In 1962, this memorial was dedicated on the site of the sunken U.S.S. Arizona.

Pearl Harbor Resources

FROM THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY:

• [www.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor) National Geographic’s Pearl Harbor site featuring extensive maps and resources. Plus, ask your students to join the National Geographic memory book.
• [Graveyards of the Pacific](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor) by Robert Ballard, available June 2001 from National Geographic Books
• [PEARL HARBOR: Legacy of Attack](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor) and [National Geographic Beyond the Movie: PEARL HARBOR](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor), coming soon on home video and DVD from National Geographic Television
• Pearl Harbor feature in the June 2001 issue of [National Geographic](http://www.nationalgeographic.com) magazine

OTHER BOOKS ON PEARL HARBOR AND WORLD WAR II:

• Donald M. Goldstein, [The Way It Was: Pearl Harbor, the Original Photographs](http://www.boylstonbooks.com/detail.cfm?isbn=0816023500), Washington, D.C.: Brassey’s, 1991
• Walter Lord, [Day of Infamy](http://www.randomhouse.com/m/public/9780394594548), New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1957

WEB LINKS:

• [www.pearlharbor.com](http://www.pearlharbor.com) The official website for Touchstone Pictures' Pearl Harbor
• [www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq66-1.htm](http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq66-1.htm) The Naval Historical Center's Pearl Harbor page
• [www.nps.gov/usar/ExtendWeb1.html](http://www.nps.gov/usar/ExtendWeb1.html) U.S.S. Arizona Memorial (National Park Service)
• [www.execpc.com/~dschaaf/mainmenu.html](http://www.execpc.com/~dschaaf/mainmenu.html) Pearl Harbor Remembered
• [web.tampabay.rr.com/mspusf/pearlharbor.html](http://web.tampabay.rr.com/mspusf/pearlharbor.html) Remembering Pearl Harbor

National Geographic Beyond the Movie is a multimedia initiative designed to provide learning tools for you to explore the most provocative real-life questions raised by today’s feature films. The National Geographic Society is the world’s largest non-profit scientific and educational organization. Our mission is to increase global understanding through exploration, education, research, and conservation.
Connecting the Movie to Your Classroom:

Touchstone Pictures’ *Pearl Harbor*, from producer Jerry Bruckheimer and producer/director Michael Bay, opening Memorial Day weekend 2001, is one of the most eagerly awaited motion pictures of the year. Along with an engrossing story and exciting re-creations of battle footage, the film touches upon a number of issues relevant to United States history standards. National Geographic hopes that with the help of this guide, your students’ interest in the movie can be linked to your history curriculum.

About the Movie:

*Pearl Harbor* tells the story of one of the most significant events in the history of the United States. The film focuses on a fictional group of young Navy pilots and nurses and the events leading to the attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Their acts of bravery during the Japanese attack and their reactions to the tragedies they witnessed create a powerful drama. The story unfolds against the background of historic events in Japan and the United States.

Connection to National Standards:

The topics and activities in this guide pertain to material covered under Historical Era 8, Standard 3 in the United States History Standards for grades 5–12, created by the National Center for History in the Schools. Issues covered include political motivations leading to World War II, the sentiments held by the American public both prior to and following the Japanese attack, the Japanese strategy for bombing Pearl Harbor, and the U.S. forces’ level of preparedness.

Setting the Scene:

The following introductory activities will give students additional historical perspective:

- **Review the geography of Japan and the Hawaiian Islands.** If possible, use a map that shows the political alignment of these regions at the outbreak of World War II.
- **Find a firsthand oral history from a Pearl Harbor survivor.** (Several are available at [www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq66-3.htm](http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq66-3.htm)) Discuss similarities and differences between survivors’ recollections and the film’s depiction of the same events.
- **Research some of the historical figures that appear as characters in the movie, such as Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle, Adm. Husband Kimmel, Adm. Isoruku Yamamoto, and Doris Miller.** (See the resources on page four of this guide.)
1. Why did Japan attack Pearl Harbor?

BACKGROUND:
Japan had been aggressively building its empire in Asia and the Pacific since 1931. By 1939 Japan occupied large parts of China and in 1940 began to move into areas of Southeast Asia controlled by France. In 1940 Japan also entered into an alliance with Germany and Italy to form the Axis powers. Although the United States had not yet entered World War II, U.S. leaders recognized the danger Japan’s advances posed and instituted sanctions against the Japanese. Negotiations proved ineffective. Japan concluded that in order to continue its expansion, it would have to go to war with the United States.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- Why did the U.S. consider Japanese expansion a threat?
- How were Japan’s activities in Asia and the Pacific similar to Germany’s efforts in Europe during the same period? How did they differ?

ACTIVITY:
- Examine Japan’s history of empire-building in the half century prior to World War II. What was the significance of the emperor and the military in traditional Japanese society?

2. Was the United States prepared for a war with Japan?

BACKGROUND:
The devastating casualties of World War I led to widespread isolationist sentiment, and the United States remained neutral when World War II began in Europe. Nevertheless, President Franklin Roosevelt began taking steps to support Great Britain by lending weapons and supplies; he also strengthened the U.S. military. However, public opposition to direct military involvement made it difficult for the armed forces to prepare for war.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- What were some arguments for and against America’s isolationist stance?
- Why did many Americans anticipate war with Germany rather than with Japan?

ACTIVITY:
- Research the diplomatic relationship between Japan and the U.S. prior to the war. In particular, look at the negotiations that took place from July to November of 1941. Why were they unsuccessful?

3. Why was Hawaii a strategic location for both the United States and Japan?

BACKGROUND:
- The Hawaiian Islands are strategically located midway across the Pacific Ocean. In 1940, in response to Japan’s aggressive advances in Southeast Asia, the U.S. Navy stationed its Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. Intending to control most of Southeast Asia, Japan saw the U.S. Pacific Fleet as a primary obstacle. The Japanese strategy was to damage the fleet in a surprise attack so that they could control the Pacific.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- How did Japan’s geography influence its desire for territorial expansion?
- Why was Southeast Asia important to Japan?

ACTIVITY:
- Using a map showing Asia and the Pacific, find and mark the areas that Japan controlled prior to and during World War II. Designate territories that were of interest to Japan for their natural resources and those important for strategic reasons. Also mark the sites of United States and British military bases.

4. What were the immediate and long-term results of the attack on Pearl Harbor?

BACKGROUND:
- The attack occurred early on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941. The Naval base was not fully prepared, in part because of the time of day. U.S. forces suffered heavy damages and casualties. Japanese forces lost little in comparison. In the United States, the attack shifted public opinion dramatically. On December 8, President Roosevelt addressed Congress and war was declared. On December 11, Germany and Italy, honoring their alliance with Japan, declared war on the United States.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
- Why was the once divided American public so quickly unified after the attack?
- In what ways was the attack successful for Japan, and how was it unsuccessful?

ACTIVITIES:
- Listen to or read President Roosevelt’s Pearl Harbor speech. Discuss the impact of Roosevelt’s speech on American public opinion.
- Research some of the theories regarding America’s advance knowledge of Japan’s attack. Why do some people believe that the United States knew the attack was planned?