



THE NATIONAL
WWII MUSEUM
NEW ORLEANS

WWII by the Numbers
Charting and Graphing D-Day and WWII Data

A Lesson from
the Education Department

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WWII by the Numbers

Charting and Graphing D-Day and WWII Data

Organizing and interpreting data is an important skill when analyzing historical events. Raw data are the building blocks for interpreting what happened in the past, what is going on in the present, and what may occur in the future. The following lesson plan asks students to create three types of graphs using statistics from D-Day and World War II and then analyze their results by answering interpretive questions.

OBJECTIVE: Students analyze the size and scope of World War II and D-Day by charting and graphing statistics and interpreting their findings.

GRADE LEVEL: 7-12

STANDARDS: History Thinking Standard 2—the student will engage in historical analysis and interpretation while utilizing visual and mathematical data.

Content Era 8 (1929-1945), Standard 3B—the student understands World War II and how the Allies prevailed.

TIME REQUIREMENT: One class period.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Copy and pass out the worksheets and have students use the given data to create a line graph, a pie chart, and a bar graph, then answer the questions that follow. This activity can be an individual or group activity depending on your specific needs in the classroom.
2. Use the statistical data from the three activities to lead a short discussion of the size and scope of World War II and D-Day.

ASSESSMENT: Components for assessment include the completed worksheet and class discussion.

ENRICHMENT: Have students collect data (such as poll numbers, statistics, or forecasts) about any current event from the newspaper, magazines, or the Internet and organize that data in a graph, which includes a short essay explaining their source, their data, and their analysis.

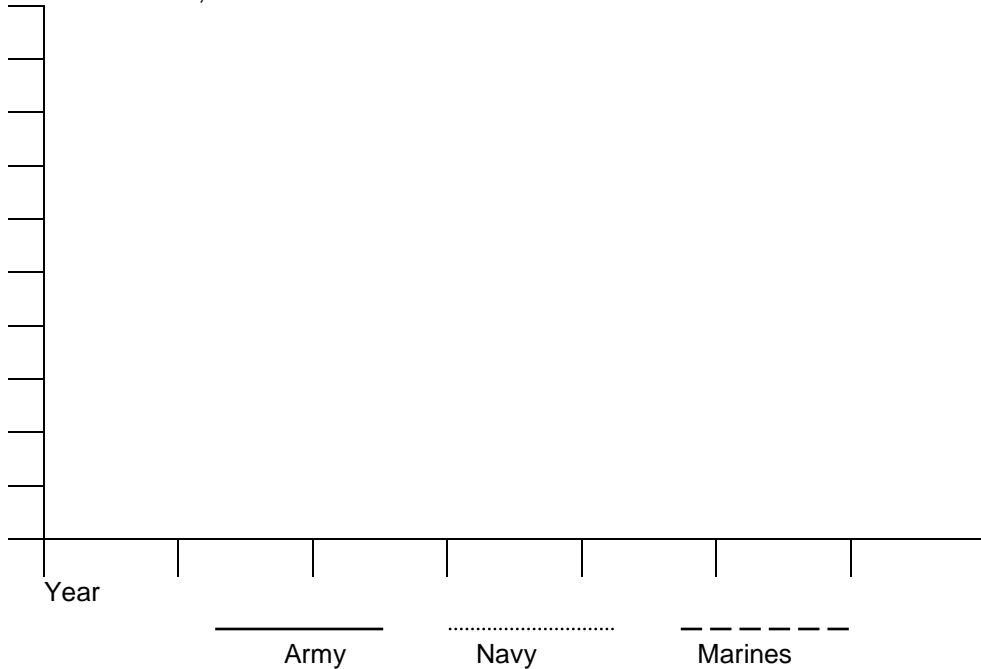
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1. On a line graph below, fill in both axes and plot and label the growth of each branch of the U.S. military during World War II. Use the type of lines shown for each branch. Then answer the questions below.

U.S. Active Military Personnel (1939-1945)

Year	Army	Navy	Marines	Total
1939	189,839	125,202	19,432	334,473
1940	269,023	160,997	28,345	458,365
1941	1,462,315	284,427	54,359	1,801,101
1942	3,075,608	640,570	142,613	3,858,791
1943	6,994,472	1,741,750	308,523	9,044,745
1944	7,994,750	2,981,365	475,604	11,451,719
1945	8,267,958	3,380,817	474,680	12,123,445

Number of Soldiers, Sailors and Marines



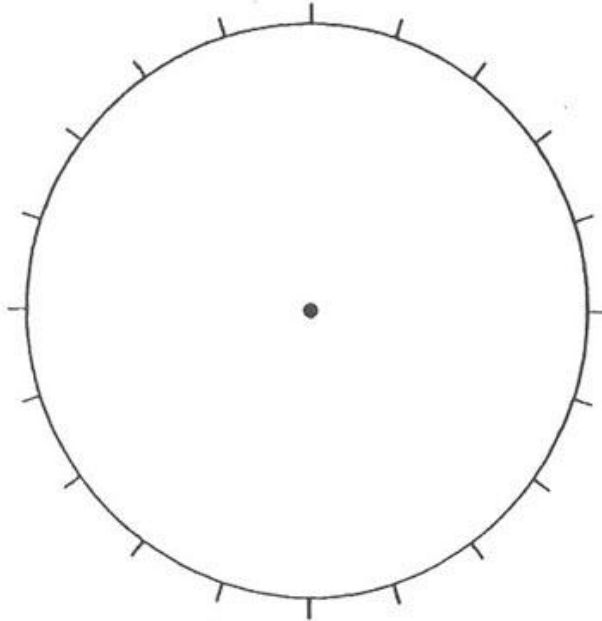
- A. What was the trend in the size of the U.S. military between 1939 and 1945?
- B. What year saw the largest increase of military personnel and what event(s) brought about this increase?
- C. From the data in this graph, what branch of service do you predict had the highest casualty rate during World War II?

2. Use these statistics from June 6, 1944—D-Day—to fill in and label the percentages of each country's military force in Normandy on the pie chart. Then answer the questions below.

D-Day Combatants

Country	Number of Soldiers on D-Day	Percentage
*United States	95,000	34%
*Great Britain	60,000	21%
*Canada	20,000	7%
Germany	105,000	38%

*Allies



- A. What country had the most troops in Normandy on D-Day?
- B. What percentage of the troops at D-Day were Allied troops?
- C. Why did the Allied commanders think it was necessary to attack with such a large number of soldiers?

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Answers to Activity Questions

Number of Soldiers, Sailors and Marines

