

**AIM:** What were the effects of World War II?

**DO NOW:** Write down two effects of World War II that are mentioned in the video clip.

*Q1: What effects of World War II are described? Take notes into the appropriate section of your chart.*

Throughout Europe and parts of Asia, cities were in ruins. For example, thousands of tons of Allied bombs had demolished 95 percent of the central area of Berlin. One U.S. officer stationed there reported, “It was like a city of the dead.” After the war, some civilians stayed where they were, living in partially destroyed homes. Others huddled in cellars with no water, no electricity, and very little food. Still others wandered across Europe, hoping to find their families or to find a safe place to live. These people included the survivors of concentration camps, prisoners of war, and refugees who found themselves in the wrong country when postwar treaties changed national borders.



The misery in Europe continued for years after the war. The fighting had ravaged Europe’s countryside, and agriculture had been completely disrupted. With the transportation system destroyed, the meager harvests often did not reach the cities. Thousands died as famine and disease spread through the cities. The first postwar winter brought more suffering as people went without shoes and coats.

*Q2: What effects of World War II are described? Take notes into the appropriate section of your chart.*

Just as in World War I, the conflicts of World War II spurred the development of ever more powerful weapons. Mightier tanks, more elusive submarines, faster fighter planes—all emerged from this period. The overwhelming destructive power of the Hiroshima bomb, and of the bomb dropped on Nagasaki three days later, changed the nature of war forever. Nuclear destruction also led to questions about the ethics of scientists and politicians who chose to develop and use the bomb.

*Q3: What effects of World War II are described? Take notes into the appropriate section of your chart.*

At meetings during the war, Allied leaders had agreed to punish those responsible for “crimes against humanity.” Trials were held in Nuremberg, Germany, from November 1945 through September 1946. Hitler was already dead, but 22 surviving Nazi leaders were tried at the **Nuremberg Trials**. Some received the death penalty; others were imprisoned. Hans Frank, the “Slayer of Poles,” was the only convicted Nazi to express remorse: “A thousand years will pass,” he said, “and still this guilt of Germany will not have been erased.” Additional trials were held in Italy and Japan. The trials demonstrated that leaders could be held accountable for their actions during war.



Q4: What effects of World War II are described? Take notes into the appropriate section of your chart.

In order to prevent another world war and to promote democracy, western nations occupied West Germany and Japan. They built new governments with democratic constitutions. However, Soviet forces occupied East Germany and most of Eastern Europe. They established communist governments in these nations, backed by the power of the Soviet Union. Thus, Europe was divided in two—between democracy in the West and communism in the East.

### **Document 1**

*Q: What key principles are the basis for the Japanese Constitution?*

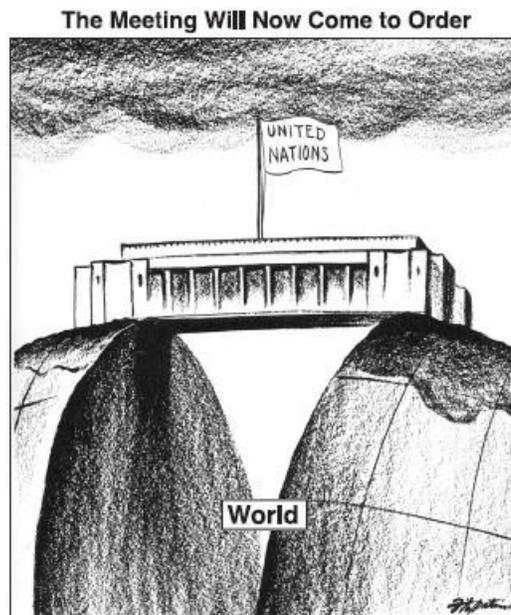
"We the Japanese people, acting through our duly elected representatives in the National Diet [legislature], resolve that never again shall we be visited with the horrors of war through the action of government, do proclaim that sovereign power resides with the people and do firmly establish this Constitution. Government is a sacred trust of the people, the authority for which is derived from the people, the powers of which are exercised by the representatives of the people, and the benefits of which are enjoyed by the people. This is a universal principle of mankind upon which this Constitution is founded. We reject and revoke all constitutions, laws, ordinances, and rescripts in conflict herewith."  
- *the Japanese constitution of 1947*

Q5: What effects of World War II are described? Take notes into the appropriate section of your chart.

World War II resulted in the formation of a new international body. In April 1945, representatives from nations around the world met in San Francisco to establish the United Nations. The purpose of the **United Nations** is to provide a place to discuss world problems and develop solutions. The two main bodies of the United Nations are: The General Assembly, which includes representatives from all member nations; each representative has one vote; and The Security Council, with 15 member nations, 5 of which are permanent; the United States, Russia, France, Great Britain, and China.

### **Document 2**

*Q: What question does this cartoon raise about the United Nations?*



Source: Daniel Fitzpatrick, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (adapted)