Turning Points in World War II
Objectives

• Understand how nations devoted all of their resources to fighting World War II.

• Explain how Allied victories began to push back the Axis powers.

• Describe D-Day and the Allied advance toward Germany.
Terms and People

- **Rosie the Riveter** – the character who symbolized the millions of women working in essential war industry jobs
- **aircraft carrier** – a ship from which aircraft can take off and land
- **Dwight Eisenhower** – a decorated World War II general who later became president of the United States
- **Stalingrad** – site of one of the costliest battles of the war between Germany and the Soviet Union
Terms and People (continued)

- **D-Day** – June 6, 1944, the day of the Allies’ invasion of France

- **Yalta Conference** – the February 1945 meeting between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin where they agreed on the Soviet Union’s joining the Pacific war, and on postwar arrangements
How did the Allies begin to push back the Axis powers?

By 1942, the Allies were in trouble. Germany was bombing Britain relentlessly, German forces had pushed far into the Soviet Union, and the Japanese were advancing in the Pacific.

However, through extraordinary efforts and a few key victories, the tide of the war began to turn. American forces battered the Japanese navy, and the Germans were defeated at Stalingrad and in North Africa.
The Allies committed to total war, using all of their resources for the war effort.

- The United States raised money by selling bonds and regulating prices.
- Factories ceased producing consumer goods and turned out airplanes and tanks instead.
- Although shortages meant consumers learned to live with less, the increase in production ended the unemployment of the Depression era.
In the United States, **Rosie the Riveter** became a symbol for the many **women who worked** in defense plants or shipyards.

British and American women served in the armed forces in many auxiliary roles:

- Driving ambulances
- Delivering airplanes
- Decoding messages
**Under the pressure of war, democratic governments limited the rights of citizens.**

- Allied governments censored the press and used propaganda to win support for the war.

- Many Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians lost their jobs and property and were interned in camps.

- The British took similar action against German refugees.
Significant Allied victories in 1942 and 1943 marked a turning point in the war.

- **At the Battle of El Alamein in November 1942, British troops halted Axis advances in North Africa.**

- **A joint British and American force under Dwight Eisenhower** then drove Axis powers back into Tunisia, where Rommel’s army surrendered.

- Moving on to southern Italy, Allied forces defeated Italian forces in 1943. Italy surrendered and overthrew Mussolini.
American naval victories in the Pacific also turned the tide of the war.

- The Battle of Midway in June 1942 was fought entirely by air.

- U.S. bombers launched from **aircraft carriers** destroyed four Japanese carriers and 250 planes.

- After Midway, Japan made no further advances in the Pacific.
The Allies planned their strategy.

- The “Big Three”—Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin—agreed to focus on finishing the war in Europe before trying to end the war in Asia.

- Though the Allies distrusted one another—Churchill and Roosevelt feared Stalin, and Stalin feared the destruction of communism—the unsteady alliance continued.
The Battle of Stalingrad was another turning point for the Allies in Europe.

• Hitler launched an offensive in 1942 to gain the rich oilfields of the Soviet Union.

• His troops got only as far as Stalingrad, where they launched a fierce house-by-house battle.

• As winter came, Soviet troops surrounded the attackers.

• Without food or ammunition, the German troops surrendered in January 1943.
After Stalingrad, the Red Army drove Hitler’s forces out of the Soviet Union.

By early 1944, Soviet troops were advancing into Eastern Europe toward Germany.

German prisoners marched to Stalingrad after their defeat by the Soviet army.
By 1944, the Allies were ready to invade France.

On June 6, 1944, ships ferried 156,000 Allied troops across the English Channel to the beaches of Normandy.
Despite heavy German defenses on the beach and heavy losses, the D-Day landing was a success.

• Allied troops broke through the German lines and advanced toward Paris.

• Within a month, all of France was liberated.
By this time, Germany was reeling under round-the-clock bombing.

After freeing France, Allied forces battled by land into Germany.

By early 1945 Germany’s defeat seemed inevitable.
In 1945, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met for the Yalta Conference.

Stalin agreed to enter the war against Japan after Germany’s surrender.

They agreed to split Germany into four zones governed by the United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union.

Stalin insisted that the Soviet Union must retain control of Eastern Europe. Churchill and Roosevelt favored self-determination for Eastern Europe. After the war this issue would cause a split among the Allies.