



UNDERSTANDING
SACRIFICE

Activity: Industry's Role in the Strategic Bombing Campaign



Guiding question:

How did industrial workers contribute to the U.S. strategic bombing campaign in Europe?

DEVELOPED BY MICHELE ANDERSON

Grade Level(s): 6-8, 9-12

Subject(s): Social Studies

Cemetery Connection: Epinal American Cemetery

Fallen Hero Connection: Sergeant Norman J. Stewart



NHD
NATIONAL
HISTORY DAY

Overview

Using timelines and primary and secondary sources, students will learn about the strategic bombing campaign during World War II. Students will analyze why Americans worked in wartime industries, such as the B-24 Willow Run bomber plant.

Historical Context

Part of United States military preparations before the bombing of Pearl Harbor involved the production of large B-24 heavy bombers. The B-24 was capable of flying long missions and delivering explosives to enemy targets. The strategic bombing campaign, for which the B-24 Liberator bomber would be used, would traverse dangerous enemy territory and engage in air-to-air combat against faster enemy aircrafts. Henry Ford, president of the Ford Motor Company, entered into a government contract to build the Consolidated Aircraft Company's design of the B-24 bomber. Ford announced that his company could build a B-24 faster than the Consolidated Aircraft Company. He pledged to have a completed B-24 bomber roll off his assembly line every hour. By 1944, Henry Ford's Willow Run bomber plant in Michigan lived up to his promise. He avoided labor shortages by expanding the employee pool to include women. People from across the country moved near the Willow Run bomber plant to build the bomber that some local young men would fly in missions during World War II.

“Time restrictions often force teachers to generalize World War II events during instruction. I wanted to personalize World War II for students by providing a soldier’s name, face, and plane, while helping students connect how the soldier’s hometown was linked to his role in the war.”

— Michele Anderson

Anderson teaches at John Glenn High School in Westland, Michigan.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Describe the strategic bombing campaign;
- Analyze and describe the dangers associated with the strategic bombing campaign;
- Identify some of the reasons why Americans worked in war factories; and
- Demonstrate how one lone B-24 fit into the larger context of World War II.

Documents Used ★ indicates an ABMC source

Primary Sources

Film, *The Story of Willow Run*

Ford Motor Company

archive.org/details/74182StoryOfWillowRun

"School Principal Accepts Position at Bomber Plant," *The Farmington Enterprise*, May 28, 1942

history.farmlib.org/localhist/npageturn.cgi?papername=Farmington+Observer+et+al&id=4823

Photograph, *Golden Crew*

Kassel Mission Historical Society

Photograph, *Norman J. Stewart*, 1943

Farmington High School

Photograph, *Ole Baldy*

Roger Freeman Collection, American Air Museum in Britain (FRE 7899)

americanairmuseum.com/media/10514

Poster, *Front Lines of Labor Help Win the War*

National Archives and Records Administration (NWDNS-44-PA-846)

flickr.com/photos/usnationalarchives/3903231345/

Willow Run Recruitment Handbill, Ford Motor Company

Benson Ford Research Library

Secondary Sources

Detroit: The Arsenal of Democracy Interactive Map

Detroit Historical Society

wwii.detroithistorical.org/

Norman J. Stewart Silent Hero Profile ★

National History Day

nhsilentheroes.org/profiles/norman-j-stewart/

Materials

- Strategic Bombing Campaign Organizer
- Crew Cards
- Teacher access to a computer with a projector or Smartboard
- Speakers
- Paper to create a timeline

Lesson Preparation

- Print and cut copies of the Crew Cards.
 - **Teacher Tip:** There are six crew cards. Duplicate as needed to have enough for your class.
- Set up classroom technology and test all online resources before class.
- Make copies of the primary source documents if not projecting the images.

Procedure

Activity One: The Factory Workers (20 minutes)

- Ask students, *Why might someone want to go to work in a dirty wartime factory?*
- Project (or distribute copies) of the *Front Lines of Labor Help Win the War* poster. Have students analyze the message the author was trying to convey.
 - **Teacher Tip:** Make sure students do not miss the description of women as girls, women's patriotism, and the modern Betsy Ross.

- Ask students, *In what ways might this poster entice women to want to work at the Willow Run bomber plant?*
- Project (or distribute copies) of the Willow Run Recruitment Handbill. Facilitate a discussion about the expectations of women in American society:
 - *In what ways did this poster go against those expectations?*
 - *Why might women have answered the handbill and gone to work at the Willow Run plant despite women's roles in American society?*
 - *How might men have responded to the Willow Run Recruitment Handbill?*
 - *In what ways could workers at Willow Run be connected to the bomber crewmen that flew in the B-24 Liberators?*
- Distribute the newspaper article, "School Principal Accepts Position at Bomber Plant." Ask students to read the article and report how the principal might be connected to the bomber crews.

Activity Two: The Golden Crew (15 minutes)

- Randomly give each student a Crew Card.
- Project (or distribute copies) of the photograph of the Golden Crew. Ask students to examine the picture.
 - *Who do they think took the picture?*
 - *Where do they think the picture was taken?*
 - *Which crew member in the picture do they think matches their Crew Card? Why?*
- Project onto the screen the senior picture of Norman J. Stewart.
- Ask students, *Can you identify Stewart in the crew picture?*
- Explain that Norman was the tail turret gunner on *Ole Baldy*. Norman graduated from Farmington High School in Farmington, Michigan. His former junior high principal was Robert Stewart (no relationship to Norman).
- Show students the picture of *Ole Baldy*, Norman's B-24 bomber built at the Willow Run bomber plant in Michigan.
- Instruct students that they will be watching a four-minute video segment from a film called *The Story of Willow Run*. As they watch, have students write down a short description of the job found on their Crew Card.
- Play for the students Norman Stewart's eulogy from his fallen hero profile. This will allow the students to find out what happened to *Ole Baldy*.

Assessment

- Ask students to complete their Crew Card and collect.

Methods for Extension

- Students can identify the geographical places Ole Baldy traveled by drawing a circle on a world map of each place and writing in the event.
- Students may use the Detroit: The Arsenal of Democracy Interactive Map to discover companies who built war materials during World War II.
- Students can research war materiel built in or near their community and how those materiel contributed to helping the Allies win the war.
- The American Battle Monuments Commission maintains U.S. military cemeteries overseas. These cemeteries are permanent memorials to the fallen, but it is important that students know the stories of those who rest here. To learn more about the stories of Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice, visit abmc.gov/education and NHDSilentHeroes.org.
- Teachers can enhance students' interest in the role of World War II on the homefront by exploring these related lesson plans:
 - [Decisions in Postwar America: Remembrance of our Nation's Fallen Heroes](#)
 - [A Japanese American Family's Experience During World War II: A Living DBQ](#)
 - [Race and Tragedy on the Homefront: The Forgotten Port Chicago Disaster](#)
 - [Sacrifice, Loss, and Honor: A Simulation of the Homefront in World War II](#)

Adaptations

- Teachers can adapt the lesson by allowing students to work with a partner on the Strategic Bombing Campaign Organizer.
- Teachers can do a read-aloud with students for the newspaper reading.

Crew Card

Sergeant Earl Romine

1. Look at the caption on the picture. Which job on the B-24 was he assigned?
2. After watching the video and using your own ideas, describe why his job was important on a B-24.
3. After watching Stewart's eulogy, write down what you think your crew member would say at Stewart's grave.



Crew Card

Sergeant Edward Feltus

1. Look at the caption on the picture. Which job on the B-24 was he assigned?
2. After watching the video and using your own ideas, describe why his job was important on a B-24.
3. After watching Stewart's eulogy, write down what you think your crew member would say at Stewart's grave.

Crew Card

Sergeant Jack Erickson

1. Look at the caption on the picture. Which job on the B-24 was he assigned?
2. After watching the video and using your own ideas, describe why his job was important on a B-24.
3. After watching Stewart's eulogy, write down what you think your crew member would say at Stewart's grave.



Crew Card

Sergeant Norman Stewart

1. Look at the caption on the picture. Which job on the B-24 was he assigned?
2. After watching the video and using your own ideas, describe why his job was important on a B-24.
3. After watching Stewart's eulogy, write down what you would say at Stewart's grave.

Crew Card

Sergeant Robert Bagley

1. Look at the caption on the picture. Which job on the B-24 was he assigned?
2. After watching the video and using your own ideas, describe why his job was important on a B-24.
3. After watching Stewart's eulogy, write down what you think your crew member would say at Stewart's grave.



Crew Card

Lieutenant William Golden

1. Look at the caption on the picture. Which job on the B-24 was he assigned?
2. After watching the video and using your own ideas, describe why his job was important on a B-24.
3. After watching Stewart's eulogy, write down what you think your crew member would say at Stewart's grave.

"School Principal Accepts Position at Bomber Plant," May 28, 1942

The Farmington Enterprise

RESIGNS



ROBERT STEWART
**SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
ACCEPTS POSITION
AT BOMBER PLANT**

Robert Stewart, who has been principal of the Farmington Elementary and Junior High School for the past five years, will leave his teaching duties here at the end of the school year. Mr. Stewart came to Farmington in 1937, and since that time has been a familiar figure in local activity.

Mr. Stewart graduated from Clinton High School, and holds a B.S. degree from Michigan State Normal School. His graduate work was taken at Wayne University. Before coming to Farmington he was at the Marlette Township Unit School where he was principal of the Junior High School for three years.

Mr. Stewart is leaving Farmington to take a position at the Willow Run Bomber plant at Ypsilanti. He and Mrs. Stewart expect to move about the middle of June to their new home in Ann Arbor.

Besides his work in the school, Mr. Stewart was a member of the Methodist Men's Club and was active in the Parent Teachers Association, and the Michigan Education Association. His friendship and help will be missed by those who knew him and worked with him.

Photograph, *Golden Crew*

Kassel Mission Historical Society



Standing left to right: Sergeant Earl Romine, engineer; Lieutenant Norman Lubitz, navigator; Lieutenant William Golden, pilot; Lieutenant Chester Droog, bombardier

Kneeling: Sergeant Edward Feltus, waist gunner; Sergeant Jack Erickson, radio operator and gunner

Sitting: Sergeant Pendleton Raines, waist gunner; Sergeant Norman Stewart, tail gunner; Sergeant Robert Bagley, ball turret gunner

Photograph, *Norman J. Stewart*, 1943

Farmington High School



Photograph, *Ole Baldy*

Roger Freeman Collection, American Air Museum in Britain (FRE 7899)



Poster, *Front Lines of Labor Help Win the War*

National Archives and Records Administration (NWDNS-44-PA-846)



Willow Run Recruitment Handbill, Ford Motor Company

Benson Ford Research Library

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

WILLOW RUN

The Largest Bomber Plant in the World

Located in Detroit Area

NEEDS: MEN and WOMEN

to train for work in aircraft industry. MINIMUM AGE: 18 years.

INEXPERIENCED PERSONS WILL BE GIVEN 8 WEEKS' TRAINING WITH PAY
at the following rates:

1st 2 weeks at \$.85 per hour

3rd 2 weeks at \$.95 per hour

2nd 2 weeks at .90 per hour

4th 2 weeks at 1.00 per hour

*Trainees then should be qualified for semi-skilled classification paying top rates.
Women paid same rates as men.*

WORKING HOURS: 9 hours per day, 6 days per week—total 54 hours per
week. Time and one-half is paid for all time over 40 hours per week.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: Ford Motor Company has one of the finest
training schools in the country. There are 32 mechanical courses offered, for
which any employee is eligible without cost.

EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER ADVANCEMENT

Clean, Interesting and Pleasant Work in New, Modern Building

Physical Examination

Men Must Be Draft Deferred

TRANSPORTATION PAID

Federal Housing Available for All Employees at Reasonable Rates

Housing Located About Two Miles From Plant

Single Rooms	- - -	\$ 5.00 per week
Double Rooms	- - -	3.50 per week each person
Furnished Apartments for man and wife		6.50 per week
Family Housing of 1-2-3 Bedrooms		23.50 to \$38.50 per month, depending upon size of family

Churches, School, Cafeterias, Theatre and Recreational Facilities on Housing Premises.

PERSONS NOW EMPLOYED IN ESSENTIAL WAR WORK NOT CONSIDERED UNLESS
RELEASED THROUGH WAR MANPOWER COMMISSION

Company Representative Will Interview at:

UNITED STATES EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
of the WAR MANPOWER COMMISSION



From the Collections of The Henry Ford (THF129178)