

# World at War: Classroom Reading List

## CFR Resources

“[Living in History](https://www.cfr.org/podcasts/living-history),” Why It Matters.

A brief introduction to issues facing Puerto Rico, which became a

U.S. territory due to American imperialism. (2,800 words)

## Articles

Simon Han, “[The Impossible Task of Remembering the Nanking Massacre](https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/12/nanking-china-japan-iris-chang/548516/),”

*Atlantic*, December 17, 2017.

A personal essay on how the Nanking Massacre (also called the Nanjing Massacre)—a massive human rights abuse from the Pacific theater of World War II—is remembered. (1,800 words)

Von Hans Hoyng, “[WWI and America’s Rise as a Superpower](https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/how-world-war-i-helped-america-rise-to-superpower-status-a-944703.html),” *Spiegel International*, January 24, 2014.

A look at the United States’ rise to superpower status, beginning with its entry into World War I. (3,400 words)

Margaret MacMillan, “[The World That War Has Made](https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-world-that-war-has-made-11601650668),” *Wall Street Journal*, October 2, 2020.

A detailed look at how wars, including the world wars, reshaped society and led to new inventions. (2,400 words)

Dylan Matthews, “[The F Word](https://www.vox.com/22225472/fascism-definition-trump-fascist-examples),” *Vox*, January 14, 2021.

A detailed look, rooted in scholarship, at whether Donald Trump should be considered a fascist and why using the label matters. (3,000 words)

Timothy Snyder, “[Hitler’s World May Not Be So Far Away](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/16/hitlers-world-may-not-be-so-far-away),” *Guardian*, September 16, 2015.

A thought-provoking essay from a historian of World War II who asks whether an impending climate crisis could create conditions akin to those that led to the Holocaust. (5,500 words)

Jay Winter, “[How the Great War Shaped the World](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/08/how-the-great-war-shaped-the-world/373468/),” *Atlantic*.

A concise look at the legacy of World War I. (2,000 words)

## Books

Michael Eliot Howard, *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction (2002).*

A concise and readable survey of the First World War. (134 pages)

Margaret MacMillan, *The War That Ended Peace: The Road to 1914* (2013). An award-winning account of the Paris Peace Conference, which ended one world war but helped to set the stage for another. (739 pages)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, [*The Communist Manifesto*](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/index.htm) (1848).

The foundational text of communism. (288 pages)

Studs Terkel, *The Good War: An Oral History of World War II* (1984).

A Pulitzer Prize-winning collection of oral histories from Americans about World War II. (589 pages)

Barbara W. Tuchman, *The Guns of August* (1962).

A prize-winning account of thirty days of political and military maneuvering that sparked World War I. (658 pages)

Elie Wiesel, *Night* (2006).

A classic account of surviving the Holocaust. (115 pages)

## Multimedia

“[Becoming America](https://www.npr.org/2020/02/12/805240795/becoming-america),” *Throughline*, February 13, 2020.

This podcast traces the rise of the United States from a small country to a global power, particularly over the course of the nineteenth century. (33 minutes)

Sam Ellis, Johnny Harris, and Zack Beauchamp, “[How America Became a](https://www.vox.com/2016/11/28/13708364/america-superpower-expansion-colony) [Superpower, Explained in 8 Minutes](https://www.vox.com/2016/11/28/13708364/america-superpower-expansion-colony),” *Vox*, November 28, 2016. This video traces the United States’ growing role on the world stage, looking in particular at the role of wars, from the Civil War to the Cold War. (9 minutes)

Neil Halloran, “[The Fallen of World War II](http://www.fallen.io/ww2/).”

A moving data visualization, available as a video or as an interactive, that depicts how many people died in the World War II and puts that number in context.

“[100 Years Legacies: The Lasting Impact of World War I](https://graphics.wsj.com/100-legacies-from-world-war-1/),” *Wall Street Journal*, October 31, 2018.

A collection of a hundred ideas, inventions, and other legacies that came out of World War I. Each has a photograph and a short essay.

## Resources

[Holocaust](https://www.facinghistory.org/topics/holocaust), *Facing History and Ourselves.*

The preeminent source of materials on the Holocaust for educators.

[Seventeen Moments in Soviet History](http://soviethistory.msu.edu/), *Michigan State University.*

A detailed history of the Soviet Union told through brief portraits, with a focus on its early years.