

# US History II (1865-Present)

## (SOC STDY 7)

**Learning in Place, Phase II**

**April 6-10, 20-24**



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**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher:** \_\_\_\_\_

## United States History II 1865-Present: Learning in Place, Phase II

**April 6-10**

✓	Task	Text	Write
	Describe the International Effects of the End of World War II.	Passage 1	<p><b>Sketch notes.</b> As you read the passage, draw a small image for each of the different effects of the end of World War II. Label each drawing with a short caption.</p> <p>What should a nation do after it wins a war? Write a paragraph evaluating whether or not you think the United States acted appropriately after the war ended.</p>
	Describe the Impact of Division in Germany.	Images 2 and 3	<p>Make a list of everything you see in both images. Imagine that you lived in Berlin after World War II. Write a paragraph explaining how you would feel as the city was divided and later separated by a wall. What concerns would you have? What actions would you take?</p>

**April 20-24**

✓	Task	Text	Write
	Describe the Rise of American Consumerism.	Passage 4	<p><b>Sketch notes.</b> As you read the passage, draw a small image for each of the different products that people started buying after World War II. Label each drawing with a short caption.</p> <p>How did people's lives change after World War II? Write a paragraph evaluating whether or not you think people's lives improved after World War II.</p>
	What were the major changes that occurred after World War II?	Passage 5	<p><b>As you read:</b> Select 5 words from Passage C that represent major changes after World War II. For each word, write general description or definition and create an illustration that demonstrates your understanding of the word as it related to economic growth.</p> <p><b>After you read:</b> Imagine you graduated from high school after World War II in 1950. Would you want to move to California? Write at least two paragraphs explaining your decision based on evidence from the reading passage. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of making that move?</p>

## Passage 1

### International Effects of the End of World War II

The consequences of World War II shaped foreign policy in the United States for the next fifty years. At the end of the war, Europe was divided between the two conquering armies. The Soviet Union controlled Eastern Europe and Eastern Germany, and the United States and Great Britain controlled Western Europe and Western Germany. Germany remained divided and took on characteristics of the conquering powers that controlled it. West Germany soon became a democratic country with capitalist economic institutions, just like its occupying countries of Great Britain and the United States. Eastern Germany remained under the dominating control of the Soviet Union, and did not adopt democratic institutions. In response to the destruction caused by World War II, the United States enacted the Marshall Plan, which provided economic support to western European countries, helped them rebuild their economies, and prevented the spread of communism. In the Pacific theatre, the United States occupied Japan, and helped it develop a democratic government and capitalist economic institutions. Because of American support, Japan became a strong ally of the United States.

To prevent the atrocities of a world war from happening again, nations came together to form the United Nations, a replacement for the League of Nations. The Charter of the United Nations was an international treaty signed on June 26, 1945 by 50 countries around the world. That same year, World War II officially ended on September 2, 1945, a war which held witness to countless crimes against humanity. The United Nations was formed partly to prevent another world war.

Citations:

<https://www.commonlit.org/en/texts/charter-of-the-united-nations>

<https://digitalllearning.whro.org/ushistory/mod9/top1/summ.html>

## Image 2

Aug. 22, 1961 | Two East German workers put pieces of broken glass on the top of the 15-foot-high Berlin Wall to prevent East Berliners from escaping. (Kreusch/AP)



### Image 3

Aug. 13, 1961 | East German workers protected by an East German soldier (foreground) begin building a wall of prefabricated concrete blocks to seal off the western sector of Berlin. (Agence France-Presse) (STF/AFP)



### Passage 4

#### The Rise of American Consumerism



Americans spent their money on cars, televisions and other modern appliance, Library of Congress

At the end of World War II, American soldiers returned home to a country quite different from the one they had left four years earlier. Wartime production had helped pull America's economy out of depression, and from the late 1940s on, young adults saw a remarkable rise in their spending power. Jobs were plentiful, wages were higher, and because of the lack of consumer goods during the war, Americans were eager to spend. During the same years, young couples were marrying and having children at unprecedented rates. New and expanded federal programs, including the G.I. Bill of Rights, allowed many

young families to purchase their own homes, often located in rapidly expanding suburbs.

#### **More, Newer, Better**

After World War II, consumer spending no longer meant just satisfying an indulgent material desire. In fact, the American consumer was praised as a patriotic citizen in the 1950s, contributing to the ultimate success of the American way of life. "The good purchaser devoted to 'more, newer and better' was the good citizen," historian Lizabeth Cohen explained, "since economic recovery after

a decade and a half of depression and war depended on a dynamic mass consumption economy."

### **Pragmatic Spending**

Americans invested in items based around home and family life. At war's end, the items people most desired included televisions, cars, washing machines, refrigerators, toasters, and vacuum cleaners: the machines that would help them modernize their lives. Between 1945 and 1949, Americans purchased 20 million refrigerators, 21.4 million cars, and 5.5 million stoves, a trend that continued well into the 1950s. Historian Elaine Tyler May noted, "The values associated with domestic spending upheld traditional American concerns with pragmatism and morality, rather than opulence and luxury. Purchasing for the home helped alleviate traditional American uneasiness with consumption: the fear that spending would lead to decadence."

### **Cars and TVs**

Television and automobile sales skyrocketed in the 1950s. With the massive growth in suburban populations, automobiles were needed more than ever, and were within reach for many first-time buyers. Families of all income brackets were buying televisions at a rate of five million a year. Some TV shows, like *The Goldbergs* and *The Honeymooners*, catered to working- and middle-class viewers with storylines about ethnic families. In addition, television provided a potent medium for advertisers to reach inside American homes, creating desires for other products.

## **Passage 5**

### **Rapid Growth of the Economy**

Californians hoped that the peacetime economy would be as prosperous as it had been during the war years. It took time for it to fully readjust to the new realities of the post-war economy and the Cold War environment, but in the end California would continue to prosper. As its post-war economy and population boomed, the Golden State's government, housing, schools, and urban infrastructure were challenged in keeping pace with this rapid expansion. The militarization-industrialization that had put California on a wartime footing would later transform California into the nation's most populous and wealthiest peacetime state.

*"The war has caused us to actually jump into our future."*

These words of California Governor Earl Warren could not have been more accurate. By war's end, California had 140 military bases that spurred government spending in the defense industry during World War II, and which continued throughout the Cold War. The vast federal defense spending prompted continuous growth

### **"The Good Life"**

Historian Elaine Tyler May believes that the federal government and the American people saw the new consumerism as a way to deemphasize class differences while stressing traditional gender roles. With the things that defined "the good life" within economic reach, working-class people could achieve the upward mobility they craved.

### **Selling in Order to Buy**

In many ways, Tupperware reinforced the ideal of the efficient home and kitchen. After all, Tupperware was meant to help housewives maintain freshness and cleanliness in food storage and preparation. Tupperware also helped fulfill the postwar desire for consumer goods. When asked how she recruited new dealers to her Tupperware distributorship, Jean Conlogue noted, "We tried to fill a need for something that they wanted, like new carpet, or a new refrigerator, and then we would map out for them how many parties they would have to hold." The company further reinforced consumption with their promotions and prizes. As rewards for their high sales, Tupperware dealers were rewarded with top-of-the-line appliances, from washing machines to double boilers.

Citation:

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americalexperience/features/tupperware-consumer/>

in other industries and manufacturing jobs. Southern California became the nation's leading producer of aircraft and second only to Detroit in automobile production, while the Bay Area became the leader in technological developments.

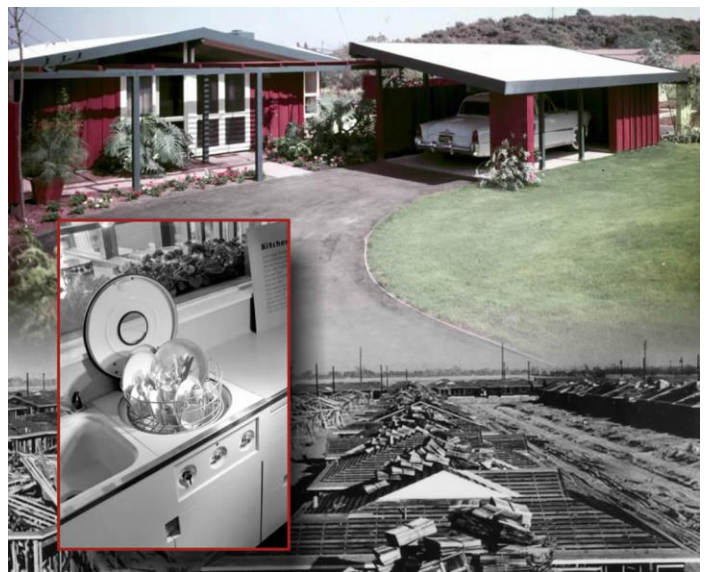
California's burgeoning economy necessitated the extensive development of roads, freeways, and bridges. In the post-war years there was a desperate need for housing for the prodigious number of workers who continued to migrate to the state. Runaway growth in suburban tract housing, consumer goods, and high rise office space forcibly pushed California toward its future role as the fifth largest economy in the world.

California experienced unprecedented military, technological, and industrial growth before, during, and after the war, which in turn led to massive increases in migration, population, jobs, and the development of sprawling industrial, urban, and suburban areas. While jobs were plentiful in California cities during and after



the war, housing was not. So great was the need for housing that military barracks, Quonset huts, trailers, and other quick-built facilities were used for housing.

On the eve of the war, California's population had already doubled since the 1920s, to 3.4 million. By 1962, California had become the most populous state in the union and had grown to 19.95 million by 1970. Approximately six million housing units were constructed in California during the thirty year period following World War II, which was made possible by government regulations, increasing wealth, more job opportunities, and new, quick methods of construction. Along with the population growth came the need for more educational facilities, shopping areas, and means of transportation. Hundreds of miles of freeways and roads were constructed to accommodate the tremendous growth in housing and new types of postindustrial and technology based industries.



Citation: <https://capitolmuseum.ca.gov/special/ww2/after-the-war>