

## Sajid Amin, What WWII means to me, Grade 9 (North Thurston High School – Lacey)

"To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace" • George Washington.

World war II was a pivotal in the development of our world's history. No one at the time would have expected such bloodshed and misery to have stemmed from European nations. The way that the combined national powers lead to an end to the war can act as a learning opportunity for future generations. It also allowed our nation to thrive as a whole.

We have seen what war can exactly do and it helps from making the same mistake. World war II to me acts as something that society today can look back on and learn from what we have done.

Sometimes referenced as "The Good War" World War II was the bloodiest war in military history. It's a weird way for Americans, specifically, to remember a war that took four times as many American lives as World War I, seven times as many as the Vietnam War, and one-hundred times as many as the American Revolutionary War. It may not be the best choice of words to describe a period in history in which the methodical murder of millions of Jews and the use of nuclear weapons in the final days of war exposed the awful truth that science and technology, rather than promoting human progress, could lead to the destruction of mankind.

There are certainly reasons why World War II would be remembered as "Good". Take, for instance, the fact that by war's end, Allied forces had successfully defeated Hitler's Nazi regime, preventing the Third Reich from gaining domination over all of Europe (and potentially the globe) and putting an end to some of history's most gruesome and terrifying racial crimes. That's undeniably "Good". Plus, the war ushered in a new world order in which imperialism could no longer be sustained. In other words, immediately following the war, people long under the control of powerful colonial governments claimed their independence and the right to rule themselves. It's fair to say that this also is "Good", and the United States emerged from the war as one of, if not the, most powerful nations on the globe. Pretty much all "Good"-at least for the U.S.

The political outcomes of World War II was not the only mark it left in its wake. The war caused destruction and depression in the lives of those who had been affected by its wrath, whether it be the fighters or the people faced by them. I believe that it caused repercussions in society based on such a travesty. Above all, World War II was one of the lowest points that humanity has transcended to which should never occur again in history through means of learning from our mistakes, and that is what World War II means to me.