

# Teachers' Guide for Cobblestone

May/June 2014: Clash at Midway

By Debbie Vilardi

Debbie Vilardi is an author of poetry, lesson plans and works of fiction. She is seeking an agent and publisher for her chapter book, *Flood*, set during Hurricane Katrina.

Goal: To learn about the events leading up to and including the Japanese defeat at Midway Atoll.

\*Always have a parent or trusted adult help with web research.

Before Beginning:

Study the cover. What is happening in this image? What do you think Midway is?

"Why Midway" by Gloria W. Lannon (Pages 2-3)

Vocabulary: atoll, archipelago, lagoon, poachers, militaristic

Comprehension:

1. How did Midway Atoll form?
2. Who claimed the land for the United States?
3. Why was it seen as valuable?
4. What were some of the early structures built on the island?
5. Why did the US Navy take over?
6. What role did air travel play in the development of the islands?
7. Why were military bases constructed on the atoll?
8. What event took place on December 7, 1941?
9. Why did a military presence at Midway become less important over time?
10. What is Midway today?

Geography Skills: Locate Midway Atoll on the map on page 3.

Research: Midway Atoll, Pan American World Airways, Pearl Harbor, National Register of Historic Places

"War Comes to the Pacific" by Edison McIntyre (Pages 4- 8)

Vocabulary: cryptographers

Comprehension:

1. What was President Franklin Roosevelt's opinion of the Japanese war with China?
2. What actions did he take to warn Japan?

3. What was happening in Europe at this time?
4. When did Japan sign the treaty with Italy and Germany?
5. What prompted Roosevelt to freeze trade with Japan?
6. What was General Tojo's dilemma?
7. How did he resolve it?
8. What prompted him to make this decision?
9. Why might he have continued to negotiate while he was preparing for war?
10. What were two results of the attack on Pearl Harbor?
11. Why might Germany have been considered more dangerous than Japan?
12. What was the result of six months of the defensive strategy against Japan?
13. What role did cryptographers play in the following battles?

Writing Activity: Look at the images on pages 6 and 7. What impression of war do these images give? What emotions do they evoke? Why?

Research: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Second Sino-Japanese War, General Hideki Tojo, Bataan Death March

"The rest of the Story" by Edison McIntyre (Pages 8-9)

Comprehension:

1. What was the result of the U.S. efforts at Guadalcanal?
2. The Japanese lacked raw materials. How did this impact their war efforts against the United States?
3. What strategy did the U.S. implement in 1943?
4. Why were the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa so costly?
5. What prompted the Japanese to surrender?

Geography Activity: Locate each of the island groups and individual islands mentioned in the article on the map on pages 12-13.

Research: Solomon Islands, Gilbert Islands, Marshall Islands, Caroline Islands, Mariana Islands, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Okinawa

"On the Attack" by Andrew Matthews (Pages 10-11)

Comprehension:

What was Japan's three-step plan?

Geography Activity: Use the map on pages 12-13 to track the attack's mentioned in the article.

Discussion: Did Japan succeed with any steps of its plan?

"Doolittle's Daring Raid" by Myra S. Weatherly (Pages 14-15)

Comprehension:

1. Why did the United States plan this bombing raid?
2. What was the original plan and why was it changed?
3. What elements made the mission more dangerous than usual?
4. Why weren't the planes stored below deck?
5. What prompted an early launch?
6. How did weather conditions impact takeoff?
7. What happened to the planes Doolittle's men flew?
8. What was the effect of the raid on Japan?

Math Activity:

1. What was the total weight of bombs prepared for the mission?
2. How many days had passed since the attack on Pearl Harbor?

Research: Lieutenant Colonel James H. Doolittle, Eglin Air Force Base

"Scratch One Flattop" by Barbara D. Krasner (Pages 16-18)

Vocabulary: scuttle

Comprehension:

1. What was Operation MO?
2. What was the makeup of the Japanese forces that were sent to take Port Moresby?

3. How did the Americans learn of the planned attack?
4. What happened during the early part of the battle?
5. Describe the errors made by both sides.
6. What is the *Shoho's* distinction in the war?
7. What were the results of the battle on May 8?

Writing Activity: It's the night of May 7. You have found your aircraft carrier after the battle and are writing home. Decide if you are American or Japanese. Describe the battle for your loved ones. Tell them of your hopes and goals for the next day. Use details from the article to help you.

Research: Rabaul, New Britain; Port Moresby; Vice Admiral Shigeyoshi Inouye; Admiral Chester W. Nimitz

"Machines of War" by Charles C. Hofer (Pages 19-21)

Vocabulary: agile, depth charges

Comprehension:

1. Note each change in technology mentioned in the article and how it impacted warfare.
2. What activities took place on an aircraft carrier?
3. What made carriers vulnerable?

Research: Select one of the vehicles on pages 20 and 21. If American and Japanese versions are mentioned in the article, select one to study. Write a report detailing its invention, purposes and uses during World War II. Include whether it is still in use today and information about its most important battles or missions.

"Cracking the Code" by Gloria W. Lannom (Pages 22-23)

Vocabulary: encipher, decipher, desalination

Comprehension:

1. What was a limitation of radio communication?
2. What was the job of a code breaker like?
3. What parts of the Japanese code had been deciphered before March of 1942?
4. Why was a false message sent from Midway?
5. What was the result of the trick?

Writing Activity: Would you rather be a code breaker or a soldier or pilot? Why? Use details from the articles to support your answer.

Experiential Activity: Create your own codes and send messages about the locations of school rooms. Decipher each other's codes. See if you can make a code so complex that only the intended recipient can decipher it and reply in code.

Research: Commander Joseph John Rochefort

"The Battle of Midway" by Barbara D. Krasner (Page 26-31)

Comprehension:

1. Why had the Japanese army resisted the idea of another attack on American territory?
2. What changed their minds?
3. Why did Admiral Yamamoto select Midway as his target?
4. What was his plan?
5. Why didn't the Americans respond to the attack on the Aleutian Islands?
6. What other information did Yamamoto lack?
7. What prompted Nagumo to change his plans for the second attack?
8. What were the results of the first attack by the American forces?
9. How did luck play a role in the bombing of the Japanese carriers?
10. Why did Fletcher retreat eastward for the night?
11. What happened to the *Yorktown*?
12. What is the opinion of historians regarding Japan's loss?
13. What were the results of the battle of Midway?

Math Activity: Compare the Japanese and American losses. How many more people and vessels did Japan lose? What percent of 3000 is 340?

Social Studies Activity: Create a timeline of the battle.

Research: Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, Rear Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, rear Admiral Frank Jack Fletcher, Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo, Kido Batai, Aleutian Islands

"A Handful of Heroes" by Andrew Matthews (Pages 32-33)

Comprehension:

1. What was each person's accomplishment during the battle?
2. Why was this important?

Research: Vice Admiral Marc Andrew "Pete" Mitscher, Lieutenant Commander John C. Waldron, Lieutenant Commander Clarence Wade McClusky, Lieutenant Commander John S. Thach

"Return of the Goonies" by Noenoe Barney-Campbell (Pages 34-37)

Vocabulary: guano, invasive, tsunami

Comprehension:

1. Why was the author at Midway Atoll?
2. How did the albatross earn the nickname "goonie"?
3. Why is Midway important to the albatrosses and other bird species?
4. What do male albatrosses do to attract females?
5. Describe the fairy tern.
6. What makes a red-tailed tropicbird unique?
7. How can weather impact the birds?
8. What other factors threaten the birds?

Discussion Activity: What can we do to help the birds on Midway?

Research: albatross, fairy tern, red-tailed tropicbird, petrels, shearwaters

"Aye, Aye, Captain!" by Marcia Amidon Lusted (Pages 40-41)

Research: Admiral Mountbatten, Karl Donitz, Admiral Ivan Isakov

Activities for the Entire Issue:

1. Use information in the articles to create a timeline of the important events and battles that surround the clash at Midway.
2. Why was the battle at Midway Atoll a turning point in the war?