

Lesson Four: Wartime Work

Objectives:

Using newspapers from Mississippi factories, shipyards, and military bases, students will understand the dramatic effect World War II had on the work place by looking at war work's cause and effects, the impact of foreign labor, and the changes in workplace culture.

Materials: *War Work: Cause and Effect*; Internet access; Workplace Culture Resource Packet (print on legal paper); *Mississippi River Basin Model Fast Facts*; *River Basins* worksheets; *Lesson Four Quiz*.

Procedures:

Activity One: The Consequences of a Wartime Economy

1. Distribute *War Work: Cause and Effect* to students.
2. Using their social studies textbook, other appropriate resources, or the *Mississippi History Now* article “Not Just Farms Anymore: The Effects of World War II on Mississippi’s Economy” by Sean Farrell found at <http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/articles/247/the-effects-of-world-war-II-on-mississippis-economy> have students complete the worksheet for a better understand of the changes that took place to the economy during the war years.

Activity Two: Workplace Culture

1. Use the Workplace Culture Resource Packet to help students understand the lives of different Mississippi wartime workers.
2. Divide the class into four groups. Print on legal paper and distribute one newspaper to each group along with an *Analyzing Primary Sources* worksheet. Give students time to analyze their newspapers and answer the worksheet questions.
3. Upon completion, give students time to share their findings. As a class, compare the different types of Mississippi wartime workers.
4. Use the *Teacher’s Discussion Guide* to help discuss with students how workplace culture was changing in the United State during the early 1940s.

Activity Three: German POWs in Mississippi

1. Have students read the *Mississippi History Now* article “German Prisoners of War in Mississippi, 1943-1946” by John Ray Skates found at <http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/articles/233/german-prisoners-of-war-in-mississippi-1943-1946>.
2. Distribute the *Mississippi River Basin Model Fast Facts* worksheet and the *River Basins* worksheets to your students.
3. Using the information and images on the *Fast Facts* worksheet, have students learn the terminology and parts of a river basin and then identify those areas on the map.

Extension Activities:

Mississippi History Now Lesson Plan: Use the lesson plan based on the *Mississippi History Now* article about German prisoners to learn more about the relationships between the POW camps, the physical environment they were located in, and the work performed by the prisoners.

Economic Shifts: Use the collection of lesson plans in Mississippi Public Broadcasting’s online teaching unit, Home Front to Battle Front: Mississippi During WWII, to learn about the work done by women, African Americans, and German POWs during the war years. Access the lessons at http://www.mpbonline.org/HomeFrontBattleFront/docs/TeachersGuide_4.pdf.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

War Work: Cause and Effect

Match the appropriate effect on the right with its correct cause.

Cause

1. Because so many men enlisted or were drafted, _____
2. Because war production increased the number of available jobs in factories, _____
3. Because military pay and factory wages were high, _____
4. Because the U.S. Navy needed ships, _____
5. Because most wartime production took place in large factories, _____
6. Because more couples were marrying and starting families and women began to work outside the home, _____
7. Because the Mississippi Gulf Coast had such a large number of industrial workers, _____
8. To pacify the call of African Americans for equality in the workplace, _____
9. Because many teenagers wanted to help the war effort by having a job, _____

Effect

- A. many small businesses had to cease production for the duration of the war or adapt their resources to war work.
- B. President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802 which stated that no discrimination based on race or religion could occur within companies holding a government contract.
- C. many family members who remained on tenant or sharecropping farms no longer needed to work for plantation owners.
- D. many rural Mississippians moved to cities.
- E. some employers created day-care centers on their premises.
- F. labor laws were changed to lower the age requirement for entering the workforce.
- G. more women entered the workforce.
- H. unions were organized to help maintain the safety, pay, and rights of workers.
- I. the most productive Mississippi company during World War II was Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

War Work: Cause and Effect *Answer Key*

Match the appropriate effect on the right with its correct cause.

Cause

1. Because so many men enlisted or were drafted, G
2. Because war production increased the number of available jobs in factories, D
3. Because military pay and factory wages were high, C
4. Because the U.S. Navy needed ships, I
5. Because most wartime production took place in large factories, A
6. Because more couples were marrying and starting families and women began to work outside the home, E
7. Because the Mississippi Gulf Coast had such a large number of industrial workers, H
8. To pacify the call of African Americans for equality in the workplace, B
9. Because many teenagers wanted to help the war effort by having a job, F

Effect

- A. many small businesses had to cease production for the duration of the war or adapt their resources to war work.
- B. President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802 which stated that no discrimination based on race or religion could occur within companies holding a government contract.
- C. many family members who remained on tenant or sharecropping farms no longer needed to work for plantation owners.
- D. many rural Mississippians moved to cities.
- E. some employers created day-care centers on their premises.
- F. labor laws were changed to lower the age requirement for entering the workforce.
- G. more women entered the workforce.
- H. unions were organized to help maintain the safety, pay, and rights of workers.
- I. the most productive Mississippi company during World War II was Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula.

Mississippi River Basin Model Fast Facts

- The model was conceived in the 1930s and begun in 1943. Parts of it were working by the 1950s but it was not finished until 1966. It was designed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).
- The model had three purposes:
 - To determine how to coordinate the operation of reservoirs to ensure the maximum amount of flood protection.
 - To determine what undesirable conditions may occur when coordination between the reservoirs was not achieved.
 - To determine what general flood control was needed and how present flood control methods could be improved.
- The model was built at a scale of 1:2,000 horizontally and 1:100 vertically, meaning that the model showed:
 - a 1.25 million square mile drainage basin in an area of approximately 200 acres.
 - 15,000 miles of streams reduced to 8 miles.
 - areas of the river that were 1 mile wide and 50 to 150 feet deep reduced to a width of 30 inches and a depth of 6 to 18 inches.
 - 1.5 million gallons of water in nature equaled 1 gallon in the model.
 - 1 day of the river could be recreated in just over 5 minutes.



German POWs felling trees. MDAH Archives and Records Services.



- Civilian labor was in short supply during World War II. The USACE arranged for 3,000 German and Italian POWs to be made available and built Camp Clinton at the model site to house them. Most of these prisoners had been captured in North Africa and arrived in Mississippi in August 1943.
- Prisoners were paid eighty cents per day for their work on the model. Officers were paid whether they worked or not, at pay beginning at \$20 per month.
- The POWs completed much of the preparatory work for the Mississippi River Basin Model. They cleared almost

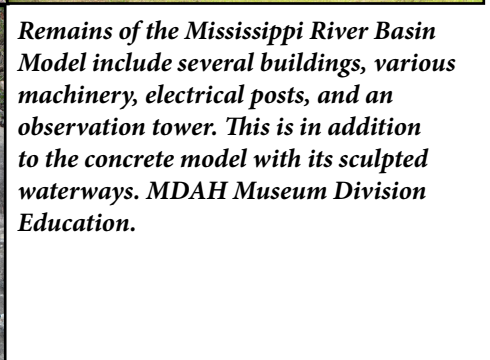


600 acres of land, built roads and bridges, and dug drainage ditches and storm sewers. This was achieved by manual labor and the use of picks, shovels and wheelbarrows. Approximately one million cubic yards of earth was moved. The value of the labor they provided was estimated at \$6 million.

- The last German POWs returned to Germany in May 1946.
- In April 1952, the model showed its value by predicting the progress of a flood on the Missouri River. Its prognostications aided evacuations and supported flood-fighting activities.
- In 1973, the model determined the effects of opening floodways and raising levees during a flood on the Lower Mississippi River.
- After the early 1970s the model was rarely used and by the 1980s, computer models were taking its place. Today the remains of the model can still be found adjacent to Butts Park in Clinton.



Remains of German POW camps still exist in Mississippi, such as these Quonset huts in Belzoni. MDAH Museum Division Education.



Remains of the Mississippi River Basin Model include several buildings, various machinery, electrical posts, and an observation tower. This is in addition to the concrete model with its sculpted waterways. MDAH Museum Division Education.



To simulate the ebb and flow of the river, devices such as bolts, divots, and steel mesh were used throughout the model. MDAH Museum Division Education.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

River Basins: Vocabulary

Use the following vocabulary words to identify the parts of the Mississippi River Basin on the map.

Confluence: the flowing together of two or more streams or rivers.

Current: the flow of water in a certain direction.

Dam: a barrier constructed across a waterway to control the flow or raise the level of water.

Downstream: in the direction of the stream's current.

Drainage Basin: the area of land drained by a river and its tributaries.

Embankments: a raised river bank to prevent flooding.

Flash Flood: a sudden and unexpected flood that causes much damage.

Flood Plain: flat area at the bottom of a valley which is often flooded.

Lake: a body of fresh or salt water of considerable size surrounded by land.

Lower Course: the one-third of a river closest to its mouth.

Main Channel: where a river flows; has a bed and two banks.

Meander: a large bend in a river

Middle Course: the middle third of a river.

Mouth: where the river meets the sea.

River Basin: an area of land drained by a river and its tributaries.

River: a large, natural stream of water emptying into an ocean, lake, or other body of water and usually fed along its course by converging tributaries.

Source: where a river begins.

Tributary: a small river which flows into a bigger river.

Upper Course: the one-third of a river closest to its source.

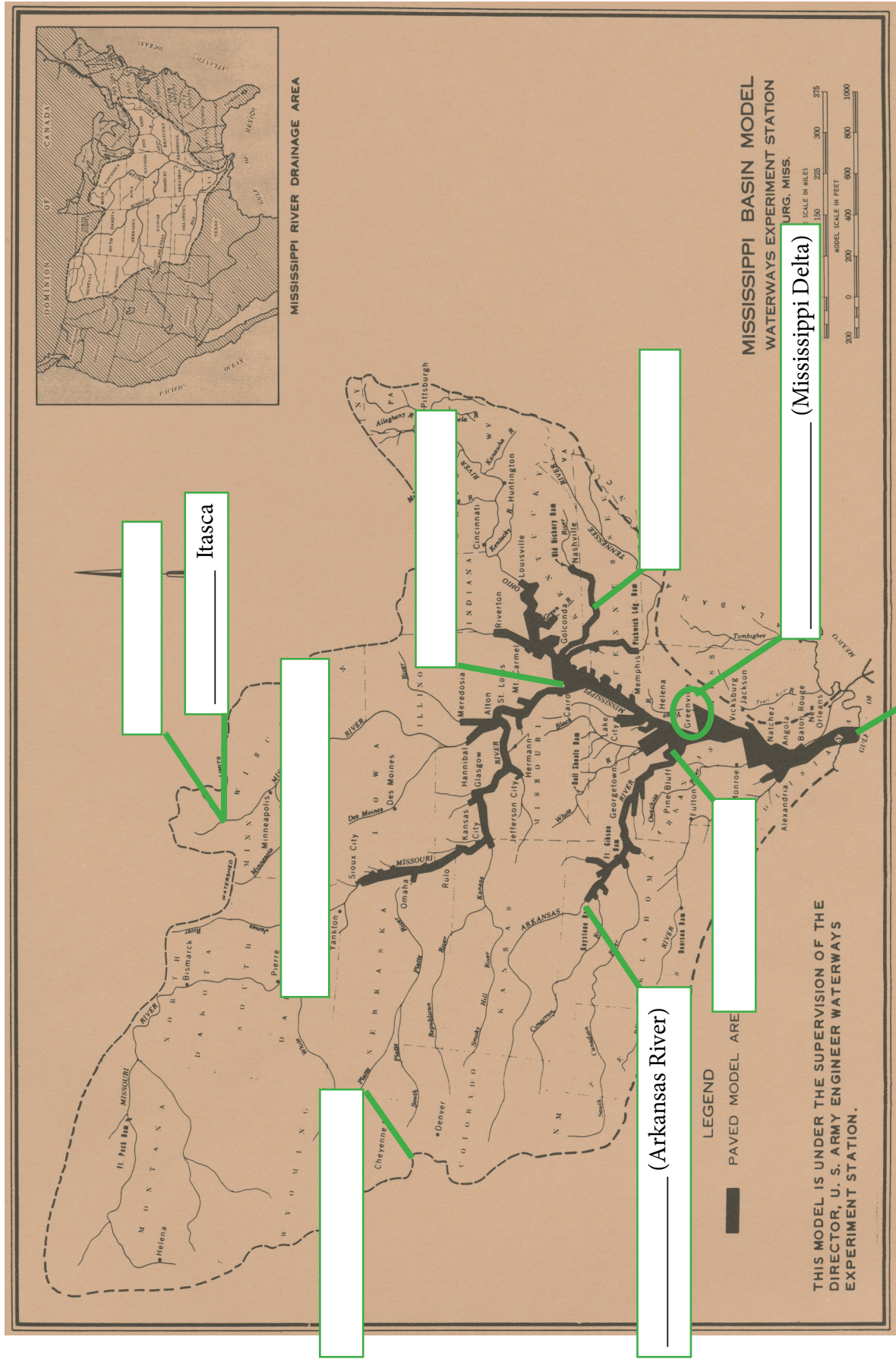
Upstream: in the opposite direction of the stream's current.

U-Shaped Valley: a valley which has been eroded by a river so that its cross-section looks like the letter V.

Watershed: the boundary between two river basins.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

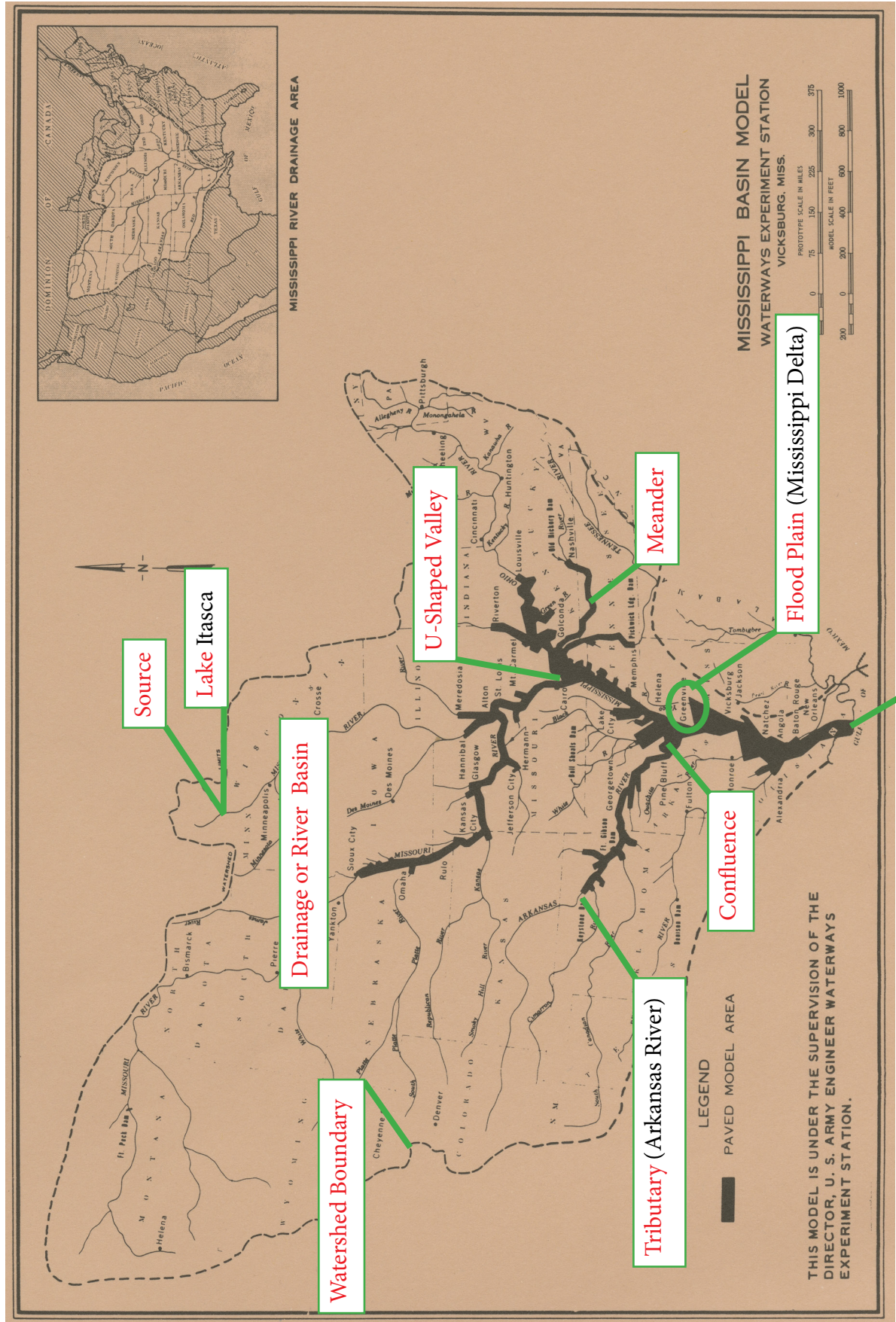
River Basins: Map



NAME: _____

DATE: _____

River Basins: Map Answer Key



MDAH Archives and Records Services.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Lesson Four Quiz: Wartime Work

Choose the best answer from the multiple choice questions below.

1. Features such as day care centers were established at workplaces to accommodate the large number of _____ entering the workforce.
 - a. children
 - b. women
 - c. grandparents
 - d. African Americans
2. Many Mississippians left their farming communities to work in
 - a. factories
 - b. cities
 - c. the military
 - d. all of the above
3. The biggest employer, with approximately 12,000 workers, in Mississippi during World War II was
 - a. Komp Equipment in Hattiesburg
 - b. the Mississippi Ordnance Plant in Prairie
 - c. Ingalls Shipyard in Pascagoula
 - d. Green Brothers Lumber Company in Laurel
4. Military camps in Mississippi had access to
 - a. movie theaters
 - b. live entertainment
 - c. dances
 - d. all of the above
5. The Mississippi River Basin Model was built for the
 - a. U.S. government
 - b. Mississippi Department of Education
 - c. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - d. U.S. Navy
6. The prisoners of war who worked on the Mississippi River Basin Model were
 - a. German and Japanese
 - b. German and Russian
 - c. German and Italian
 - d. Italian and African

7. The purpose of the Mississippi River Basin Model was to determine
 - a. how to provide maximum amount of flood protection
 - b. what undesirable conditions may occur when reservoir coordination was not achieved
 - c. what flood control was needed and how to improve current flood control methods
 - d. all of the above
8. The Mississippi River Basin Model was valuable during floods in
 - a. 1952 and 1973
 - b. 1952 and 1980
 - c. 1961 and 1973
 - d. 1973
9. The boundary between two river basins is called a
 - a. drainage basin
 - b. watershed
 - c. river basin
 - d. u-shaped valley
10. The state of Mississippi is located in the _____ of the Mississippi River.
 - a. upper course
 - b. middle course
 - c. lower course
 - d. none of the above

Use a separate sheet of paper to complete the short answer questions below.

1. How did the World War II economy impact minority workers? Are these same groups considered the equals of white males in the workforce today? Explain your reasoning.
2. A motivating factor to move during the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century (farm to factory) and the African American Great Migrations of the 20th century (South to North) was to find work. Is the migration of war workers during the 1940s comparable? Why or why not?
3. The effects of industrialization of cities, states, and populations that occurred during World War II can still be seen across the U.S. Where in Mississippi do you find evidence of this today?
4. Why would the continental U.S. have made a good place for a POW camp?

*Lesson Four Quiz: Wartime Work **Answer Key***

1. **B**
2. **D**
3. **C**
4. **D**
5. **C**
6. **C**
7. **D**
8. **A**
9. **B**
10. **C**