

Name: _____ Class: _____

General Eisenhower's Order of the Day

By General Dwight D. Eisenhower
1944

Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969) was the Supreme Allied Commander of the Invasion of Normandy and Assault on German forces in Europe during World War II; he would later be President of the United States from 1953 to 1961. On June 5, 1944 nearly 3 million troops, 4,000 ships, and 1,200 planes belonging to America and the other Allied forces waited in England for the order to invade the French Coast of Normandy to begin an assault on the Germans who had taken over much of Europe. Eisenhower's Order of the Day was delivered to the 175,000-member expeditionary forces meant to invade Normandy directly on June 5, 1944, the eve of the invasion. As you read, note the language that the author uses to describe Allied forces and their opponents.

[1] Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Forces:¹

You are about to embark upon the Great Crusade,² toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you. The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave Allies³ and brothers-in-arms on other Fronts⁴ you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi⁵ tyranny⁶ over oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.



"Into the Jaws of Death" by Robert F. Sargent is in the public domain.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened. He will fight savagely.

But this is the year 1944. Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41.⁷ The United Nations⁸ have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats, in open battle, man-to-man. Our air offensive has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground. Our Home Fronts⁹ have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men. The tide has turned. The free men of the world are marching together to victory.

1. These forces were made up of 175,000 military men from America, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the French army of liberation.
2. **Crusade (noun):** a military expedition undertaken for a sacred cause
3. World War II was fought between the Allies (which consisted of America, the U.K., Canada, and others) and the Axis (which consisted of Germany, Italy, and Japan).
4. A "front" in war is a place where two armies meet in open battle; other fronts in World War II included the South Pacific where Allied forces fought against the Japanese.
5. The Nazi party, led by Adolph Hitler, ruled over Germany as a fascist (nationalist to the point of violence), invasive, genocidal country. During World War II, over six million Jews, Romani people, homosexuals, disabled people, political enemies, and people of color were systematically murdered.
6. **Tyranny (noun):** an oppressive, unjust government

- [5] I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty, and skill in battle. We will accept nothing less than full victory.

Good Luck! And let us all beseech¹⁰ the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble¹¹ undertaking.

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7. In 1940 and 1941, Germany invaded France and attacked Britain with bombs.
 8. This is a reference to the unity of the Allies, not the modern international United Nations organization. The modern U.N. was created after World War II ended in an effort to bring lasting peace to the world.
 9. The Home Fronts consist of the many citizens at home in the Allied countries working to support the war.
 10. **Beseech** (*verb*): to beg or ask in a serious manner
 11. **Noble** (*adjective*): worthy

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which of the following best identifies the central idea of this text? [RI.2]
 - A. Americans' independence and freedom relies on the troops' performance.
 - B. Victory is uncertain, given the Nazi's strength in Europe.
 - C. The Allies are positioned to succeed so long as men fight bravely.
 - D. Only God can ensure an Allied victory over the Germans.

2. PART B: Which phrase from the text best supports the answer to Part A? [RI.1]
 - A. "The hopes and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you." (Paragraph 2)
 - B. "Much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940-41." (Paragraph 4)
 - C. "We will accept nothing less than full victory." (Paragraph 5)
 - D. "And let us all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking." (Paragraph 6)

3. How does paragraph 3 affect the development of Eisenhower's central ideas? [RI.5]
 - A. It admits that the fight ahead will be difficult.
 - B. It convinces the troops that the enemy will be easily defeated.
 - C. It claims that bravery is stronger in the face of savagery.
 - D. It laments that many of those reading will die in battle.

4. Which statement best describes the relationship between the war during 1941 and 1944? [RI.3]
 - A. In both years, the Germans are winning the war, making 1944 an urgent moment to surprise them.
 - B. In 1941 the Germans were winning but in 1944 the Allies had dealt them many losses.
 - C. In 1941 and 1944, the Allies were winning but not quite able to destroy the German army.
 - D. In 1941, the Germans were better trained than the Allies are in 1944.

5. How does Eisenhower use specific word choice to characterize the Allies and their enemies in this call to arms? [RI.4]
