Teacher's Guide:

South Carolina Youth on the Home Front

WWII Pre-Visit Lesson

Grade 5

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South Carolina Youth On the Home Front

Social Studies **Grade 5**

60 minutes

Lesson Overview

Students will view photographs of children participating in Home Front activities as an introduction to the concepts of scrap drives, victory gardens, and rationing. Propaganda posters and additional media will accompany the photographs to illustrate the national efforts to enlist civilians in supporting the war from the Home Front.

"I Can" Statements

1. I can define "scrap drive," "victory garden,"and "rationing."
2. I can explain how scrap drives, victory gardens, and rationing supported WWII military objectives.
3. I can describe how youth participated in these activities.
4. I can use primary sources to gain understanding of events in history.

Materials Included

- Kids on the Home Front PowerPoint
- *Doing Their Part* organizer
- Links to printable primary sources

South Carolina Standards

Deconstructed Skills:

- Evidence

Standard 3: Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, political, and social effects of World War II, the Holocaust, and their aftermath (i.e., 1930-1950) on the United States and South Carolina.

- **5.3.E** Analyze multiple perspectives on the economic, political, and social effects of World War II and its aftermath using primary and secondary sources.

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Use the provided presentation to guide the lesson and provide visual support for the activities. Students will complete the *Doing Their Part* organizer as they go along.

Hook

Ask students to identify what they see in the photograph. What do they wonder?

If students need a hint, point out that one girl is holding a can with a grape juice label and one boy appears to be holding a can of beans.

Students may suggest a recycling program is happening or garbage pick-up. Explain to students that these young people are working in their community to help the the Allied forces win the war.

Life at Home

Slide 3

Explain that home life during the war looked different from life during peacetime. The likelihood that a child in South Carolina had a household member serving in the military or working in a factory producing war materials was very high.

Evening entertainment, such as radio programs and books, often focused on supporting the war effort. Ask students to reflect on what they've learned so far: How do they think young people helped support the war effort?

Victory Gardens

Slides 4-8

Students will view images of children participating in gardening activities. Discuss the information on each slide.

On Slide 6, explain that every state had Victory Farm Volunteers, in which young people helped out on farms.

Ask students why might farmers need help. Remind students that the labor shortage caused by men going to war affected farms as well.

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On Slide 7, students will calculate the percentage of South Carolina households that grew victory gardens to ascertain whether the campaign was successful.

330,000/435,000= 0.75862, or 75.862%

Have students practice other math standards, such as rounding the decimal to the nearest thousandth or to the nearest whole number.

Students will read an article about one student's victory garden in Sumter, South Carolina. For size reference, compare it to the size of the classroom.

Youth Programs and School

Explain to students that youth organizations such as the Scouts and 4-H supported the war effort by encouraging victory gardens, selling war bonds, and organizing scrap or recycling drives (discussed later). New programs, such as the Schools at War program, were also created to encourage students to participate.

Share with students that during World War II, children were encouraged to stay in school rather than go to work. Schools taught students how they could support the war effort. Some teachers left to serve in the military, and older students may have had classmates considering joining the armed forces.

Rationing

Explain that many items were rationed, from gas and clothing to food. Students can watch an informational video from WWII about the importance of rationing.

Ask students how they think people would have seen this video. Answer: At the movie theater before a movie.

Salvage Drives

Inform students that plastic food packaging did not become common until after World War II. Before then, grocery store foods were usually packaged in tin cans, cardboard boxes, paper wrappers, or glass bottles. Americans were encouraged to save all of these items. They called this "scrap," which we can think of as an early form of recycling.

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People were encouraged to save this scrap so it could be reused. Ask students if they think the military could use recycled materials.

Ask students to share how they think young people participated in the scrap and salvage drives. Students should remember that scouting programs collected scrap. Inform students that schools and other youth organizations also led scrap drives.

For each slide, ask guiding questions to help students identify what children were expected to do with scrap.

Ask students to compare scrap drives to our ideas of recycling today.

Doing Their Part

Name: _____

Victory Gardens

1. How are children assisting in the victory gardens?

2. What makes Harold's victory garden "super"?

3. Do you think victory gardens were successful? Why or why not?

Rationing

3. In the video, the point system is explained. Why do items have different points?

4. Why was it important for school children to be taught about rationing?

Salvage

6. How was metal used by the military?

7. How was rubber used by the military?

8. How was cooking oil used by the military?

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