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“Give It Your Best!” Civilian Contributions on the Home Front

Teacher’s Background

“What did *you* do today . . . for freedom?” “Back the attack with War Bonds!” “Get in the scrap!” “Loose lips sink ships.”

. . . If you had lived in the United States during World War II, you would have come across messages like these all the time. They appeared everywhere: on posters in bus depots, factories, banks, and meeting halls; on movie screens; in magazines and newspapers; even on matchbooks and bottle tops. They were repeated many times a day over the radio. Why?

The Role of the Home Front

During World War II, no bombs were falling on cities, factories, and railroads here in the United States. No one was destroying our homes, or starving our families or putting them to work at forced labor, as was happening in Europe, the Far East, and elsewhere.

Yet, though the United States was not under direct attack, it *was* at war. Thousands of American servicemen were fighting and dying in far-off places, and civilians back home were afraid that if we did not win this war, our country would be the next victim of the Axis powers.

To keep this from happening, and to bring home as many of our soldiers as possible, civilians in the United States were urged to do everything they could to support the war effort.

This civilian contribution was primarily to serve the needs of the wartime economy.

Our own troops and our Allies on the war fronts were depending on the U.S. home front for munitions, food, blankets, medical supplies, and other needs.

By the time the United States entered the war, in December 1941, the Europeans had been fighting for over two years. Germany had occupied France, invaded Russia, and was carrying out constant bombing raids on cities and industrial centers throughout England. Of the Allies, only the United States was still untouched, free to pour its resources into war production.

But such an all-out effort would require huge civilian sacrifices—of time, of ease, of material abundance. People on the home front would make these sacrifices *voluntarily* only if the reasons for doing so seemed clear and sensible and important to them.

Recognizing this, the U.S. government encouraged the use of the public media, including advertising, to get this message across: It’s going to take everyone’s personal help, day-to-day, in every way possible, to win this war fast. . . . Here are some of the ways *you* can pitch in:

- **Work hard at your job!** Production is the key to winning this war. We need food, arms, equipment . . . for ourselves and our Allies. Work carefully. Put in extra hours.
- **Take care of your health!** Eat nutritious food, get plenty of rest. A sick person can’t help the war effort in as many ways as a healthy one can.
- **Don’t waste!** Many materials are in short supply. So, “Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without!”
- **“Get in the scrap!”** Turn junk into weapons to win the war. Contribute your old iron, tin, paper, used cooking fat.
- **Buy War Bonds!** “We lend our money—they give their lives.” Invest at least a tenth of your earnings in War Bonds.

- **Plant Victory gardens!** They’re a way *you* can help supply the food we and our Allies so badly need. Victory gardens are producing a third of America’s vegetables these days.
- **Give blood!** Each pint of the blood that can save a wounded serviceman’s life has to be donated . . . by someone like you and me.
- **Observe rationing!** Of course it’s inconvenient. Of course you’d like more. But rationing exists because there just isn’t enough to go around. If servicemen are giving up their lives, is it too much to ask *you* to give up a little gasoline, or beef, or sugar?
- **Maintain security!** Remember, enemy agents could be anywhere. Report suspicious individuals. If you hear rumors about military information like troop

movements or casualty levels, keep them under your hat!

- **Write to servicemen!** They are giving so much. Cheery V-Mail letters* are an easy way to let them know you’re grateful.
- **Walk, don’t ride!** Every bit of gas, oil, and tire rubber is needed. . . . If you *have* to drive, then sharing is the way to go: carpool! give others a lift!
- **“Take your place in civilian defense!”** Be an air raid warden. Help “get those lights out” during blackouts. Or volunteer for Red Cross work. . . . There are so many ways you can help.
- **Rent out your spare room!** We don’t have to tell you there’s a housing shortage. If you have extra rooms in your home, rent them out.

A Glance Backwards

Almost all of these pitches are intended to enlist civilians’ aid in dealing with the problems created by the extraordinary wartime economy. To get a grasp of the production build-up that occurred around the beginning of the war, let’s glance backwards.

As recently as the 1930s, the United States had been

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*See Pull-Out Page.

Working... Fighting...

24 HOURS A DAY.. 168 HOURS A WEEK!

FOR VICTORY, BUY UNITED STATES WAR BONDS!

—FOR THE SAME GREAT CAUSE!

Heroic deeds of our armies overseas stand as a challenge to our “armies” at home, our armies of workmen who *build* the sinews of war. They know how much the *fighting* forces are doing for them. And they are determined to do *their* part in return. To do it with work. To keep American production on the offensive *every minute* of every day of every week. They are doing it in the Oldsmobile arsenals with a vast, non-stop drive to boost the output of “fire-power” . . . turning out ever increasing quantities of cannon for planes, cannon for tanks, and shell for tanks and artillery! Already, Oldsmobile has been producing vital matériel for almost a year and a half. Already, Oldsmobile arms and ammunition have seen action on every major front. But, for the men and women who work at Oldsmobile, that’s only the beginning. They’re thinking about our armies *over there*. They’re working for *them* . . . to keep *them* firing . . . building in volume for *them*, for Victory!

OLDSMOBILE DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS

★ VOLUME PRODUCER OF “FIRE POWER” FOR THE U. S. A. ★

suffering the effects of the worldwide economic depression. Productivity was low and unemployment widespread.

During these years, isolationist sentiment was strong in the United States, putting a brake on America's movement toward direct involvement in conflicts abroad. After war broke out in Europe in September 1939, however, American neutrality legislation was revised to allow sales of supplies to the combatant democracies. After the fall of France in 1940, our defense spending increased. In March 1941 the U.S. Congress passed the Lend-Lease Act, the basis of our wartime economic and military aid to our Allies.

Americans welcomed the jobs this defense spending was creating, and were appalled by the brutalities abroad that they were hearing about. Nevertheless, a great many people in this country still balked at the prospect of direct involvement in the conflict.

On December 7, 1941, this reluctance abruptly ended. That morning's Japanese surprise bombing attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, sent a shockwave of outrage across the United States.

Public opinion coalesced into the view that fighting this war was a dirty job that had to be done. From now on, the country's commitment would be all-out.

The War Production Boom and Its Effects

Pervaded by this sense of urgency, the production build-up grew more intense. Would there be enough materials . . . enough workers . . . enough time . . . to produce what was needed to bring victory?

Posters, magazine ads, and radio commercials drummed home the importance of doing one's part. "Sure I'm working harder," explained a war worker on one poster, "we're building arms for victory!" "We can do it!" another urged.

During the war years, the federal government poured about \$240 billion into private industry. Most government war contracts were written to ensure that companies would make a profit even if their costs ran considerably higher than originally estimated. This encouraged manufacturers to do whatever it took to turn out as much as possible, as fast as possible.

As millions of men went into the armed services, the need for workers grew more acute. Jobs that historically had been open only to white men (and there had been many such jobs!) were now being offered to women—and to a more limited extent to Blacks and to teenagers.

More women were working, and at more strenuous and responsible jobs than before. Rosie the Riveter, with biceps like Popeye's and a bandana wrapped around her curls, became a wartime stereotype.

War workers could combine self-interest with their patriotism. War plants commonly operated around the clock, seven days a week, to maximize production. Overtime hours—frequently a job requirement during the war—made for fat paychecks.

How welcome this steady, well-paid work was after more than a decade of depression! As Americans earned more, they began making up for the lean years: they had their teeth fixed, paid off their debts. They ate out more, spent more on entertainment. . . . Then, since consumer goods were in short supply, they began to put money away: total individual savings increased sixfold during the war years.

The lure of such lucrative war production jobs drew people from all over the country. When peace returned, 27 million Americans were living in a different place from where they had been when the war began. Some were in the service, but many were civilians who had pulled up stakes to find work.

If they could get hold of enough gas, they piled their possessions into trucks and sedans. Otherwise they stood in line for spaces on buses and trains jammed with troops. They waited hour after hour next to businessmen, and servicemen's wives, and squalling babies, hoping to board: priority on transportation was given to servicemen. Civilians couldn't count on reservations or sleeping car accommodations or a meal in the dining car. Sometimes they were even put off the train midtrip to make way for servicemen who were boarding.

When these civilian migrants finally reached their destinations, they usually had no trouble finding jobs. The hard part was finding a place to live. There were massive housing shortages near war production facilities and military camps, where the influxes of people were enormous. The government built housing, but not nearly enough to meet demand.

Old-time residents were urged to rent out their spare space. At one point there were rumors that the government might actually begin billeting war workers in private homes. This never happened, but the fear that it might led many people to rent rooms to strangers who were at least of their own choosing.

When the newcomers couldn't find regular living quarters, they set up house in storerooms and garages, in sheds, empty stores, and chicken coops. Trailer parks mushroomed. Overcrowding was so extreme that sometimes one *bed* was rented out to several people, each working a different shift. As soon as one "tenant" got up, another could turn in. No wonder so many wartime advertisements reflect a longing for a home of one's own.



Ellen Weymouth

- Age 23.
- Husband is in navy, somewhere in Pacific.
- Lives with their baby son at his parents' home in Texas.
- Does volunteer work as nurse's aide, and is helping to organize a blood drive in their community.



Joseph DaCosta

- Age 37.
- Engineer with Ohio company that produces parts for guns.
- Exempted from military service because his work is classified as essential to war effort.
- Married, with three grade-school-aged children.
- Brother is prisoner of war in Germany.



Sally Johnson

- Age 10.
- Lives in Michigan with mother and eight-year-old brother.
- Father was killed six months ago in the Pacific.
- Mother works night shift in factory that makes tanks.
- Babysits for her brother while her mother is working at night.



Harold Goldstein

- Age 58.
- Dentist, lives in New York City.
- Older son missing in Italy; younger son still in high school.
- Volunteers as air raid warden.



Rosa Marconi

- Age 19.
- Married high school sweetheart four months ago.
- Followed him to Portland, where he was in military training.
- Now that he has shipped out, she shares apartment with two other servicemen's wives.
- Is a riveter in aircraft factory.



Jimmy Kowalski

- Age 12.
- Goes to school in small town in Iowa.
- School is very active in war effort.
- Is currently scrap drive leader for his class.
- Big brother is Air Force pilot stationed in England.

Public services in these areas were badly strained: schools were packed, transportation and sanitation poor, social services inadequate.

One group that suffered particularly from this was children whose mothers were working in the factories and shipyards. Often the mothers were new to town, had no relatives or friends there, and (as the most recently hired) was assigned the night shift. Youngsters were sometimes simply locked up alone at night, or were allowed to wander the streets. Movie theaters, often open around the clock in wartime boom areas, were crowded with kids whose mothers had parked them there until they got off work at midnight. Juvenile delinquency increased.

All over the country, and especially in boom areas, the demand for goods and services exceeded availability. People had to stand in line continually—at meat markets and restaurants, theaters and barber shops. "Don't you know there's a war on?" was the constant excuse—for long waits, high prices, poor service, and unavailable items.

Shortages

Shortages were an ongoing wartime reality everywhere in the country—shortages both of raw materials for war production, and of consumer goods for everyday living.

More raw materials were needed, particularly materials that went into war supplies: aluminum and magnesium for airplanes, for example; and rubber for tank treads, jeep and truck tires, and many other uses.

We needed more, and *had* less. The war cut us off from many traditional sources of supply. Because of the Japanese occupation in the Pacific, we could no longer get rubber or tin from Malaya, or sugar from the Philippines.

Even when our traditional sources were still friendly,

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Lesson Plan*

Step 1: World War II—War Fronts and Home Front

Show the children the Oldsmobile advertisement reproduced on page one, and tell them that it appeared in *Life* magazine in July 1942. Ask what war the United States was fighting at that time (World War II).

Draw a timeline on the chalkboard indicating when the war began in Europe (1939); when the U.S. entered the conflict (1941); and when peace came (1945).

Now take a moment to help the children develop a rough idea of how long ago these events occurred. To do so, ask how old their grandparents are now. Select a typical answer (preferably sixty years old or above) and write it on the board. Then have the children figure out how old a person who is that age now would have been when the events on the timeline occurred. For example, a person who is around sixty now would have been an older teenager when the war ended.

Now come back to the Oldsmobile ad. Give the children a chance to examine it more carefully. Ask them to describe in one sentence what is going on in each half of the picture: an industrial worker on the left is handing a shell to a soldier on the right.

Ask, why does the soldier need the shell? What is going on where the soldiers are? Give a few basic facts about World War II: That American servicemen were fighting mainly in two parts of the world: against the Germans and Italians in Europe (and North Africa); and against the Japanese in the Far East. Explain that the powers we were fighting against were called the Axis powers. Our side we called the Allies; they included, besides ourselves, England, France, and Russia. List these main combatants on the chalkboard.

Then return to the right side of the ad and ask your students to imagine that they are these soldiers. What, as soldiers, do they need? What supplies and equipment does an army require? Write the answers on the board: bombs, guns, grenades, tanks, planes, communications equipment, uniforms, food, medical supplies, etc.

Now ask the children, where are these supplies to come from? Most must be made in factories and then transported to where the soldiers are. Even food has to be packaged and shipped.

Where are all these fields and factories? All over the United States.

Point out that not only we but also our Allies needed these supplies. Explain that their countries (unlike the United States) were where the fighting was going on. This made it very hard or impossible for our Allies to produce everything they needed. One way we could help was by sending supplies.

Now point out that the production of these supplies is what the left-hand side of the picture shows: this is the *home front*. Explain the term. A front is where a war is being fought, so the term *home front* emphasizes that the war is really being fought at home as well as on the battlefields abroad. The fight at home is the struggle to produce enough, in time. On this home front, everyone can help out; without this home front, the war cannot be won.

Step 2: Life on the Home Front

Give each child a copy of the following list:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Don't waste | Write letters to soldiers |
| Collect scrap | Don't travel unless necessary |
| Plant Victory gardens | Don't ride if you can walk |
| Work as hard as you can | Don't spread rumors about military matters |
| Stay healthy | Observe rationing |
| Give blood | Do civil defense work |
| Buy War Bonds | Rent out spare rooms |

Give the class a chance to read through these items. Explain that these were all ways people on the home front were encouraged to behave during the war. Tell the children that if they had been living in the United States during those years, they would have constantly heard messages—on the radio, in newspapers, in magazines, on posters—urging them to act in these ways. Explain any of the terms in the list that are unclear.

Then tell the children that they are now going to look at some real advertisements that appeared in magazines during the war. Give them a chance to examine the ads reproduced in this issue of ART TO ZOO. Whether you photocopy, project, or post the ads, make sure that the small print is legible, and that the children can refer back to the ads as often as they wish to while they are working.

For each ad, instruct them to write down: first, what *product* the ad is selling; second, what *wartime message* (or messages) from the list the ad is expressing; and third, what the *purpose* of the wartime message is—that is, how doing what the message suggests might help the war effort.

Tell the children that the purpose of some of the messages will be easy to figure out. That of others will be harder, or even impossible. The children should

*This Lesson Plan, obviously suitable for a U.S. history course, may also be used in language arts and consumer education. Follow-up Activities include an art project.

Loose talk got there first!



1. THE RUMOR: Again and again, John and his wife read the letter they have just received from their son overseas. In it they discover a hint that his outfit may be moving toward a certain war zone...a hint that was innocently phrased in his letter. Naturally, they worry...and speculate over this bit of "news."



2. THE RUMOR SPREADS: That evening in a café, John gets talkative about his son and where he may be going. Enemy ears are alert and keen. His careless words are overheard. Soon they are pieced together with other seemingly harmless "slips" into a complete piece of information the enemy can use.



3. THE RESULT: When a "surprise" offensive is launched by our troops, the enemy is ready and waiting in well-prepared defense positions. What should have been an easy victory for us becomes a difficult operation with heavy casualties. Once again...loose talk claims its vicious toll of suffering and death.



4. THE REMEDY: Whatever you hear...keep it under your Stetson! No matter how trivial the information may seem to you, it can be vital to the safety of our fighting men. So, unless you read it in the paper or hear it on the air, don't repeat it. Think before you speak...and keep it under your Stetson!

A good Stetson to keep it under is the "De-Luxe Stratoliner." Lightweight favorite of men who insist on the best in comfort and appearance. Keeps its good looks a long time, thanks to the exclusive Stetson Vita-Felt® Process. \$12.50. Other Stetsons in a wide range of prices. John B. Stetson Company, U. S. and Canada...Hats for men and women.

Keep it under your STETSON



How YOU CAN HELP WIN THE WAR!

NOT ALL OF US CAN SHOULDER A GUN OR MAKE A PLANE, BUT ALL OF US CAN DO SOMETHING TO BACK UP THE BOYS AT THE FRONT. BELIEVING THAT EVERYONE, YOUNG AND OLD, IS ANXIOUS TO KNOW WHAT TO DO, THE MENNEN COMPANY VOLUNTARILY SUBORDINATES ITS OWN ADVERTISING TO FURTHER CIVILIAN WAR EFFORTS. HERE ARE A FEW WAYS YOU CAN HELP—

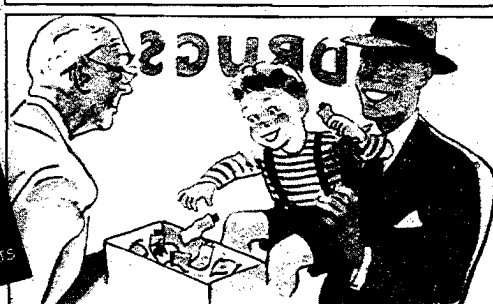
RENT SPARE ROOMS TO WAR WORKERS. INADEQUATE HOUSING IS HAMPERING PRODUCTION IN MANY AREAS. PHONE OR WRITE PERSONNEL DIRECTORS OF PLANTS IN YOUR VICINITY.



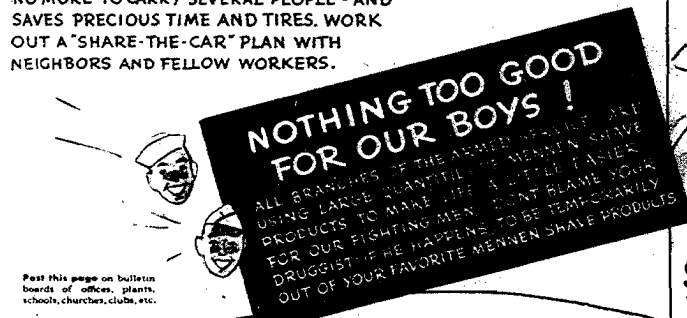
GIVE A LIFT TO OTHERS. IT COSTS NO MORE TO CARRY SEVERAL PEOPLE - AND SAVES PRECIOUS TIME AND TIRES. WORK OUT A "SHARE-THE-CAR" PLAN WITH NEIGHBORS AND FELLOW WORKERS.



CARRY PARCELS TO SAVE GASOLINE, OIL, TIRES, AND MANPOWER ON DELIVERY TRUCKS — YOU'LL BE HELPING TO DELIVER MORE BOMBS ON THE ENEMY.



SAVE EMPTY TUBES FROM SHAVE CREAM, TOOTH PASTE, ETC. THEY HAVE A HIGH CONTENT OF BADLY NEEDED TIN. LEAVE THEM WITH YOUR DRUGGIST WHO WILL FORWARD THEM TO A CENTRAL DEPOT.



NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR OUR BOYS!
ALL BRANCHES OF THE ARMED SERVICES ARE USING LARGE QUANTITIES OF MENNEN SHAVE PRODUCTS TO MAKE LIFE A LITTLE EASIER FOR OUR FIGHTING MEN. DON'T BLAME YOUR DRUGGIST IF HE HAPENS TO BE TEMPORARILY OUT OF YOUR FAVORITE MENNEN SHAVE PRODUCTS.



3-STEP MENNEN SHAVE

- ① WHISKERS OFF!** Mennen Brushless. It's the fastest growing Brushless. In tubes or glass jars. Lather, plain or Mentholated (best-seller of its kind).
- ② FACE PEPPED-UP!** Skin Bracer — America's best-selling shave lotion. Cools, refreshes. Everyone likes its minty odor.
- ③ PERFECT FINISH!** Talcum for Men. Neutral tint, doesn't show. Most popular men's talcum.

GROW VEGETABLES IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD FOR YOUR FAMILY. START A COMMUNITY-GARDEN MOVEMENT TO MAKE VACANT GROUND PRODUCE. THIS WILL RELEASE FOOD FOR OUR FORCES AND ALLIES.



not be disturbed if they are unable to figure out the purposes of some of the messages: they will become clearer in a little while, after the discussion.

When the children have finished, have them talk about their answers. Draw on the Teacher's Background section to guide the discussion and help them understand why people were being urged to act in these ways during the war. Emphasize that almost all the kinds of behavior on the list are intended to help the country cope with the tremendous and rapid build-up of the wartime economy and with the social problems that this created.

Step 3: A V-Mail* Letter

Now your students are ready to use their new knowledge and their imaginations to try to get inside the skin of some of the characters in these advertisements.

To do this, first have the kids read the brief descriptions of the six wartime characters that appear in boxes on page 2. Each of the characters can be found in one of the ads they have been discussing.

Have the kids then choose one of the characters, and pretend to be that person writing a V-Mail letter to a serviceman.

Tell the children that their letters should include the following items:

—A brief description of how the war has affected their life at work or at school.

—A short account of at least three things they are doing to help the war effort; an explanation of how they think each activity will contribute; and a description of how they feel about doing it.

—An example of some creative way they have dealt with a shortage.

—Anything else that they think their chosen character would want to say.

When they have finished, the children should fold and seal their V-Mail letters according to the instructions on the form.

As a culminating activity, ask the children to give (or send) their finished letters to a person born no later than 1927 who spent the war years on the home front—perhaps one of their grandparents. (Be sure to remind the kids that, if they mail their letters, they will have to enclose them in regular stamped envelopes, since V-Mail is no longer in use.)

The V-Mail letters are to be the basis of a spoken or written interview with the older people. First, the children should ask the older people whether the V-Mail letters seem to them to accurately reflect the reality of the times. Then they should ask more questions about the older people's experiences on the home front: How did the war affect their lives? Do they remember some of the activities on the list? Do they remember other ways that the war changed how they lived? How did they feel about the war while it was happening... and are their feelings about it different now, as they look back decades later?

As a final step, the children will be writing up these interviews. With this in mind, they should—if the interview is being conducted in person or on the telephone (rather than through an exchange of letters)—take notes or tape record what the older people say.

Remind the children that, in conversation, people are usually less organized and more repetitious than is acceptable in writing. It is the children's job as interviewers to turn their interviewees' answers into a clear and readable written piece.

Post the write-ups where all class members can share them. The purpose of this activity is twofold: to enrich the children's knowledge of the home front, and to encourage them to value older people's experiences as the rich resource that they indeed are.

Follow-up Activities

Creating Present-day Ads (discussion and art project)

In the Lesson Plan, the children saw that advertisements during World War II often carried a double message, combining a pitch for a product with a suggestion for helping the war effort.

Your students will enjoy trying to create similar ads—ads that tout an imaginary company's product while promoting a cause appropriate to the 1980s.

The first step is for the kids to choose a cause. Begin by having them discuss what public service messages might be suitable for our own time: Eliminate pollution? Provide for the homeless? Shun drugs? Achieve nuclear disarmament? Save the whales? Curb population growth? Stop drunk driving?

Which of these issues would most Americans consider important? As advertisers, your students do not

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* An explanation of what V-Mail was, and a V-Mail letter blank, appear on the Pull-Out Page.

If you photocopy the V-Mail blank for your students, it should be reproduced *full size*. The easiest way to do this is on 11" wide paper.

However, many photocopiers won't take paper that is more than 8 1/2" wide. If this is the case with your machine, copy the form onto 8 1/2" x 11" paper: *it will fit exactly, except for the flap*. Next, you will have to make separate photocopies of the flap, which your students can then cut out (leaving an extra margin for overlap), and paste onto the main part of the form.

Who Said "Weaker Sex"?

All over the land, America's women are in the drive for Victory! They're helping to build planes and tanks, making munitions, aiding civilian defense, conducting canteens, working in Victory gardens. Not only these, but all active women and girls choose the freedom and practical comfort of slacks. And, with a feminine eye for real value, thousands are turning to trim, man-tailored Ensenada and Miss Yank Slacks. Perfect fit across waist and hips, new tapered drape, swing pockets, pleated fronts. Most styles have concealed zipper pockets. In many popular styles and fabrics, \$2 to \$4.

RELIANCE MANUFACTURING CO.
212 West Monroe St., Chicago, Ill.
New York Office: 1350 Broadway

MAKERS OF: Ayon Shirts • Yankshire Coats
Kay Whitney and Happy Home Pants
Big Yank Shirts and Trousers
Fashioned in England

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Axis naval attacks on merchant shipping were making imports (and exports) unreliable and costly—in money and in human life.

If output of war materials was to remain high, these shortages had to be dealt with—by reducing consumption, recycling, and using substitutes.

Production of an increasing number of items deemed nonessential was banned by the government. To save steel for tanks and guns, the manufacture of safety pins, clothes irons, and children's wagons was halted. To save copper and brass, the production of alarm clocks was banned.

Individual citizens were encouraged to conserve: "Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without!" was the watchword.

All over the country, communities organized scrap drives to collect materials for recycling: paper, cooking fat, rubber, tin, and iron. . . . Rationing was established, to distribute the burden of decreased consumption as evenly as possible.

Substitutes were sought: the biggest success was the development of a synthetic rubber industry, but all kinds of simpler stand-ins were used too. The down of milkweed plants (instead of kapok) was stuffed into life preservers; peanut oil lubricated machines; walnut shells were ground up and baked in loaves, then sliced to produce laminated boards.

Materials, consumer goods, labor, time . . . all needed to be stretched as far as possible.

One of the few things there seemed to be plenty of (at least compared to the depression years) was money—and people were being encouraged *not* to spend it!

In this boom economy, inflation was a constant threat, and citizens were urged to help the war effort by doing what they could to keep prices down: by making only necessary purchases, by observing the price freeze the government had put into effect, by shunning the black market, by investing in War Bonds rather than in consumer goods, and by observing the government's rent ceilings.

And so . . .

Americans all over the country—in quiet backwaters, big cities, small towns, as well as in war production areas—were making do and giving up. They were figuring out how to feed their families decently on their allotment of ration stamps. They were inventing new ways to spend their weekends now that gasoline rationing had eliminated their Sunday drives. They were turning frayed collars and walking more. They were handing in their discarded razor blades at the barber's so the steel could be recycled, and their old

toothpaste tubes (made of tin in those days) at the drugstore—"no tube, no toothpaste!" Once in a while they were even paying for their ticket to the local movie theater with a pound of fat instead of with money.

They were coming forward to make active contributions too. Men were volunteering for civil defense, acting as air raid wardens, enforcing the blackouts, arguing about the best way to put out incendiary bombs. Women were volunteering for Red Cross courses on first aid and nutrition, folding bandages, helping out at Victory canteens, visiting wounded servicemen in hospitals and running errands for them, and sending off Bundles for Britain. They were working as block leaders to transmit and explain government messages to their neighbors.

All over the country, people were planting Victory gardens and donating blood. They were boxing their old books and magazines to send to men in the service. They were saving their cooking fat in cans at the back of the stove, and giving it to the butcher to forward for use in explosives. They were forcing themselves to go to work even when they had headaches or colds. They were concocting oddball recipes to make up for the lack of available ingredients—learning how to cook muskrat and bake cakes made of potato peels.

Children were among the most enthusiastic volunteers. They used their wagons to haul junk for scrap drives; they saved medicine bottles for re-use, distributed government pamphlets and anti-black-market pledge cards. They soaked the labels off tin cans, washed them, removed the ends, stamped them flat, and once a week piled them by the curb to be collected by city trucks for recycling. They knitted scarves for youngsters in war zones, took auxiliary firefighter training courses, raised vegetables, learned to identify planes, made toys for child care centers. And they bought War Stamps and War Bonds. The nickels and dimes that boys and girls all over the country brought to class accumulated . . . and accumulated. . . . School sales finally accounted for over a billion dollars worth of War Bond and Stamp purchases—just one example of how countless individual contributions added up on the home front.

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want their product associated with a cause that many consumers would judge to be foolish or wrong.

After the children have chosen a cause, have them spend a short while discussing the differences in style and format that they notice between the World War II ads and present-day ones. (Which usually include more writing? Is the print the same size? Which give more information about the product? What types of people appear? etc.) After this discussion, the children will be ready to create their individual ads.

What If . . . ? (group discussion)

Have the children discuss how Americans' willingness to cooperate might have been affected:

—if people had been drafted for war work, and paid little or nothing for their labors?

—if the war had lasted longer and shortages had become more severe—if people had been starving, for example?

—if American cities had been bombed?

—if a large number of Americans had believed the war to be unjust (as was the case in the 1960s, with Vietnam)?

The Pros and Cons of National Unity. Resolved: That a country is at its best during times of strong national purpose. (debate)

World War II created a tremendous sense of unity and purpose among Americans. Use a debate to encourage your students to weigh the gains and losses that resulted from this resolve.

Pros include:

—**Accomplishment.** An amazing amount was accomplished economically.

—**Cooperation.** Many people look back on World

ART TO ZOO

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THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY
THE NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK

Smithsonian National Seminar for Teachers

"Teaching Writing Using Museums and Other Community Resources" will be offered by the Smithsonian Institution this summer for teachers (grades 5–12), school librarians, and curriculum specialists who live more than 75 miles outside of Washington, D.C.

Carrying graduate credit, the course will survey ways teachers can use local museum exhibits and such diverse resources as cemeteries and houses as tools for teaching writing. Interpreters for hearing-impaired individuals can be provided for all class work.

Meeting from July 6 to 15, the course will cost approximately \$275. Specially priced dormitory housing may be available.

For information write: NATIONAL SEMINAR, OESE, A&I 1163, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560. Or telephone (voice) 202/357-3049 or (TDD) 202/357-1696.

War II with nostalgia, despite the hardships of the time: it was a period when they felt that their lives had meaning and direction, and that what they did as individuals was important. During the war, they felt pressured to *cooperate* rather than to *compete*—and they liked that.

—**Social gains.** The war brought social gains for some groups, broadening job opportunities, and encouraging the breakdown of long-held prejudices.

Cons include:

—**Destruction and suffering.** This was a war: people were suffering, dying, mourning. Cities were being destroyed. Whole countries were disappearing.

—**Deprivations.** Wartime economic hardships created many changes in people's lives, and would have become harsher if the war had been longer.

—**Intolerance.** The flip side of national purpose is intolerance of anyone perceived to be a threat to that purpose. (How were conscientious objectors treated during World War II? What happened to Japanese Americans? Did anything analogous happen to German Americans? If not, why not?)

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Lingeman, Richard R. *Don't You Know There's a War On? The American Home Front, 1941–1945*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1970.

Terkel, Studs. *"The Good War": An Oral History of World War Two*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1985.

Books for Children

These are novels set on the U.S. home front:

Frascino, Edward. *Eddie Spaghetti on the Homefront*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1983.

Greene, Betty. *Summer of My German Soldier*. New York: The Dial Press, 1973.

Hickman, Janet. *The Stones*. New York: Macmillan, 1976.

Todd, Leonard. *The Best Kept Secret of the War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

Your local librarian can recommend many excellent books (fiction and nonfiction) about the wartime experiences of children in other countries.

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Mientras estás sentado en la papirera en 1945, notas el silencio afuera. Esto es porque la gasolina es racionada y nadie puede comprar carros nuevos o llantas, solo pocos automóviles andan en la calle.
Acabas de llegar a la casa de la oficina de correos,

artículo llamado "Pequeñas Cartas de la Segunda Guerra Mundial," escrito por James H. Bruns de la Colección Filatélica Nacional, Smithsonian Institution. El artículo apareció en la edición de *Stamp Collection* de marzo-abril 1985.
**Cualquiera que tenga un radio de onda corta las reconocerá: son la letra V en el código Morse.

Instructions for V-Mail Form

If you are using the original, printed Pull-Out Page: Cut out the form. Write your letter, address it, fold as indicated, and use glue to seal it closed.

If you are using photocopies: You will have two photocopies, one of the front of the form and one of the back. Glue them carefully together back-to-back, making sure that the edges and fold-lines on the two sides correspond exactly (hold the sheets up to the light to check whether they are lined up correctly).

After the glue has dried, treat your two glued-together sheets like a single sheet, and proceed as if you were using the original, printed Pull-Out Page. (You may need to add a flap. If so, your teacher will explain how to do so.)

Instrucciones para un Formulario de Correo-V

Si estás usando el original: Recorta el formulario. Escribe tu carta, pon la dirección, dóblala como se indica, y usa goma para pegarla.

Si estás usando fotocopias: Tienes que tener dos fotocopias, una del frente del formulario y otra del reverso. Pégalas cuidadosamente asegurándote que los bordes y líneas donde se dobla correspondan exactamente (pon las hojas de papel una en contra de la otra frente a una luz para darte cuenta que están bien alineadas).

Después de que se seque la goma, pretende que las dos hojas pegadas son solo una y procede como si estuvieras usando el formulario original. (Tal vez necesites añadir otro papel. Si este es el caso, tu maestro(a) te explicará como hacerlo.)



ART TO ZOO January 1988
News for Schools from the Smithsonian Institution

ARTE A ZOOLOGICO Enero de 1988
Noticias para las escuelas de parte del Smithsonian Institution

V-MAIL

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT PERMIT NO. 1

FOLD SIDES OVER AND THEN FOLD BOTTOM UP AND SEAL

NO OTHER ENVELOPE SHOULD BE USED

Print the complete address in plain block letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided. Use typewriter, dark ink, or pencil. Write plainly. Very small writing is not suitable.

No. _____

To

(CENSOR'S STAMP)

From

(Sender's name)

(Sender's address)

(Date)

... And who are you writing to—your father? your brother? your husband? your son?
As you write, remember that you don't even know exactly where your correspondent is: his location is a

he has passed it. Find the place on the form where his stamp will go.
After you have finished writing your letter, think about whether you would want to use this kind of form

letters to their boyfriends and husbands. But this lipstick would get into the machines that photographed the V-Mail letters and clog them. People called this problem "the scarlet scourge."

al tamaño original y entregada.
¿Porqué tanta complicación?
Para ahorrar espacio. Tanta gente y provisiones eran mandadas al extranjero durante la guerra, que había poco espacio en los barcos y aviones: 150,000 microfotos de correo-V cabían en una bolsa de correo—¡ y las cartas de tamaño normal habrían llenado 22 bolsas de correo!

Antes de que comiences a escribir tu carta, tu maestro(a) te dará información acerca de seis de las personas que puedes ver en los anuncios que estás usando. Cuando escribas la carta, piensa que eres una de esas seis personas . . . ¿Cuál persona quieres ser?
. . . ¿Y a quien le vas a escribir?—¿A tu padre? ¿A tu hermano? ¿A tu esposo? ¿A tu hijo?

Mientras escribes, recuerda que no sabes exactamente donde se encuentra la persona a quien le escribes: el lugar donde el está es un secreto militar. Cuando escribas la dirección en la carta, simplemente escribirás su nombre y otra información que identifique la sección del ejército a la cual el pertenece. Los militares van a hacer llegar la carta al lugar correcto.

También te das cuenta que alguien que tu no conoces va a leer cada palabra que escribas . . . ¿Qué piensas de ésto? Este extraño es un militar encargado de la censura. El leerá tu carta para asegurarse que tu no escribes sobre secretos militares. Si el ve información que el cree que no debiera ser dicha, el la va a censurar. Cuando haya terminado de leer tu carta, el le pondrá un sello que indica que la carta ha pasado inspección. Encuentra el espacio en el formulario donde se pondrá este sello.

. . . Después de terminar de escribir la carta, piensa si quisieras usar este tipo de formulario regularmente. Mucha gente envió una carta por correo-V una vez porque era algo nuevo. Después, mucha de esta gente prefirió enviar cartas normales, usando papel y sobre. Las cartas de correo-V no fueron muy populares por mucho tiempo.

Para comenzar, no contenían mucho espacio para escribir. Además, no podías adjuntar nada—ni fotografías, ni cabellos, ni artículos del periódico local. Hasta lápiz labial en las cartas podía causar problemas. En ese tiempo, el lápiz labial oscuro era popular, y las mujeres, a menudo, besaban las cartas para sus novios y esposos. Pero este lápiz labial causaba problemas a las máquinas que fotografiaban las cartas de correo-V. La gente llamaba este problema "el azote escarlata."

V-Mail Service provides the most expeditious dispatch and reduces the weight of mail to and from personnel of our Armed Forces outside the continental United States. When addressed to points where micro-film equipment is operated, a miniature photographic negative of the message will be made and sent by the most expeditious transportation available for reproduction and delivery. The original message will be destroyed after the reproduction has been delivered. Messages addressed to or from points where micro-film equipment is not operated will be transmitted in their original form by the most expeditious means available.

INSTRUCTIONS

- (1) Write the entire message plainly on the other side within marginal lines.
- (2) PRINT the name and address in the two panels provided. Addresses to members of the Armed Forces should include rank or rating of the addressee, unit to which attached, and APO or Naval address.
- (3) Fold, seal, and deposit in any post office letter drop or street letter box.
- (4) Enclosures must not be placed in this envelope and a separate V-Mail letter must be sent if you desire to write more than one sheet.
- (5) V-Mail letters may be sent free of postage by members of the Armed Forces. When sent by others postage must be prepaid at domestic rates (3c ordinary mail, 6c if air mail is desired).

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT PERMIT NO. 1

DO NOT WRITE HERE

DO NOT WRITE HERE

FOLD HERE

FOLD HERE

DO NOT WRITE HERE

DO NOT WRITE HERE

V... MAIL

See Instruction No. 5

EVERY BOY CAN HELP WIN THIS WAR BY COLLECTING SCRAP RUBBER AND METAL



Frank Leahy, Boston football coach and Director of the Youth Sports Department

"So, come on fellows! Organize a Scrap Warden team in your community and let's junk the Axis"...says Frank Leahy

BOYS: You can get in the scrap and help beat the pants off the Japs, the Nazis and the Fascists! And here's how: By collecting discarded rubber tires, tubes, not water bottles, shoes, mags, hose, irons, pipe and all the other junk

that folks in your community have been accumulating in their backyards, cellars, closets and attics for years!

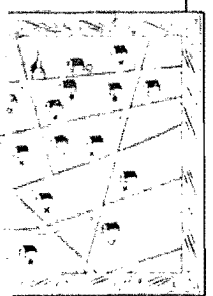
First, get your team of Scrap Wardens together. Next make a map of your territory like the one shown here. And then start a systematic search for junk. Start in your own houses. Mobilize your fathers, your mothers, your brothers, sisters and friends. Get them to work with you!

If folks don't cooperate it's just because they don't understand how desperately our soldiers and sailors on the firing line need every ounce of scrap you can collect. So, don't take "no" for an

answer. Don't let anybody "black" you. Don't let the problem of moving scrap to your junk dealer or local Salvage Committee stop you. Go to your Mayor, go to your newspaper, stir people up... make 'em get in the scrap with you.

You may not be old enough to fly and shoot and fight side by side with your older brothers and the fellows you've always looked up to, but you can pass 'em the ammunition! So, let's go! Let's use the same headwork, the same team spirit, the same never-say-die grit that wins on the football field to help us all win the greatest fight of all time!

MAKE A MAP LIKE THIS ONE circles indicate homes of fellows on your team. Dots indicate homes of friends. Crosses indicate houses where you'll have to "sell" your scrap. Plan your campaigns like a military campaign.



WHAT "SCRAP" MEANS TO THE ARMY AND NAVY

Guns and tanks are 50% scrap metal	Subs and ships are 50% scrap metal	7700 aluminum pans make a piston plane	1 gun makes 2 helmets
Scrap rubber makes gas masks and balloons	Scrap rubber makes tires for trucks and jeeps	Refrigerator makes 3 machine guns	100 lbs. of paper makes a carton for 35 shells
1 old tire makes 8 gas masks	1 old radiator makes an aerial bomb	5 toothpaste tubes supply the tin for 1 plane	

RUBBER BOOTS, SHOES, HOT-WATER BOTTLES everything made of rubber is precious to Army and Navy use. Make a special effort to get a fine scrap rubber collection.

TAKE ALL SCRAP TO YOUR LOCAL JUNK DEALER OR SALVAGE COMMITTEE*

*Toothpaste and shaving cream tubes go to your local hospital.

UNITED STATES RUBBER COMPANY



"It takes so many points to get enough vitamin-rich foods. Yet I didn't want my family to get tired, low in resistance... vitamin-deficient. That started me thinking. Vimms, I found, have all the essential vitamins and minerals. And they require no points at all!"

SEE WHAT 3 VIMMS A DAY SUPPLY

Vitamin A as much as in 20 pats BUTTER	Vitamin B ₁ as much as in 1 1/2 PORK CHOPS	Vitamin B ₁₂ as much as in 1/2 QUART MILK
Vitamin C as much as in 50 TOMATO JUICE	Vitamin D as much as in 1 1/4 COD LIVER OIL	Vitamin E as much as in 1/2 lb. HAM
CALCIUM as much as in 1 1/2 AMER. CHEESE	PHOSPHORUS as much as in 1 1/2 EGGS	IRON as much as in 1/2 lb. STEAK

"This gives you an idea of what Vimms supply. They fit right into any modern plan of family feeding. Vimms are pleasant to take, too. And they meet two simple rules of vitamin-buying:

1. Get all the vitamins Government experts say are essential
2. Get them in the balanced formula doctors endorse



"'Get that Vimms feeling' used to be just a slogan to me. But my young-ster sure have got it now. I must have needed extra vitamins too, because I feel a lot better myself. Why don't you try Vimms? They cost only a nickel a day in the Family Size. And it's worth much more just to be sure!"

At your druggist's
Lever Brothers Co., Pharm. Inc., Cambridge, Mass.
All essential vitamins and minerals. 24 tablets 50¢; 96 tablets \$1.75; 288 tablets \$5.00

English continued
being sent overseas during the war that there was little room in the holds of ships and planes: 150,000 microphotos of V-Mail letters could fit into a single mail-bag—while the full-sized letters would have filled 22 bags!

Before you begin your letter, your teacher will give you some information about six of the people you can see in the ads you have been using. You are going to pretend you are one of these people when you write your letter. Which one do you want to be?

military secret. When you address the letter, you will simply give his name and other information that identifies what part of the armed forces he is with. The military will forward the letter to the right place.

You are also aware that someone you don't know will read every word you write. . . . How do you feel about that? This stranger is the military censor. He will read your letter to make sure you haven't told any military secrets. If he sees information that he thinks should not be told, he will black it out. When he has finished with your letter, he will stamp it to show that

regularly. Lots of people sent a V-Mail letter once, because it was something new. But after one try, many of these people went back to regular paper and envelope. V-Mail letters were not very popular in the long run.

For one thing, they didn't give you much space to write in. For another, you couldn't enclose anything—no photos, or locks of hair, or clippings from your hometown newspaper. Even lipstick on the V-Mail blank could cause problems. In those days dark lipstick was popular, and women often put a kiss-mark on

Español continua
Bien, pero mientras vaya en camino, el formulario se va a hacer mas pequeño—¡mucho mas pequeño! Después de que deposites tu carta, se usará equipo especial para hacer una pequeñísima fotografía de ella. Este microfilm pesará menos que una treintava parte de la hoja de papel original. Es esta fotografía pequeñísima y no tu carta original la que será enviada a través del océano.

Cuando llegue a la estación de recibo cercana al soldado a quien le escribes, la fotografía será agrandada

**You're never too busy
to write V-Mail**



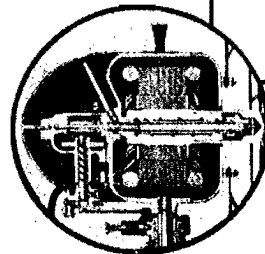
**Tell him things are
running smoothly...**

including your Emerson-Electric Fan

Write your service man V-Mail letters full of the homey news he's so hungry to hear... "The garden's in," you might write. "You should see the tomato plants..." "Your kid brother comes Saturdays to help me with the lawn..." "Your son looks more like you every day..." "I got out your mother's trusty old Emerson-Electric Fan this morning and have just oiled it up. It still runs just like new. Mrs. Marsh, our new neighbor, dropped in when I first turned the fan on. She couldn't believe it was 20 years old. She made me an outlandish offer for it... imagine! 'No, thanks,' I said. 'I couldn't get through the

summer without that Emerson-Electric Fan.'" He wants to know every little thing that goes on. V-Mail is the answer for frequent letters that can be written in spare moments when news and the impulse to write are fresh in mind. Remember, too, V-Mail is sure, fast and saves valuable cargo space. **Emerson-Electric Fans will be back...**

As soon as critical material can be allocated by the Government, Emerson-Electric Fans (which have not been made for civilian purchase since May, 1942) will be back. They will have all the fine features which have characterized "Emerson-Electric" products since 1890.



**Keep your Emerson-Electric
Fans at top efficiency
...while he's away.**

1. If your fans operate satisfactorily, clean them thoroughly and oil with medium-weight mineral oil, grade SAE 10 or 20.
2. If there is any unusual noise or vibration, due to worn parts or faulty electrical connections, take the fan to your Emerson-Electric Dealer or Electrical Repair Shop to determine repairs required. (Generally, if your Emerson-Electric Fan is not more than 20 years old, parts are available.)

**Why Emerson-Electric Fans
are "lifetime" fans**

This cut-away view shows the "sealed" Emerson-Electric hollow-shaft and armature bearing, with only one place to oil. Practically everlasting, it has been an exclusive feature on Emerson-Electric 12" and 16" Fans for more than 47 years.

**BUY MORE "E" BONDS IN THE 7th...
AND HOLD ALL YOU HAVE!**

EMERSON ELECTRIC
MOTORS · FANS · APPLIANCES

"You're Never Too Busy to Write V-Mail!"*

Imagine that you have traveled back through time . . . over forty years . . . to World War II America.

It is 1943 on the home front: there are no home computers, no pocket calculators, no Velcro, no satellites, no atomic weapons. Few things are made of plastic. No one knows what is on the far side of the moon. Television is in its infancy: it's the radio that people switch on for news or entertainment.

. . . Yet 1943 is not so very long ago—the number of years since then is far less than the average lifetime: if you had been in grade school then, you would be only in your fifties now.

As you sit at your desk back in 1943 you notice how quiet it is outside. Because gasoline is rationed and no one can buy new cars or tires, only a few automobiles are passing in the street.

You have just come home from the post office, where you picked up the V-Mail blank reproduced on this page.

Look at it. Read what is printed on it. Turn it over and examine the other side. When you handle a V-Mail letter now, you are handling history.

As a child back on the home front in 1943, you

know what V-Mail is—a special way of sending letters to (and from) servicemen. You know that the V stands for Victory . . . but can you guess what the dots and dash after the V are?*

This form isn't very big, is it? . . . Well, as it travels, it's going to get smaller—a *lot* smaller! After your letter is mailed, special equipment will be used to make a very tiny photograph of it. This microfilm picture will weigh less than one-thirtieth of the original sheet. It is this tiny photo, not your original letter, that will be sent across the ocean.

When it arrives at a receiving station near the soldier to whom you are writing, the picture will be made full size again, and delivered.

Why go to all this trouble?

To save space. So many people and supplies were

continued

*The information on V-Mail that appears here is based on an article called "Little Letters of World War II," by James H. Bruns of the National Philatelic Collection, Smithsonian Institution. The article appeared in the March-April 1985 issue of *Stamp Action*.

**Anyone who has a ham radio will recognize them: they are the letter V in Morse code.

Nunca Estas Demasiado Ocupado Para Escribir Correo-V*

Traducido por Dr. Ricardo Inestroza

Imagínate que has viajado a través del tiempo . . . mas de cuarenta años atrás . . . a los Estados Unidos de la Segunda Guerra Mundial.

En los Estados Unidos, en 1943: no hay computadoras, ni calculadoras, ni Velcro, ni satélites, ni armas atómicas. Se producen pocas cosas de plástico. Nadie sabe que hay al otro lado de la luna. La televisión está en su infancia: es el radio lo que la gente pone para escuchar noticias y para divertirse.

. . . Pero 1943 no hace mucho tiempo—el número de años que han pasado desde entonces es mucho menos que el tiempo promedio de lo que dura una vida humana: si tu hubieras estado en la escuela primaria en ese tiempo, ahora solo tendrías cincuenta y tantos años.

Mientras estés sentado en tu pupitre en 1943, notas

donde recogiste el formulario de correo-V reproducido en esta página. Míralo. Lee lo que está escrito. Examina el otro lado del papel. Tener en la mano un formulario de correo-V ahora es como tener en la mano un pedazo de historia.

Siendo niño en los Estados Unidos en 1943, tu sabes lo que es el correo-V—una manera especial de enviar cartas a (y de) los hombres en el servicio militar. Tu sabes que V quiere decir Victoria . . . pero, ¿puedes adivinar que significan los puntos y el guión después de la V?*

Este formulario no es muy grande, ¿verdad? . . .

continúa

*La información sobre el correo-V que aparece aquí está basada en un