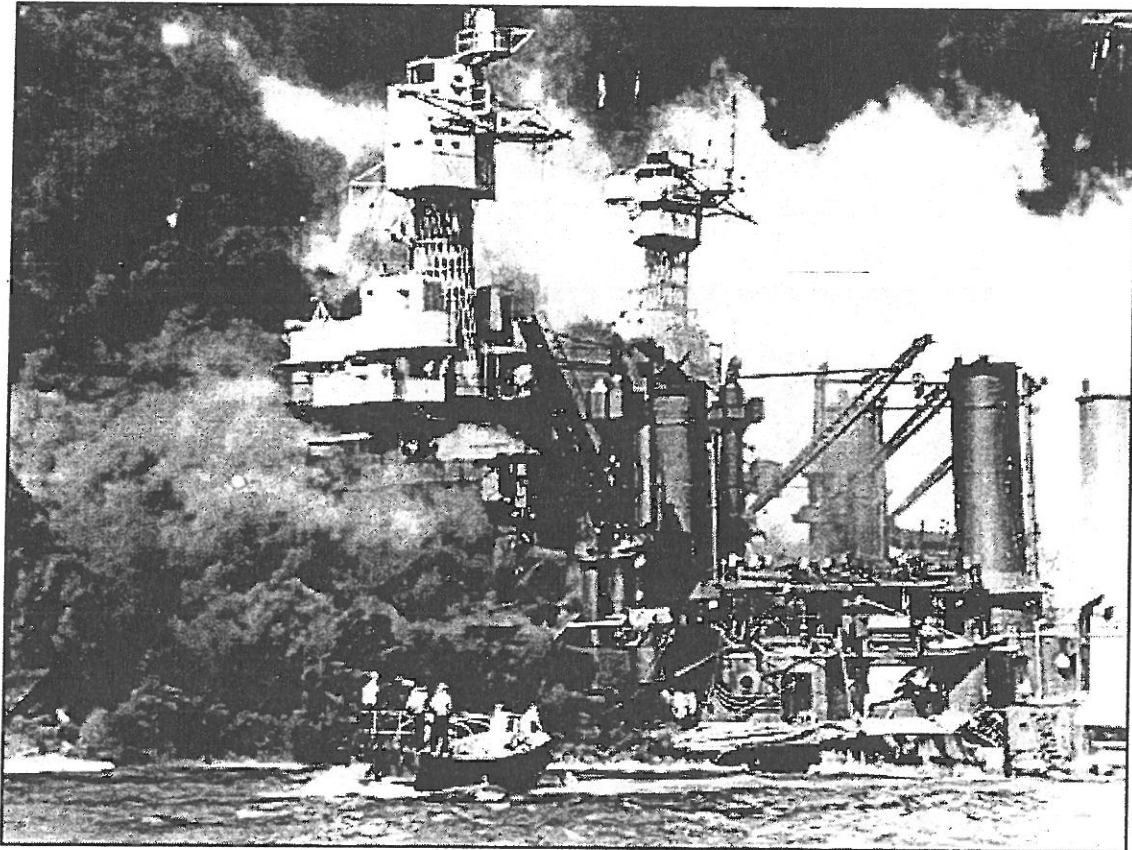

Why Did Japan Attack Pearl Harbor?



E

Overview: On December 7, 1941, Japanese planes and submarines made a surprise attack on the United States at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The following day, after President Roosevelt's impassioned speech, Congress declared war on Japan. It marked the beginning of America's direct involvement in World War II. Why did this island nation with a land area smaller than California, attack the United States at Pearl Harbor?

The Documents:

Document A: The New World Order

Document B: Japan's Expansion (map)

Document C: Actions and Reactions (timeline)

Document D: US Embargo on Oil, Steel, and Scrap Iron (chart)

Document E: Hideki Tojo: Imperial Conference, Nov. 5, 1941

A Mini Document Based Question (Mini-Q)

Hook Exercise: Pearl Harbor

Directions: In 1924 the United States Congress passed the Immigration Quota Act. The new law sharply restricted the number of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe. It also denied immigration to Indians, Chinese, and Japanese. Below is a response from a Japanese newspaper. Read the passage and then consider the three questions that follow.

Japan Times and Mail, April 19, 1924

“The Senate’s Declaration of War”

There is no denying that the adoption by the American Senate of the exclusion amendment to the Immigration bill has given a shock to the whole Japanese race such as has never before been felt.... (T)he Senate has passed, with an almost overwhelming majority, an amendment they know is a most humiliating one to the Japanese race. And the event cuts the Japanese minds deep, a wound that will hurt and rankle for generations and generations.

Questions

1. Much of the anti-Japanese feeling in the United States in the 1920s was in California. The opposition included California labor organizations. Why would California workers be against Japanese immigration?

2. Why does the headline in the *Japan Times and Mail* call the Senate vote a “Declaration of War”?

3. Seventeen years after this vote and this article, Japan attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor. Is there a possible connection between the Immigration Quota Act of 1924 and Pearl Harbor? Explain.

Why Did Japan Attack Pearl Harbor?

It is possible to argue that the most memorable day in United States history was Sunday, December 7, 1941, the day Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Within hours America was deeply embroiled in World War II, both in the Pacific against Japan, and in Europe against Japan's ally, Nazi Germany. The world would never be the same.

To begin to understand why Japan attacked Pearl Harbor one must step back at least a few

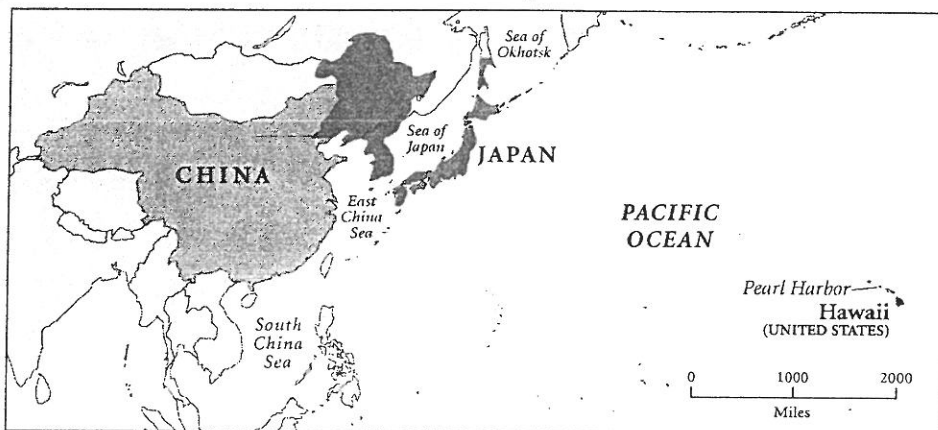
years to the end of an earlier war. In 1919 many of the major world powers met in Versailles, France, to sort out the wreckage of World War I. Among those present were Japan and the United States. One of Japan's interests was to hold on to some islands in the

Pacific it had picked up from Germany. President Woodrow Wilson led the American delegation. Wilson's special interest was the creation of a **League of Nations**, an organization to solve future world problems.

In fact, a League of Nations was established. Many nations joined, including Japan. Surprisingly, the United States did not join. Some American leaders simply did not want to get tangled up in the world's problems. The failure of the United States Senate to vote for the League got a mixed reaction in Japan. Some Japanese leaders were quite shocked and disappointed. Others, however, were not surprised. They were suspicious of the United States. And besides some Japanese leaders had been resentful of the Versailles Treaty. They had always seen it as a way for the Europeans and the Americans to maintain the **status quo** – to keep the world divided between the haves and the have-nots. And in the 1920s, Japan was still one of the have-nots.

In the early 1930s things changed. The military gained increasing power in Japan. In 1932 the Japanese established a **puppet state** in **Manchuria**. When the League of Nations objected, Japan itself left the League. In 1937 Japan invaded China.

The United States and President Franklin Roosevelt were upset and worried about Japan's advances in China, but there was an even bigger concern in Europe. That concern was Adolf



Hitler and Nazi Germany. In 1939, Germany attacked Poland. In the next two years German tanks and planes threatened to conquer most of the European continent. France fell. England held on by a thread. In September 1940, Japan signed a three-way pact with Germany and Italy. This was very upsetting to the United States. Roosevelt realized war with Germany was just a matter of time. He had hoped to avoid a war with Japan. He did not want to fight on two fronts.

But Roosevelt did not get his wish. On December 7, 1941, 361 planes launched from six Japanese aircraft carriers and delivered a surprise attack on the American naval base and airfields at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

But why? At the time Japan had half the population of the United States. In area, it was smaller than Sweden. Japanese leaders knew they were taking a big risk. With all this, *why did Japan attack Pearl Harbor?*

Background Essay Questions



1. What event took place at Versailles in 1919?
2. Why did Woodrow Wilson push the League of Nations?
3. Why didn't the United States join the League?
4. Why were some Japanese leaders resentful of the peace treaty at Versailles?
5. What country did Japan invade in the 1930s?
6. The United States supported China. Why didn't the United States go to war sooner against Japan?
7. Define each of the following:

League of Nations

status quo

puppet state

Manchuria

two fronts

1941 July 16: Yankee Joe DiMaggio hits in 56th consecutive game

December 7: Japan attacks Pearl Harbor

Dec. 8: US declares war on Japan

Dec. 10: Japan invades Philippines

Dec. 11: Germany and Italy declare war on US

Dec. 22: All US males 20 to 44 declared eligible for the draft

Understanding the Question and Pre-Bucketing

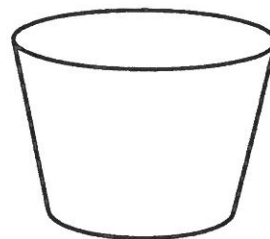
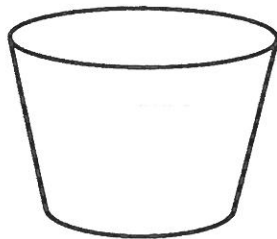
Understanding the Question

1. What is the analytical question asked by this Mini-Q?
2. What and where is Pearl Harbor?
3. Rewrite the question in your own words.

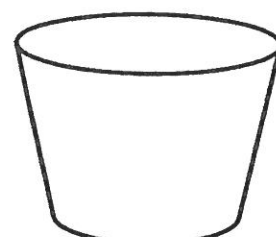
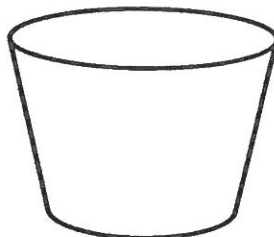
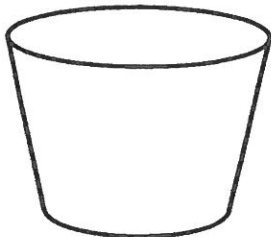
EV

Pre-Bucketing

Directions: Using any clues from the Mini-Q question and the document titles on the cover page, predict analytical categories and label the buckets. We suggest a two- or a three-bucket format.



OR



Document A

Source: Japanese Ministry of Education, excerpts from *The Way of the Subjects*, August 1, 1941.

Note: *The Way of the Subjects* was required reading in most Japanese high schools and colleges.

- An old order ... (European and American) ... is now crumbling.
- The ideals of Japan ... are represented by the principle that the benevolent rule of the Emperor may be extended so as to embrace the whole world.
- Japan is the fountain source of the Yamato race. Manchukuo (Manchuria) is its reservoir and East Asia (including China) is its paddy field.
- The way of the subject is to be loyal to the Emperor in disregard of self, thereby supporting the Imperial Throne coexistence with the Heaven and the Earth.

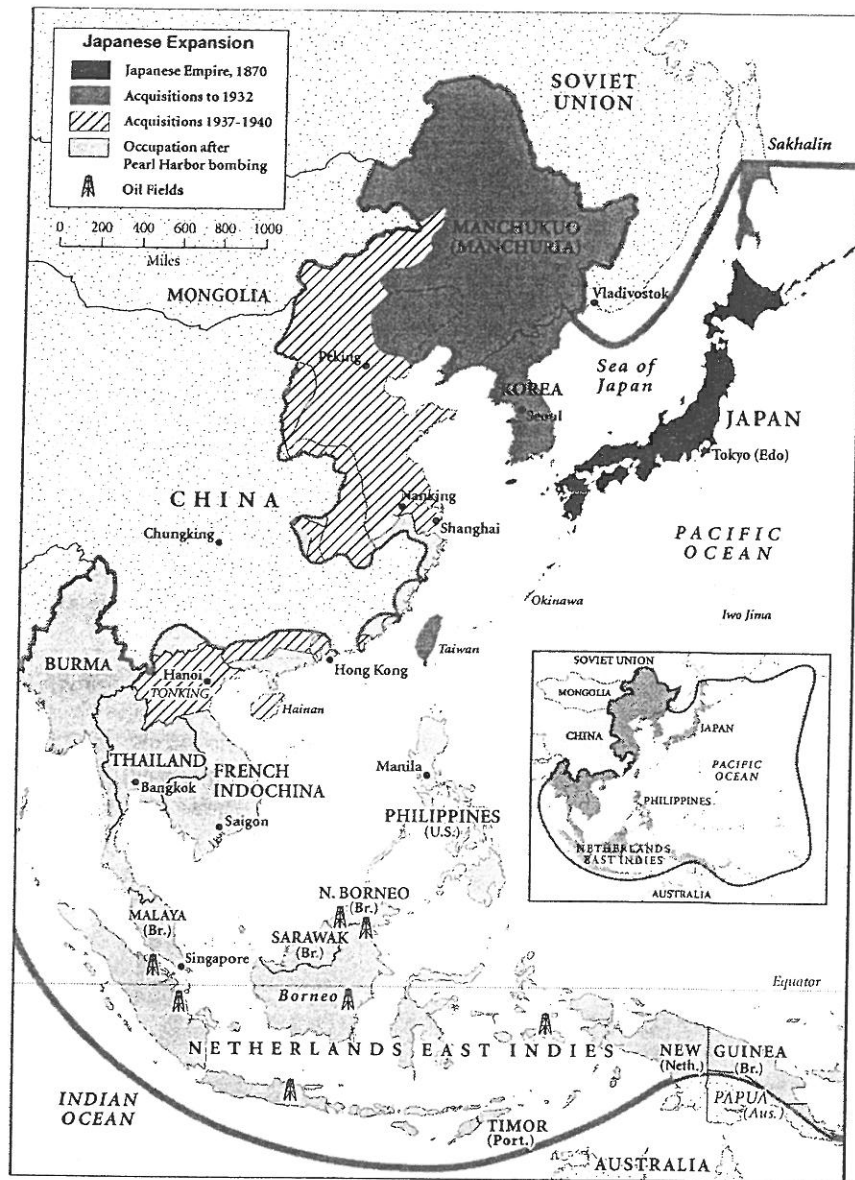
Note: The Yamato race refers to a pure, unmixed Japanese people.

Document Analysis

1. What is a “subject”?
2. What is meant by the “old order”?
3. Name three countries that you think might have controlled the “old order”?
4. Who will be the leader of the “new order”?
5. Who will be ruled by the “new order”?
6. Does this document help answer the question, “Why did Japan attack Pearl Harbor?” Explain.

Document B

Source: Map created from various sources.



Document Analysis

1. What area did Japan establish as a puppet state in 1932?
2. In what year did Japan begin its occupation of China outside of Manchuria?
3. "Japan is the fountain source of the (pure Japanese) race. Manchukuo is its reservoir and East Asia is its paddy field." Is this quote from Document A supported or not supported by the map? Explain.
4. If Japan was interested in seizing oil fields, what islands might they invade? If the Europeans were busy fighting a war with Hitler, what nation could be expected to block Japan?

Document C

Source: Chronology adapted from Akira Iriye, *Pearl Harbor and the Coming of the Pacific War*, Bedford/St. Martin's Press, Boston, 1999.

1932		Japan completes occupation of Manchuria
1937		Japan attacks China
1938		Japan declares its policy to establish a “new order in East Asia”
1939		US begins an embargo* of aircraft and aircraft parts against Japan
1940	May	President Roosevelt moves US Pacific fleet from California to Pearl Harbor
	July	US Congress passes Naval Expansion Act. Promises to triple fleet size by 1944
1941	July	The United States freezes all Japanese assets and bank accounts
	Aug.	The United States imposes an embargo on oil shipments to Japan
	Dec.	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor

*Embargo = stopping trade

E

Document Analysis

1. How many years was it between Japan’s attack on China and Pearl Harbor?
2. What is the “new order” that Japan announced in 1938? (See Document A)
3. What evidence is there in 1939 that the United States did not like the “new order”?
4. What does it mean to freeze assets and bank accounts?
5. What is an embargo?
6. Judging from this timeline, why do you think Japan attacked Pearl Harbor?

Document D

Source: Adapted from Suzuki Akira, "US Economic Sanctions Against Japan and Its Aid to China during the Sino-Japanese War," *Asia Kenyu*, April, 1986.

Japanese Imports 1937 – 1941						
Petroleum (Oil) in units of 10,000-tons						
Steel and scrap iron in units of 1,000 tons						
	<u>Petroleum</u>		<u>Steel</u>		<u>Scrap Iron</u>	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>US</u>
1937	482	380	995	409	242	178
1938	392	316	857	310	136	101
1939	343	291	706	32	256	218
1940	436	291	690	...	139	112
1941	141	88	646	6	20	11

Note: In 1940 Japan had few oil reserves and produced very little of its own oil.

Document Analysis

1. What is an import?
2. In the late 1930s, about what percent of Japan’s oil came from the United States:
 10%? 20%? 50%? 80%?
3. Look at the Document B map. Why would Japanese military leaders be interested in keeping up the flow of imported oil?
4. The United States stopped all trade of oil, steel, and scrap iron with Japan on August 1, 1941. There is evidence that President Franklin Roosevelt was worried about cutting off all oil to Japan. What might have been his concern?

Document E

Source: Hideki Tojo, comments at Imperial Conference, November 5, 1941. In Akira Iriye, *Pearl Harbor and the Coming of the Pacific War*, Bedford/St. Martins Press, 1999.

Note: Tojo was both Prime Minister and War Minister of Japan. These comments were made in a closed meeting of Japan's top government and military leaders in the presence of the Emperor.

The United States has not conceded a single point; it simply makes strong demands on Japan.

... What they insist upon is Japan's acceptance of the principle of the withdrawal of troops.... As I understand it, withdrawal of our troops is retreat. We sent a large force of one million men to China, and it has cost us well over 100,000 dead and wounded, the grief of their bereaved families, hardship for four years, and a national expenditure of several billions of yen. We must by all means get satisfactory results from this.... We can expect an expansion of our country only by stationing troops. This the United States does not welcome.

...(H)ow can we let the United States do as she pleases, even though there is some uneasiness? Two years from now we will have no petroleum for military use. Ships will stop moving. When I think about the strengthening of American defenses in the Southwest Pacific, the expansion of the American fleet, ... I see no end to difficulties.... I fear that we would become a third-class nation after two or three years if we just sat tight.

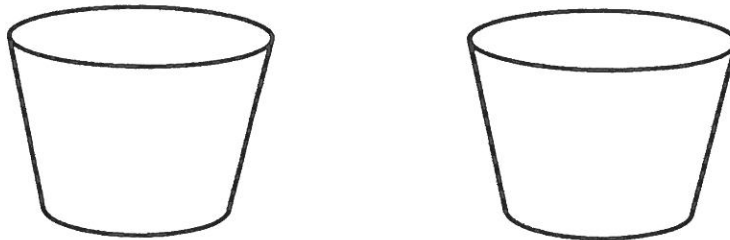
Document Analysis

1. Who is the speaker and what is his position?
2. Why does Tojo say that it would be hard for Japan to pull their troops out of China?
3. What is the US position regarding Japanese soldiers in China?
4. According to Tojo, how long will the Japanese supply of oil last?
5. According to Tojo, what will happen to the US navy over the next few years?
6. Judging from this document, why did the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor?

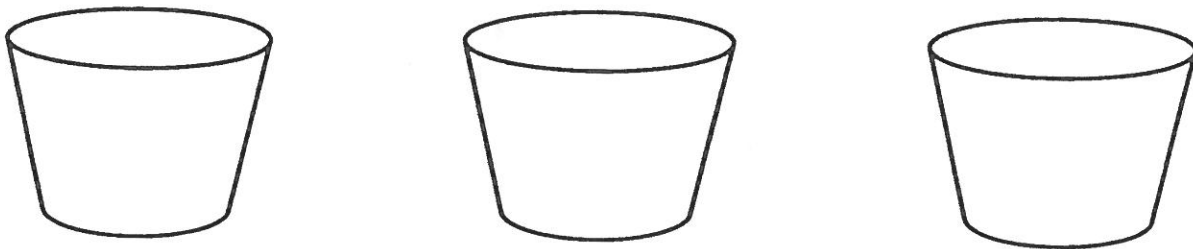
Bucketing – Getting Ready to Write

Bucketing

Look over all the documents and organize them into your final buckets. Write final bucket labels under each bucket and place the letters of the documents in the buckets where they belong. It is okay to put a document in more than one bucket. Remember, your buckets are going to become your body paragraphs.

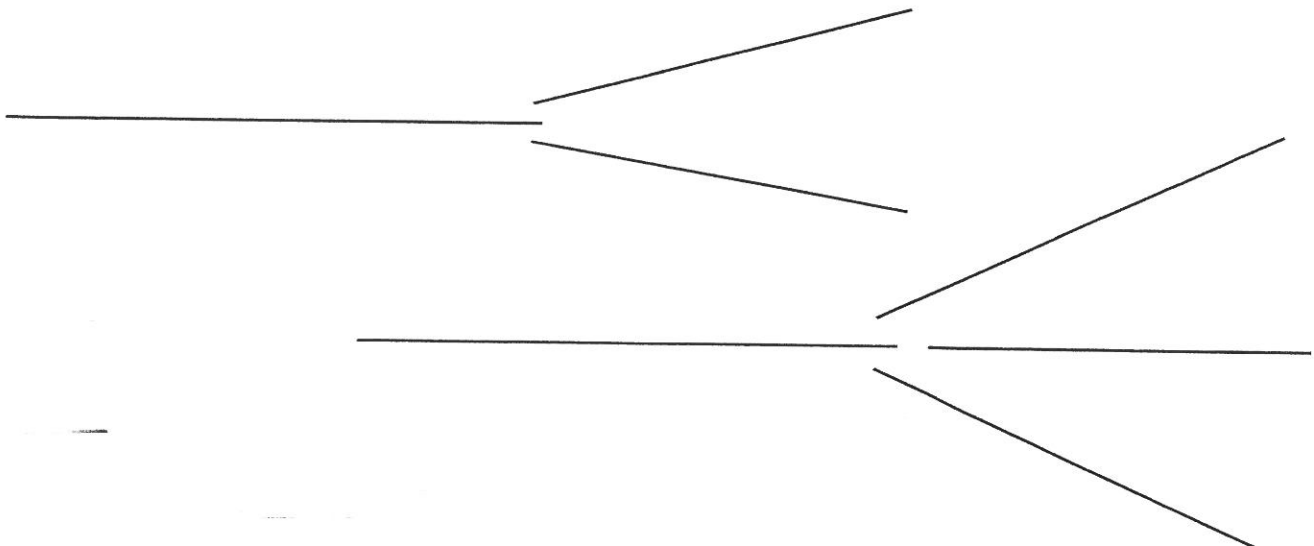


OR



Thesis Development and Roadmap

On the chickenfoot below, write your thesis and your roadmap. Your thesis is always an opinion and answers the Mini-Q question. The roadmap is created from your bucket labels and lists the topic areas you will examine in order to prove your thesis.



From Thesis to Essay Writing

Mini-Q Essay Outline Guide

Working Title

Paragraph #1

Grabber

Background

Stating the question with key terms defined

Thesis and roadmap

Paragraph #2

Baby Thesis for bucket one

Evidence: supporting detail from documents with document citation

Argument: connecting evidence to the thesis

Paragraph #3

Baby Thesis for bucket two

Evidence

Argument

Paragraph #4

Baby Thesis for bucket three

Evidence

Argument

Paragraph #5

Conclusion: Restatement of main idea along with possible insight or wrinkle

EV