

The Women of WWII

This lesson, or rather series of mini lessons, can all be done to provide information on Women Workers during WWII, or different mini lessons can be selected depending on what you are looking for. A lesson order has been provided, but you may complete in the order that works best for your classroom.

Each mini lesson has a formative assessment, but the overall summative assessment is the journal entry completed at the end of the trunk lessons.

Lesson Content and Design

Central Focus/Big Idea: The focus of this series of activities is to guide the students in learning about the Women Workers of World War II. These workers often known as Rosie's, or at Springfield Armory as Women Ordnance Workers, were essential to the war effort. In these different activities' students will learn about why women joined the war effort and began working previously predominantly male jobs, the work that they did, and their lasting impact through a comprehension reading, photo and propaganda poster analysis, song analysis and art. Additional extension activities have been included to use at your discretion.

Context/Rationale: The purpose behind this series of mini lessons is to get students thinking about how World War II impacted women and the lasting legacy the war had on the fundamental role of women in society. Through this series students will learn about the different role's women took on, the different organizations, and how women were encouraged to join the workforce. By engaging with primary sources students will be able to examine history and draw their own conclusions as to the lasting legacy and impact these women had on future generations.

Objective(s):

- Explain why women went to work during World War II.
- Identify and explain the various jobs that women did during the war.
- Analyze various primary sources and draw conclusions regarding the reasons why women worked and the work they did.
- Analyze various propaganda primary sources and identify the purpose of the posters and explain why propaganda was used to encourage women to work.
- Research an organization and create a poster highlighting the role and purpose this organization had organizing women to help the war effort.
- Reflect on the role of women during World War II while drawing a conclusion on the lasting impact these women had on future generations.

Assessments: To see the students' progress throughout the series a KWL chart will be used. This can be used to see the overall learning of each student. Each activity has a formative assessment, that engages the students in critical thinking and application of the content from the lesson. The summative assessment has the students writing a journal entry applying their knowledge of Women Workers during World War II.

Not all activities will need to be completed for the students to complete the summative assessment; it is your judgement as an educator on how many of the activities you would like the students to complete before giving them the summative assessment based upon the level of students in your classroom.

The Women of WWII

Vocabulary	Foundational (Terms to understand the content (base words)) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World War II • Primary Source 	Comprehension (Terms to understand and apply) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women Ordinance Worker • Rosie the Riveter • Propaganda • Armory vs. Arsenal • Production 'E'
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Additional Resources

History Channel Video: [Who was Rosie the Riveter?](#) (2:40)

Discusses the history of Rosie the Riveter and the different images associated with her

[Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historical Site](#)

This is a National Park Site dedicated to interpreting the story of women who were at home during World War II.

Berkley Library, [Rosie the Riveter World War II American Home Front](#)

This site has over 200 oral history records from different Rosie's who worked in the Bay Area during World War II. Transcripts have been provided, if possible, along with videos.

[The Library of Congress](#)

The Library of Congress has ample resources regarding women workers during World War II along with links to additional sites with more information.

Presentation/Syntax

Activities	Materials	Detailed Description
Catch	Women Worker Outfit and Bandana Rosie Poster	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructions</u></p> <p>To get students interested and thinking about women workers during World War II, show them the outfit that a WOW or Rosie might have worn during the war. This outfit will include a pair of pants (dungarees), a shirt, bandana, and buttons*. Upon presenting these items to the students, ask them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are they? • Who might have worn them? • What work do you think these people did? <p>After the students have shared their thoughts (writing them down would be great for students to be able to refer back to their thinking), share with the classic Rosie the Riveter Poster (the 'We Can Do It').</p>

The Women of WWII

		<p>Give the students a few minutes to explore the poster and share their thoughts on how it relates to the outfit presented.</p> <p>Explain to the students that they will be spending time learning about women workers during World War II, and often these women were called Rosie's. Some of these workers wore outfits like the one just shown to them, but some of them wore dresses and aprons!</p> <p>If the students didn't already guess, share that these outfits were meant to keep the women workers safe as they worked on machines, some of which were dangerous. The bandanas allowed them to identify themselves with the war effort and to keep their hair safe and out of the machines. Unfortunately sometimes women's clothes and hair did get caught in the machines leading to injuries.</p> <p>*The buttons included are enlarged versions of different designs that were used during World War II. The morse code represents the letter 'V' as in V for Victory.</p>
KWL Chart	KWL Chart	<p>After examining the outfit and poster and getting initial thoughts from the students, they will fill out a KWL. It is important for students to not feel pressured if they don't know anything, that is the purpose of filling out these charts; it is to see what your students know and what they want to know.</p> <p>After the students have finished filling out the K and W portion of their chart, collect them and use them to guide which activities you will do to complement what they know and what they want to know.</p> <p>If there is something that they want to know, but you don't have the resources to do so, reach out to us and we can help! Students are inquisitive and often will think of a question that we never considered, and they can help us grow the content in this trunk to better serve other students 😊</p>

The Women of WWII

<p style="text-align: center;">The Women of Springfield Armory</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Women Power Comprehension Reading Worksheet</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Photo Cards</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WOW Outfit</p>	<p>Using a short reading and photos of workers at Springfield Armory students will examine and analyze them to determine the roles women took on during WWII at Springfield Armory and identify/explain whether they would work as a WOW.</p> <p>The photos the students analyzing are from the Springfield Armory NHS Archives and on the back the date, if possible, is given along with information pertinent to the photo.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Background Information</u></p> <p>For this activity, it will be helpful for your knowledge and perhaps the students, is the difference between Rosie the Riveter and Women Ordnance Workers (WOWs). Rosie's were any women who worked towards the war effort, but WOWs worked specifically for the Ordnance Department, which worked to supply Army Combat Units with weapons and ammunition. The bandanas that they wore were also different as Rosie's had polka dots and the WOWs had the Ordnance Bomb on theirs.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructions</u></p> <p>During this activity the WOW outfit can be laid out to help the students understand the type of clothing that some women wore while working in factories.</p> <p>Explain to the students that in this activity they will be looking at the role of women during World War II. Ask the students to discuss what they think women did during World War II before explaining that many of them began working in factories. After, explaining the work that women did ask the students to explain why they think women began working in factories. (They began working in factories as jobs were opening as men joined the service and women were needed to fill the open positions.)</p> <p>After this short discussion, explain to the students that they will be completing a short reading on women and the work that they did. Upon completing the reading they will be looking photos of women workers at the Armory and reading about what they did at the Armory.</p> <p>A couple of different versions of the comprehension reading have been included. You are to use your discretion when determining which reading you would like the students to complete. As the students read, they should take notes on what stands out to them on the included worksheet.</p>
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The Women of WWII

		<p>After the students complete the reading, they are to examine a few of the photo cards of the different workers at Springfield Armory. As the students examine the photo cards, they should take notes on the second page of their handout.</p> <p>Once they have completed the comprehension reading and examination of the photo cards, they should answer the questions on the final page. This page serves as the assessment for this activity</p>
<p>Women in Defense Video</p>	<p>YouTube Video</p> <p>Women in Defense Video Guide</p>	<p>Produced by the Office of Emergency Management and written by Eleanor Roosevelt, <i>Women in Defense</i> was a short film created shortly before the United States entered World War II. The video highlights the skills and usefulness that women brought to the defense of the United States in various industries including science, production, and medicine.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructions</u></p> <p>This video will be best utilized with older students as the comprehension is higher level. As with all activities, use your discretion when determining whether this video is appropriate for your students.</p> <p>Explain to the students that they will be watching a video created just prior to World War II to highlight how women would be of use to the war effort in various fields. The students will be given a video guide to fill out while watching the film.</p>
<p>Song Analysis</p>	<p>YouTube Video</p> <p>Singing Rosie Worksheet</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Background Information</u></p> <p>In early 1943 a song, <i>Rosie the Riveter</i> by Redd Evans and John Jacob Loeb, debut (though written in 1942). The song became immensely popular during the World War II era and apparently lead to Norman Rockwell to draw his famous Rosie the Riveter. Some sources state that the song was inspired by Rosalind P. Walter a riveter on Corsair fighter planes, others, including Loeb's widow, state that 'Rosie the Riveter' was selected because of its alliteration.</p> <p>Recorded by multiple artists overtime and played by big bands during the war the <i>Four Vagabonds</i> recorded a catchy version (that can still be found and heard today!). The lyrics were shortened as some of them were cut but the essence of the song remained.</p>

The Women of WWII

Instructions

Two different version of this activity have been provided. One version is for younger students or those at a lower level and the other is for older or high achieving students. Both versions will follow the same format, the older version has additional lyrics that were cut by *Four Vagabonds* and additional questions. Use your discretion in determining which version you want to use with your students.

Through multiple readings of the lyrics, the student will gain an understanding of the purpose/ meaning of the song. It is recommended that the initial reading occurs as a class.

During the initial reading, have the students highlight words they do not know. After the initial reading, have the students define the words they highlighted. This can be done as a class and the unknown words can be worked through together or the students can get dictionaries to define the words. They should then write down the definitions to the words they don't know in the second column.

Using your discretion, the second reading can be done independently, in small groups, or as a class. During this reading the students should work to understand the lyrics and make sense of the words they don't know in context. After each lyric, have the students write down words or draw a picture in the third column that represents that specific lyric.

On the third and final reading, read through the song completely without pause. At the end ask the students what the meaning of the song is and why they think it was written. The students should then answer the questions that follow.

On the older version, as mentioned, additional lyrics have been added as they were originally written. These lyrics are denoted by a star and any after the star.

Here is a [link](#) to *Rosie the Riveter* by the *Four Vagabonds*. You can show this video at any time in the lesson depending on your students and where you feel that it will be the most beneficial. The video shows different women working during the war and the different jobs they did along with some information about who Rosie's were and their impact.

The song can also be found on iTunes.

The Women of WWII

<p>Photo Gallery</p>	<p>Women at Work Worksheet</p> <p>Women Worker Photos</p>	<p>Photos are a great primary source! Using photos from Springfield Armory National Historic Site Archives students will analyze them to learn about the different jobs that women at the Armory during World War II and beyond.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructions</u></p> <p>Select the photos that you would like to use in this activity (not all of them must be used). Around the classroom distribute the photos. Another option would be to group the photos and assign a student/group to look at a specific set.</p> <p>After handing the worksheet out to the students explain to them that today they will be looking at primary sources from Springfield Armory about Women Ordnance Workers. Have the students write down in the box what they believe a primary source is. After the students have completed their writing, ask some of them to share their ideas before explaining that a primary source is something that was created during the time of study/by someone who experienced the event. Explain to the students that these photos seen around the classroom are primary sources as they were taken during the time when women were working at the Armory. Ask the students if they can think of other examples of primary sources. An example to help clarify for students is a textbook. Explain that a textbook is a secondary source, that may contain primary sources. The majority of the text is written by people who were not directly there when the event happened. But the photos and quotes are likely to have been taken during the time of the event.</p> <p>Once the students understand what a primary source is, explain that the primary sources from Springfield Armory they will be examining today are photos of the Women Ordnance Workers. As they look at the photos, they are to note what they see. They should be thinking about what do they see: Are there machines? What are the women wearing? How do the women look? Are there words? The students can also write down the emotions that they feel from the photos. All of this will be going on their worksheet in the second box on the first page.</p> <p>Next the students will be creating a collection of their learning before they begin working on the questions on the back side of the student sheet. Here students will share what they noticed from the pictures with classmates. Pose the question “What did you see?” to your students.</p>
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The Women of WWII

There are a couple of different ways to do this. An online method would be to create a Word Cloud using an online platform such as SurveyMonkey or Mentimeter (both have free subscriptions). Using either one of these platforms, students can log into technology to type in what they saw in the photos and what stood out to them with results in real time.

Another option would be to have the students in small groups share their learning and writing on a piece of paper before sharing with the larger group.

A final option would be to have students come up to the whiteboard/Smart Board a few at a time and write down what they saw/noticed. If other students noticed the same thing, they can just place a mark near the similar item.

Out of all of these options creating a digital word cloud will be the easiest but depending on your classroom the technology may not be available. You are to use your discretion when determining how you want the students to share their observations with others.

After the students have complied their observations, facilitate a discussion with students about what we can learn from these photos about working at the Armory; have them start drawing conclusions. After the discussion have the students flip to the back of their worksheet and have them complete the remaining questions.

These questions are not all direct and will have the students comparing past to modern and thinking about why primary sources are important when studying history and what we can learn from them, particularly in relation to Springfield Armory.

The Women of WWII

<p style="text-align: center;">Art</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Design Sheet</p> <p style="text-align: center;">White Bandana</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fabric markers</p>	<p>The students have seen Rosie the Riveter and have by now have begun to associate her with the red polka dot bandana, or red bomb bandana for Women Ordnance Workers. The students will be given an opportunity to design their own bandana that has significance to them.</p> <p>Hand out the drafting sheet to the students. This sheet will have the students thinking about what is important to them and designing symbols that represent those important items. The students will then create a sketch of what they want their bandana to look like before they design it. (Give students 15-20 minutes to complete this step)</p> <p>After the students have drafted their bandanas, they will get the white bandana to put their design on. After the students have completed their design and the bandana has dried, walk the students through how the bandana was tied. This YouTube Video shows a couple different ways to tie the Rosie Bandana, but the first one is the one most commonly associated with Rosie's. Tying the bandanas take practice and can be frustrating for students (and even adults!), but this can become a teachable moment for students as how times have change and how to persist through things that are challenging.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Propaganda Posters</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Student Propaganda Worksheet</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Laminated Propaganda Posters</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Background Information</u></p> <p>Propaganda posters popped up everywhere and encouraged women to help the war cause. Whether it was planting a Victory Garden, donating nylon stockings, saving bacon grease, scraps of paper, or tin, or getting a job, these posters helped women connect with the war effort. Hundreds of different posters were designed over the course of the war, but there are two that are the most well-known.</p> <p>On May 29th, 1943, <i>The Saturday Evening Post</i> (Memorial Day Issue) published a cover image portraying Rosie the River with a flag in the background and a copy of <i>Mein Kampf</i> under her feet by Norman Rockwell. This image while often known as the first Rosie the Riveter is not the one often associated with her, but rather the one drawn in 1942 by J. Howard Miller for Westinghouse Electric Corporation. The image drawn by Miller wasn't as well-known during WWII as it is now. It became increasingly popular during the 1960's during the continued push for women's rights, the 40th anniversary of WWII, and the National Archives licensed the image to sell souvenirs and raise money (Rockwell's image had more copyright restrictions and therefore wasn't used). And therefore became retroactively identified as Rosie the Riveter.</p>

The Women of WWII

Who was the 'Real Rosie?' That is up for debate. Each artist had their own model: Norman Rockwell's was Mary Doyle Keefe a telephone operator in Vermont, Miller's was Geraldine Hoff Doyle a worker in a Navy Machine shop, or Rose Will Monroe a riveter at Willow Run Bomber Plant in Michigan, or Naomi Parker Fraley a machine shop worker at Naval Air Station in California. There was no single Rosie, but rather millions of them as women joined the workforce to do their part for the war effort.

In the activity below, the image by Norman Rockwell hasn't been included to give students an accurate idea as to what people were seeing at the time.

In this activity student will examine various propaganda posters that were made during World War II. Students will then draw conclusions as to what these posters were encouraging women to do and how they were doing it before creating their own poster.

A variety of posters have been included; you can select the ones that are most appropriate for your class to use for this activity. (All photos came from the Library of Congress unless noted on the back.)

Instructions

Around the classroom spread out a variety of the propaganda posters before the students arrive in class. Once the students have settled in hand out the propaganda worksheet and explain to the students that they will be examining various propaganda posters from World War II today. Have the student write down what they think propaganda means in the first box; encourage them to look at the posters while they are constructing their definition. After the students have constructed their definition, have them share with a nearby partner to create a definition between them. Next have them get together with another group so compare definitions and create one as a larger group. After the group sharing, have a spokesperson from each group share the group definition. On the whiteboard/Smartboard or similar technology, write down the definitions from the students. After all groups have shared, have them as a class come up with a definition. If their definition is correct have them write the class definition in the Propaganda Is box, or correct their definition and explain the new one before having them writing it in the box.

After the students understand the definition, explain to them that they will be participating in a gallery walk of these posters. As they visit the

The Women of WWII

posters, they should take notes on their worksheet document what they see regarding people, words, colors, and symbols, along with the emotion the poster uses. Use your knowledge of your students to determine how long they need to complete this portion of the activity. It usually is helpful to tell the students that they need to visit a certain number of posters before they can be considered done.

After the students have examined the posters, have them flip their worksheet over and respond to the top two questions in rectangular boxes. After the students have responded to these two questions, you have a couple of different ways to proceed in the discussion.

Option one is to have the student's pair and share as they did earlier in the lesson, and then pair and share again with another group before presenting to the entire group how the posters made them feel, what they noticed, and how they as a group think that the posters encouraged women to join the work force.

Option two is to have the students head to the poster that speaks to them. Once the students have made it to their poster, ensure that there are no students who are alone and if there is some, ask them to join another group or to have someone from a larger group join them. Have the students share with each other why that poster speaks to them before discussing what the poster is conveying to the viewers and how this particular poster encouraged women to join the workforce. After each group has had ample time to discuss their answer, each group will then share their responses with the class sharing why they feel the poster is important, what it is conveying and how it encouraged women to join the workforce.

After the discussion, have students answer the final question regarding why they think that propaganda was used during the war to encourage women to work.

Once all the students have completed the worksheet, it is time for them to design their own poster! Using the provided sheets of white construction paper, students are given the opportunity to design their own poster encourage women to join the workforce. Encourage them to make up a slogan, to use symbols, and to include emotion in their poster.

The Women of WWII

Organizations for Women	Women at War Worksheet	<p>Not all women worked in factories, but rather some opted to help the war cause by joining an organization. Different organizations grew out of the need for additional help during World War II and a handful were just for women. The WACs, WAVES, WASPs, SPARS the Red Cross and Marine Corps Women's Reserve all gave women an opportunity to serve their country.</p> <p>Students will be instructed to research one of the following groups and they will then create a poster highlighting the group which can be displayed in the classroom to showcase the importance of each organization. Seven organizations have been selected for this lesson.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructions</u></p> <p>Break the students into smaller groups and assign each group an organization to research. Explain to each group that they're going to be researching an organization that women joined during World War II to help the war effort and that not all women began working in factories. That by researching one of these organizations they will gain a better understanding of the level of commitment women had towards helping the war cause.</p> <p>Using the provide guide, students will research their assigned organization. They will be looking to identify what the acronym stands for, when/why the group was created, what the group did, where they worked (generally), how many women joined (approximately), and thinking about how this group might have benefited women today. Use your discretion when determining how specific you want their answers to be. An additional page has been included for students to write down fun facts that they find on their organization.</p> <p>After the students have gathered all their information, they will work to create a poster (physical or digitally) that highlights their group and shares the answers to the posed questions. As a group the students should present their poster to the class and share some of the information that they learn. After each group has given their presentation, engage the class in a discussion thinking about how the groups are similar/ different and why women might have joined one organization over another. This is a great opportunity for the students to highlight their learning and think critically about the skills that the women learned from these organizations and how they might have benefited the women in their future.</p> <p>A rubric has been provided for scoring the poster if you wish to use it.</p>
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The Women of WWII

<p style="text-align: center;">Summative Journal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">KWL Chart Review</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Summative Journal Guide "I'm a WOW"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Harriet Atwood Example</p>	<p>This is the summative portion of this collection should be able to be completed by students even if not all of the actives were done. This summative will give the students and opportunity to showcase their learning.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instructions</u></p> <p>After completing all of the activities of your choosing, have the students take out their KWL charts and fill out the 'L' portion of their KWL Charts. After students have finished filling out this portion, have the students share with each other in small groups their most impactful takeaway about women workers during World War II before have some students from each group share with the class.</p> <p>For the summative assessment the students will be writing journal entry as if they were a WOW/Rosie who joined the workforce during World War II. Before beginning their final draft, the students will answer questions to help them organizing their thoughts by using the guide sheet. After completing the guide sheet the students can then beginning writing their journal entry. Encourage the students to look at the provided rubric when writing their journal entry.</p> <p>An example entry has been provided following the story of Harriet Atwood who actually worked at Springfield Armory. While the facts in this entry are real, it has been written in first person to give the students an example of what is expected, therefore some liberty has been taken to write as if we were her.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Extensions Activities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mystery Graphing Sheet</p>	<p>In this trunk we have included a handful of extensions activities. These activities can be used for students who finish their work early or to build upon other skills.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Mystery Graphing</u></p> <p>This graphing activity will have students plotting a series of (x,y) coordinates and connected the coordinates to unveil a mystery design and phrase. This activity can be used for those students who have finished early, as a challenge activity, or a way to build upon math skills. The mystery design is the ordinance symbol, and the phrase is WOW.</p>

The Women of WWII

Rosie Revere Engineer STEAM Activity

In this trunk we have included the book *Rosie Revere Engineer* by Andrea Beaty. This book tells the story of Rosie who likes to create new inventions, but after her uncle lights at her she hides her inventions and keeps to herself. That is until her Aunt tells her of her dream to fly after she worked on airplanes. The moral of the book is that you will face failure during your life, but that they are a success because of what you learned; that your only true failure is if you quit.

Rosie Revere Engineer Book

Pipe cleaners

Popsicle Sticks

Tape

Construction Paper

Binder Clips

Cutouts of Rosie

Women during World War II took on the roles traditionally filled by men, and these women faced many challenges just like Rose Revere, but they didn't give up. Because of the Rosie's the troops were provided with the supplies necessary to win the war.

In this activity students are given the opportunity to design their own invention.

Instructions

Explain to the students that they are now inventors and they have been struck by an idea! Break the students into smaller groups (3-4 per group) and hand out one Our Flying Invention worksheet per group. Students are tasked with designing a flying machine just like Rosie Revere developed. They will be given supplies (construction paper, pipe cleaners, tape/glue, popsicle sticks, and other supplies of your own if you chose to include) to build their machine. Their flying machine will need to slide down a zip line (you create with the included yarn) without having Rosie fall out of the basket.

Show the students the zip line and the materials they will be given to design their flying machine. Give the students about 15 minutes to work through the initial questions and brainstorm their invention before they begin designing it. Once the students have completed drawing their design, they need to come to you for approval before they can begin building.

Give the students about 10-15 minutes to build their flying machine, adjusting the time for the needs of your students. After each group has built their machine, they will test it one by one on the zip line. You can adjust the angle and length of the zip line to see if the students get different results.

Once the testing is completed, have the students return to their groups and fill out the Reflection questions. The big question for the students is to think about how they would improve their flying machine if given the opportunity to build it again. Even if the students say they

The Women of WWII

	Acrostic Poem Worksheets	<p>wouldn't change a thing, encourage them to think about how they could make it more comfortable, how could it be made with different materials, or how to make it faster.</p> <p><u>Acrostic Poem</u></p> <p>Three different Acrostic Poems have been provided to give students another way to show their learning about women workers during World War II. Depending on the age level and ability level of your students you can select between 'Rosie,' Women,' and 'Women Workers.'</p> <p><u>Coloring Sheets</u></p> <p>Two different coloring sheets have been included where students color in the poster created by J. Howard Miller. This has become one of the most famous posters of World War II encouraged women to take on wartime jobs.</p>
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