Lesson 1
Who Was Prepared for War?

Activities
Activity 1: Armaments.

A. Using tables of military spending, students analyze, in a whole class discussion, Japan’s military strength during the 1930s and 1940s and the risks it took in invading China.

B. The teacher can use the following specific questions for the tables to help direct students toward conclusions about military preparations for war.

- In Student Handout 1.1, use the tables titled “Armaments Production of the Powers, 1940-1943” to answer the following questions:
  - Which government spent the most on armaments (weapons) in 1940, 1941, 1943?
  - Why was the Axis alliance spending more in 1940 and 1941? Why did the Allied governments spend more in 1943?

- In Student Handout 1.2 use the table entitled “National Income of the Powers in 1937 and Percentage Spent on Defense” to answer the following questions:
  - In 1937, which three governments spent the largest percentage of their budgets on defense?
  - Which government spent the smallest percentage on defense?

- Using the data in all the tables, briefly explain the global context for armaments production and government budgets for defense from the end of World War I to 1943.

Activity 2: Nationalism.

Using the three primary source texts in Student Handout 1.3, ask students to answer the following questions:

1. According to Tanaka, how is Japan different from England and the United States?

2. According to Hitler, how is land ownership determined?

3. What are the similarities between Tanaka’s and Hitler’s arguments for expansion?
Lesson 1

Student Handout 1.3—Primary Sources

The following excerpt is from a letter that General Giichi Tanaka, the prime minister of Japan, is believed to have written to the Japanese emperor in 1927.

Letter of General Tanaka, 1927

England can afford to talk about trade relations only because she has India and Australia to supply her with foodstuff and other materials. So can America because South America and Canada are there to supply her needs. … But in Japan her food supply and raw materials decrease in proportion to her population. If we merely hope to develop trade, we shall eventually be defeated by England and America, who possess unsurpassable capitalistic power. In the end, we shall get nothing. A more dangerous factor is the fact that the people of China might some day wake up. Even during these years of internal strife, they can still toil patiently, and try to imitate and displace our goods so as to impair the development of our trade. When we remember that the Chinese are our sole customers, we must beware, lest one day China becomes unified and her industries become prosperous … our trade in China will be ruined. … Our best policy lies in the direction of taking positive steps to secure rights and privileges in Manchuria and Mongolia … The way to gain actual rights in Manchuria and Mongolia is to use this region as a base and under the pretense of trade and commerce penetrate the rest of China. Armed by the rights already secured we shall seize the resources all over the country. Having China’s entire resources at our disposal we shall proceed to conquer India … Asia Minor, Central Asia, and even Europe. But to get control of Manchuria and Mongolia is the first step.


Lesson 2

Student Handout 2—Timelines on Beginning and End Dates of World War II

Possible Beginning Dates for WWII

- 1931: Japanese invasion of Manchuria
- 1937: Japanese invasion of China
- 1939: German invasion of Poland
- 1940: German attacks on Britain
- 1941: Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor and Singapore

Possible Ending Dates for WWII

- February 1943: German army surrendered to Soviets
- June 1945: German army surrendered to Allies in Germany
- August 1945: Japanese government surrendered to Allies on US naval ship
“Frauen Warte” (Women’s Viewpoint), 1940
Artist unknown
Poster based on the April 1, 1940 issue of Frauen Warte, the Nazi Party’s biweekly illustrated magazine for women.


“Weapons for the front … From the Soviet women”
Date and artist unknown

Source: http://filebox.vt.edu/users/efalwell/sovietprop/stalin5.html
• **1940** Plutonium was discovered

• **1942** US Manhattan Project began in order to develop the first atomic bomb. The anti-tank rocket, or bazooka, was invented. Before the bazooka, only anti-tank grenades or “elephant guns” would damage well-armored tanks, but even these performed poorly. Aircraft carriers became the major offensive arm of the Navy

• **1943** First use of air-launched, radio command-guided anti-ship missiles

• **1944** First V-1 flying bomb was used by Germany against the Great Britain. V-2 rockets were used by Germany. First German military jet, the Messerschmitt, was used in battle

• **1945** Atom bomb was developed and used

• **Late World War II** Acoustical homing torpedoes were developed

Source: [http://www.warscholar.com/Year/TechnologyOutline.html](http://www.warscholar.com/Year/TechnologyOutline.html)
Assessment

Directions

Imagine that you are a journalist working in September 1945, and write headlines for the following newspapers:

- Tokyo Times
- London Times
- New York Times
- Dresden Times
- Moscow Times
- Shanghai Times
- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia Times

Now, explain the point of view you expressed in those headlines. What makes them similar and what makes them different?