

SCHOLASTIC
FOCUS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sibert Honor Author

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Grades 3-7

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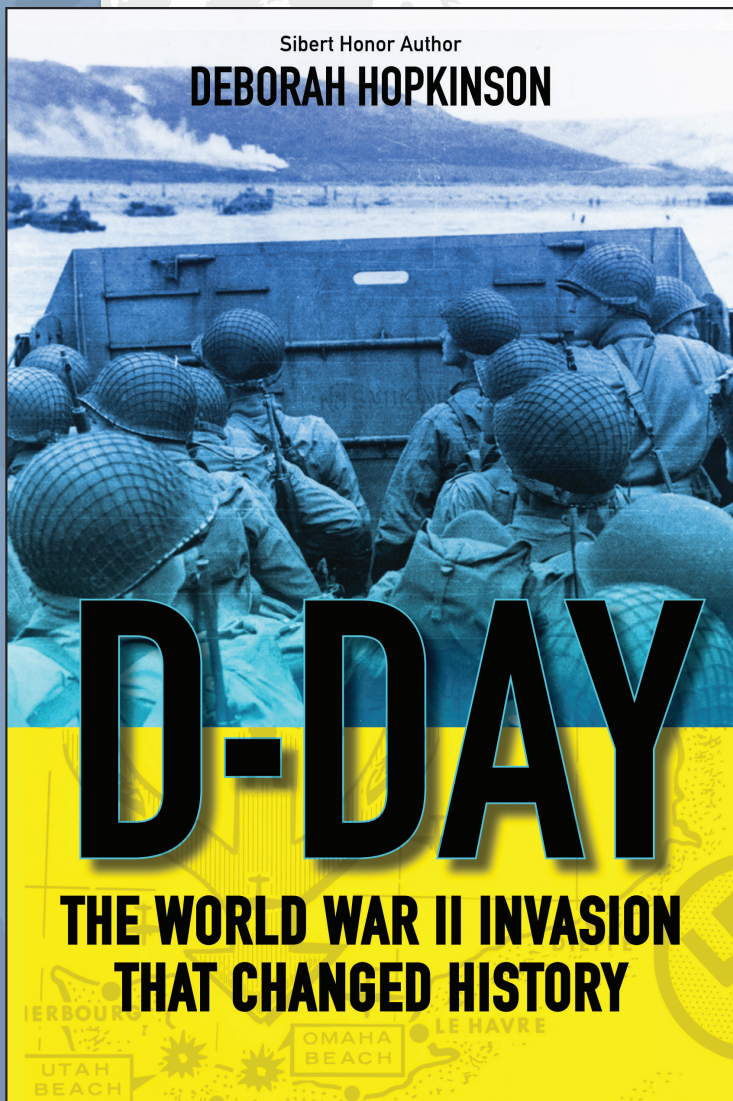
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The Common Core State Standards addressed by the discussion questions and activities in this guide are listed below. For more information on the Common Core, visit corestandards.org.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.1-7.1;
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.5;
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.6-5.6;
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.7-4.7;
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.3;
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2-7.2

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ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS



“Look, Listen, Remember” boxes with details and links to more information about soldiers, reporters, weaponry, transportation, and more are sprinkled throughout the book. A section with the same name at the back of the book compiles these links into a directory of online resources. Select one topic of interest and use one or more of the suggested websites to gather information about it. Organize your research into an informative piece about your chosen topic.



Several countries banded together to form two opposing sides in World War II: the Allied powers and the Axis powers. On a world map, locate each of the countries that participated in the war. Create a color key identifying which countries were a part of the Allied powers and which countries were members of the Axis. Color the countries on your map accordingly.



Ernie Pyle was a war correspondent during the events of D-Day. Reread the firsthand accounts of those who survived D-Day in part 6, “Aftermath: More than Courage.” Imagine you’re Ernie and write a newspaper article about D-Day using information from the stories of survivors paired with facts about the invasion. Give your article a headline to grab readers’ attention. Your article should describe what really happened as the soldiers tried to make it to the beaches of Normandy. Include information from the firsthand accounts of soldiers as quotes in your article.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



World War II involved many countries, each with a specific reason for entering the war. What were some of the reasons and events that led to D-Day, the largest military endeavor in history?



Who was Frederick Morgan and why was he important in what Prime Minister Winston Churchill termed “Operation Overlord”?



Securing the use of a port was essential for the military. Troops would need access to supplies, ammunition, and food. How did the Mulberry Harbors help the troops who went up against Hitler’s “Atlantic wall”?



With more than twelve million American men serving in the military during the war, many jobs were left open in the United States. How did “the vast reserve of woman power,” as Secretary of War Henry L. Stanton called it, help the war effort on the home front?

- ★ Treatment of African Americans in the military reflected the segregation that existed in American society at the time. Cite examples to support this fact after reading “Briefing: African Americans in World War II” on pages 24–27.
- ★ Preparations for Operation Overlord were well underway long before a Supreme Commander was selected to command the operation. Describe the person who was ultimately selected to fill the prestigious position.
- ★ The element of surprise was key to the successful Allied invasion of Europe. How did a crossword puzzle almost expose the secret?
- ★ Tides, storms, and wind were crucial elements to consider when planning when D-Day would take place. Who was J. M. Stagg? How did he help General Eisenhower plan D-Day?
- ★ War correspondents accompanied the military as eyewitnesses to capture the invasion in words and photographs. Describe the challenges that both male and female reporters and photographers faced during D-Day.
- ★ When the European invasion began on June 6, 1944, the Allies put their plan into action. What were the roles of the paratroopers? The demolition experts? The rangers scaling the cliffs? How did the roles of these military personnel differ on Utah Beach and Omaha Beach?
- ★ A German tank division was stationed near Caen. German Major Hans Von Luck wanted to launch a counterattack against the Allies. What kept him from putting his tank division to use?
- ★ How was a child’s toy helpful to the paratroopers who landed in the dark of Normandy?
- ★ General Eisenhower called Andrew Jackson Higgins “the man who won the war.” How did the boats that Higgins designed help soldiers move from the sea to land? What was unique about the employees of Higgins Industries?
- ★ One battalion commander described the invasion of Omaha Beach by saying, “This is a debacle.” Cite evidence from the text of chapter 18 to support this assessment.
- ★ About 1,800 African Americans took part on D-Day. Explain the role of the 320th Anti-Aircraft Barrage Balloon Battalion. Discuss how African American soldiers were recognized (or not) for their heroic efforts on D-Day.
- ★ What was the importance of Pointe du Hoc? What was the Rangers’ plan to secure Pointe du Hoc and the armament stored there?
- ★ Discuss Private Hal Baumgarten’s ordeal on Omaha Beach and the lessons he took from his experiences on D-Day that formed his future view of the world.

D-DAY: The World War II Invasion that Changed History

By Deborah Hopkinson

Robert F. Sibert Honor Author

The World War II invasion of Allied troops into German-occupied Europe on June 6, 1944, known as D-Day, was the largest military endeavor in history.

Critically acclaimed and award-winning author Deborah Hopkinson details the courageous contributions of commanders, service members, African Americans, women, journalists, and others to this critical battle. Her in-depth research and masterful weaving of official documents, personal and eyewitness accounts, and archival photos into a clear and compelling narrative thread bring the European theater of World War II to vivid, thrilling life.



Melissa Hill

Deborah Hopkinson lives with her family near Portland, Oregon. Her book *Titanic: Voices from the Disaster* was a Sibert Medal Honor Book and a YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction finalist. Two of her other books, *Courage & Defiance: Stories of Spies, Saboteurs, and Survivors in World War II Denmark* and *Dive! World War II Stories of Sailors & Submarines in the Pacific*, were named NCTE Orbis Pictus Recommended Books. Learn more at deborahhopkinson.com.



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