

**REVIEW****CALIFORNIA CONTENT
STANDARD 11.7.3***American Soldiers
in World War II*

Specific Objective: Identify the roles and sacrifices of individual American soldiers, as well as the unique contributions of the special fighting forces.

Read the summary to answer questions on the next page.

Volunteers and the Draft

- 5 million Americans volunteered for service but more were needed. They gave up jobs, families, and homes to serve.
- 10 million were drafted through the Selective Service system.
- Most received eight weeks of basic training before service.

Daily Life for Soldiers

- Life for combat soldiers was hard—food was often canned and cold, sleep might be on the ground or a cot, uniforms went unwashed, little communication with loved ones at home, constant danger of attack or sudden death.
- Support troops were needed for thousands of tasks, from driving supply trucks to typing reports; work often involved hard work, long hours, and monotonous jobs.

Decorated Heroes

- Millions earned a Purple Heart, awarded when a soldier is killed or injured in action.
- Officers like General Eisenhower and General MacArthur were honored for their planning and leadership.
- Soldiers like Audie Murphy were decorated for bravery; Murphy was given 24 medals by the United States and others from France and Belgium.

Special Fighting Forces

The U.S. Army was segregated during the war and kept some groups from combat. However, the following groups won many honors for their service.

- African Americans—about 1 million served, most limited to noncombat roles. Tuskegee Airmen (trained near Tuskegee, Alabama) became the first group of African-American pilots and won honors for service in Europe.
- Mexican Americans—more than 300,000 served, most in segregated units; Company E of 141st Regiment, 36th Division received a large number of medals
- Asian Americans—almost 50,000 served; the Japanese-American 442nd Regimental Combat Team became the most decorated unit in U.S. history.
- Native Americans—about 25,000 served; Navajo language served as an unbreakable code for U.S. troops fighting the Japanese. The Navajo Codetalkers were honored in 1969 for special contributions to the war effort.

**CALIFORNIA CONTENT
STANDARD 11.7.3**

American Soldiers in World War II

Directions: Choose the letter of the *best* answer.

- 1 Which statement *best* describes how Americans felt about serving in the military during World War II?**
 - A** There were few volunteers because unemployment was low.
 - B** Large numbers volunteered in spite of the hardships they would face.
 - C** Most Americans were opposed to the war, and the entire army was drafted.
 - D** There was strong support for an all-volunteer army at that time.
- 2 Combat soldiers in World War II often had**
 - A** little communication with loved ones at home.
 - B** fresh food that helped them stay healthy and ready to fight.
 - C** short tours of duty, generally limited to one year.
 - D** the best health care because so many doctors had enlisted.
- 3 During World War II, millions received a Purple Heart, a medal which signifies that a soldier**
 - A** was a member of an elite special force.
 - B** has shown extreme bravery.
 - C** was injured or killed in action.
 - D** served in the Army Medical Corps.
- 4 Which statement *best* describes integration in the U.S. military during World War II?**
 - A** There were few minorities in service because few volunteered.
 - B** Under Roosevelt's orders, it was the first army in history to be fully integrated.
 - C** Races were segregated, and minorities were often kept from combat roles.
 - D** Minorities served in the military but were not allowed outside the United States.
- 5 African Americans during World War II**
 - A** were decorated as skilled pilots and soldiers.
 - B** made up almost half of all U.S. soldiers.
 - C** were only allowed to serve in the Navy.
 - D** refused to serve in support roles in the army.
- 6 Thousands of Navajos distinguished themselves during World War II**
 - A** as scouts because of their excellent hunting and tracking skills.
 - B** in support roles as cooks because of their skills in cooking outdoors.
 - C** as aircraft gunners because of their excellent marksmanship.
 - D** by using their language as a code the Japanese could not break.