

## History of the World War II

### Interactive online textbook for the 10 (11) grade

- according to the new integrated school curriculum of 2017
- actualization the topic of war prisoners and forced labors



<https://www.novadoba.org.ua/ww2-intro>

For Ukraine with its complex historical past, its wide range of cultural and regional varieties, the issue of evaluating events of the World War II and memories about it is gaining a great significance, especially in the current conditions of the armed conflict in the East of Ukraine and the annexation of the Crimea.

This issue becomes extremely topical when we are dealing with teaching history of the World War II at school. Particularly important is the integration into the school education of the sensitive and relatively unknown issues of the World War II, such as history of prisoners of war from different war camps, Ostarbeiters, refugees, international relations, etc. On the other hand, we are also aware of the fact that not always the interesting methodological materials on a certain set of problems have an opportunity to be put into practice in the process of history teaching, because they deal with the specifics of a certain theme without taking into account the general context. And learning a certain problem in detail is impossible without it. That is why the qualitative implementation of the theme “Ostarbeiters and prisoners of war in the World War II” was possible for us only in the integral context of other topics of the World War II. As a result, there appeared the idea of writing a new textbook on the World War II history and developing the unit on the theme of Ostarbeiters and prisoners of war as one of its key elements. Its main task has been the intensification among the school students and youth of the processes of objective, unprejudiced

perception of the World War II versatile history, organization of research projects and discussions by means of modern ICT.

Since 2016 the group of Ukrainian teachers including Tetiana Babenko, Natalia Holosova, Vasyl Diakiv, Petro Kendzor, Oleksandra Kozoroh, Natalia Markus', Liudmyla Makhun, Pavlo Polianskyi and Ella Sytnyk, have started developing the interactive online manual in the World War II history.

The following themes have been included into the chapters, defined by the group of authors:

«Memory of the war»,

«The imminence of the World War II»,

«The beginning of the World War II»,

«The armed aggression of Germany on the USSR. The events of the World War II in 1941-1942»,

«The occupation regime on the territories of Ukraine and Europe annexed by the Nazis»,

«Concentration camps and mass extermination of people on the territories annexed by the Nazis. Holocaust»,

«The situation and status of prisoners of war. Ostarbeiters»,

«The Resistance Movement and its trends»,

«The turning point in the war. The events of 1943-1944. Liberation of the USSR territory»,

«The end of the World War II»,

«After the war. 1945-1948»,

«A person who survived the war... An incomplete story».

Taking into consideration the special status of the manual's themes, the authors' group proceeds from the following fundamental methodological points of reference:

- it is important to start the systematic study of the World War II events in the light of the current challenges, and namely: defining the place of the war in our present-day life, researching different **social memories** about the war at the local level, as well as the issues of political manipulating with the social opinion on the ground of the historical past;

- it is worth considering the World War II history in the light of comprehension and critical analysis of the debatable and complicated experience of the war emphasizing the common responsibility for the tragic past;

- the narrative of studying the World War II period as a personal drama, tragedy of the whole nations and cultures should be of polyphonic, non-linear character which transforms various interpretations of the past;
- the dramatic events of the World War II should be studied from the point of view of: solidarity, respect for others, empathy, mutual understanding, freedom, civic responsibility;
- the course of the World War II on the territory of Ukraine as well as on the European continent or on the world arena should be reflected in the school history education in the integral continuum of the integrated educational course of history of Ukraine and world history.

The online manual is composed according to the principle of organizing the learning activities in the form of class-and-lesson work. At the same time, its materials can be used not only for studying the course of history on the theme of the World War II according to the curriculum, but also for the advanced studies of specific topics, for optional courses, specialized courses for social and humanities grades, as well as a methodological and contents resource for organizing the out-of-school activities (discussions, history groups, clubs, expeditions, research, conferences, etc.).

Defining the format of the interactive textbook in history we have decided to create it according to the contemporary challenges, involving in it the Internet and computer technologies. Thus, the developed educational resource has a number of advantages in comparison to the traditional forms and methods of teaching history: mobility, illustrative and systematic character, integration into the world educational space, wide opportunities on involving the database of history sources, visual materials, videos, etc. The efficient online version enables teachers to evaluate every student's work in the lesson process.

The paper version of materials for presentation (methodological manual) is intended rather for teachers and aimed at helping them to understand better the specifics and structure of work on a certain theme.

The educational material is presented taking into consideration various points of view on the events of those times. On the basis of it and by means of the system of questions students research independently the events of a certain period of the World War II and also form their own attitude to a specific historical problem. Thus, the manual materials are based on the general principles of the critical analysis of various historical sources.

The suggested educational resource book is based on the multiperspective and controversial approaches, which foresee studying the events of the World War II from the points of view of different subjects and various interpretation of the historical past. In this respect, it was important for the authors' group not only to take into account different standpoints, evaluations and approaches to the analysis of a certain event, but also to consider the World War II in its religious, ethnical, gender, age, professional or other social manifestations.

In this context a special attention should be paid to the methods of discussing controversial issues. It's worth realizing for a student that the complex, controversial questions need complex answers, and simplification leads to subjectivity, prejudice and destructive decisions. All points of view and arguments of a certain passage are significant for the creation of an integral picture of the World War II course. That is why one cannot disregard them, all standpoints should be taken into account and thoroughly analyzed.

We strived to create for students such opportunities which enable them not only to get acquainted with various sources, but also to establish connections between various events, perspectives and personal decisions of an individual in the conditions of that time. Therefore, the critical and unprejudiced approach in studying history of the World War II, as well as organizing the social discussion on controversial and sensitive issues concerning this tragic period can become one of the factors of the Ukrainian society consolidation, finding understanding with neighbors, overcoming contradictions of the past for the sake of the common future.

### **Methodological peculiarities of working with the online manual**

While developing these materials the authors, on the one hand, aimed at making the process of getting acquainted with the historical past more systematic and interesting for students by means of using modern computer technologies, and on the other hand, at helping teachers to conduct their lessons with deeper thematic approach and on a higher methodological level.

Thus, the work at the lesson is intensive and interesting, and also foresees the possibility of integral perception of the educational material. We are aware of the fact, that the period of 45 minutes is insufficient for the full acquisition of the problems touched upon at the lesson. Therefore, we suggest giving up the

reproductive methods of questioning students at the beginning of the lesson and organizing the lesson so that to make a student's work more active, to give him/her opportunity to use information as a tool for solving the problems or tasks suggested to them.

### **Typical scheme of organizing students' work**

Before the lesson the teacher prints out "Advice for a colleague" and acquaints himself/herself with the recommendations on conducting the lesson. For students, in its turn, the "Worksheet for a student" and the "Reference table" (optionally) should be printed out. It is important for every student to have, besides the printed materials mentioned above, the Internet access in a computer, tablet or smartphone. It is also possible to download the history course on the data storage devices and later use it gradually.

The main stages of work foresee getting acquainted with the range of problems of the lesson and its visual imagery, work with brief information messages (stickers), with the chronological table, filling in the "Worksheet for a student", doing tests, reflection, etc.

We suggest making comprehensive evaluation of the level of acquisition by students of a certain theme materials and the formed competences both according to the results of passing online tests by them, performing tasks on the Worksheets for students and the results of their oral questioning. The students' activity should be motivated in the course of discussions, by involving students' peer evaluation, self-evaluation, etc.

We are aware that the suggested lesson procedure is of a recommendation character. Our task is to help our colleagues to see another approach to studying the complicated theme of the World War II and to encourage them using the materials and methodology in a creative way according to their own pedagogical experience.

Stage	Characteristic of the work organization at the lesson	Tentative time
Acquainting themselves with the theme of the lesson and the key question	It is important to stress the range of problems touched upon in the key question, which goes throughout all the lesson materials.	2 min.

Acquainting themselves with the photos (the left visual part of the website)	Students look at the photos for the lesson independently. As a rule, the website contains about 5 visual sources demonstrating the main events or problems of a specific period of the war. Although a considerable part of the visual materials will not be understandable for students, the main task of this stage is to kindle students' interest, to motivate them for searching for new information.	4 min.
Acquainting themselves with the brief description of a specific period (the right textual part of the website)	As a rule, this text contains the most general or apt characteristic of a certain period of the World War II.	3 min.
Work with stickers	We mean by a sticker a relatively brief illustrated textual message on a certain page of the World War II. Every lesson comprises from 5 to 10 stickers. A sticker can be followed by the questions, the answers to which students should search while getting acquainted with the materials of a specific sticker or the lesson in general. The sequence of viewing the stickers is given on the scale below, although the students can define a sequence, which is comfortable for them, on their own. The time for commenting or discussing the materials of every sticker is regulated by the teacher depending on time possibilities at the lesson. At the end of many stickers there is a button "Learn more" which provides students with more detailed information.	12 min.
Working with the Reference table	All the factual material for every lesson is accumulated and generalized in the Reference table. Acquisition of this material allows keeping in memory systematically the main facts. The majority of the suggested tables have three comparative columns with the events which took place in Ukraine and on the European or world arena.	8 min.
Working with the "Worksheet for student"	Students consolidate their knowledge on the printed out "Worksheets for student". They are allowed to use the Reference table or the materials of stickers.	8 min.
Testing and evaluating the students' knowledge. Summary.	Testing the students on the basis of 12 questions in every lesson in the systematized online program. The lesson can be summarized by means of the method of completing sentences: - Today I have learnt ... - Thanks to this lesson I have understood ... - After this lesson I can explain to my peers that ...	8 min.

