuss his reasons why he wrote it. What other issues would make a good documentary for Mr. Burns to do? Write him a letter to suggest your issue and the reasons why it would make a good documentary.

Read Citizen Spotlight Award p. 35 and think about entering it.

Solve the crossword puzzle on p. 40-41. Use the articles in the magazine to help solve it.

CLOSURE

Look over the charts created with the students prior knowledge and edit them with their learned knowledge.

