Chapter 14 Test Study Guide
Louisiana’s World War II Era

To be successful on this assessment, review all assignments in binder for basic content, as specified in the bullets below. There will be DBQs (Data Based Questions) which you know as LEAP practice: Source Reading(s) and corresponding questions. The format is Multiple Choice and True/False. Twenty questions @ 5 pts. each. Specifically, be aware of the following:

- The combatants of WWII and the major leaders of each nation.
- The causes of the war, for example, appeasement.
- Louisiana’s contributions to the war effort. Examples include the La. Maneuvers, Acadian soldiers, Higgins Boats (or officially LCVP—Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel boats), and Nonfighting citizen involvement.
- The social, political, and economic impact of the war on La.
- BELOW ARE ALL THE PICTORIAL AND READING SOURCES USED FOR QUESTIONING ON THE TEST! REVIEW THEM.

WAR RATION BOOK, TREATY OF VERSAILLES, LEADERS OF AXIS POWERS
REPORTED LOCATIONS OF GERMAN U-BOAT CASUALTIES OFF LA. COAST

PROPAGANDA,

CHART INDICATING SPIKE IN LCVP (HIGGINS) BOAT BIRTHRATE POSTWAR,

POLICY OF APPEASEMENT (SEE CAUSES OF WAR)
THREE SOURCE READINGS:

POW’s

Directions: Analyze the following sources and answer the questions provided.

Background: A prisoner of war is a person who has been captured and imprisoned by the enemy in war.

Source 1: The Geneva Conventions

The Geneva Conventions are a series of treaties the military must abide by in times of war. They were initially implemented by the International Committee for Relief to the Wounded (which later became the International Committee for the Red Cross and Red Crescent), to protect soldiers no longer engaged in combat, such as the sick and wounded, shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea, prisoners of war, and civilians.

Prisoners of war must be:

1. Shown respect at all times
2. Allowed to notify their next of kin and the international Red Cross of their capture.
3. Allowed to correspond with relatives and to receive relief parcels.
4. Given adequate food and clothing
5. Provided with shelter equivalent to those of their captor’s troops
6. Given medical care
7. Paid for any work they do
8. Sent home if seriously ill or wounded provided they agree not to resume active military duties afterwards.
9. Quickly released and sent home when the war is over.

Prisoners of war must not be:

1. Forced to give any information except their name, rank and number
2. Deprived of money or valuables without a receipt and guarantee they will be returned at the time of release
3. Given individual privileges other than on grounds of health, sex, age or military rank
4. Held in close confinement e.g. solitary confinement unless they have broken any laws. They can however have their freedom restricted for security reasons.
5. Be forced to do military or dangerous or unhealthy work.
“Every man in camp was thin, many emaciated, but Louie and Phil were thinner than anyone else. The rations weren’t nearly enough and Louie was plagued by dysentery. He couldn’t get warm and he was racked by a cough. He teetered through the exercise sessions, trying to keep his legs from buckling. At night, he folded his paper blankets to create loft, but it barely helped; the unheated, drafty rooms were only a few degrees warmer than the frigid outside air.”

“The guards were fascinated to learn that the sick, emaciated man in the first barracks had been an Olympic runner. They quickly found a Japanese runner and brought him in for a match race against the American. Hauled out and forced to run, Louie was trounced, and the guards made a cowering mockery out of him. Louie was angry and shaken, and his growing weakness scared him. POWs were dying by the thousands in camps all over Japan and its captured territories, and winter was coming.”

Standing before Louie, the Bird jerked the belt off of his waist and grasped one end with both hands.

“You come to attention last!”

The Bird swung his belt backward, with the buckle loose end, and whipped it around himself and forward, as if he were performing the hammer throw. The buckle rammed into Louie’s left temple and ear.

Louie lay on the floor, dazed, his head throbbing, blood running down from his temple.

When he gathered his wits, the Bird was crouching over him, making a sympathetic, almost maternal sound, a sort of Awww.

For several weeks, Louie was deaf in his left ear. The Bird continued to beat him every day.

As his attacker struck him, Louie bared it with clenched fists and eyes blazing, but the assaults were wearing him down. The corporal began lording over his dream life, coming at him and pounding him, his features alight in vicious rapture.
Few Americans know that from 1942 until 1946 over 400,000 German, 50,000 Italian, and 5,000 Japanese prisoners of war were housed in the continental United States. These German POW’s also would be able to help the war effort in America. How could they do that? These POW had many trades and could be used to repair American uniforms and equipment, rebuild vehicles, work in the cotton fields of the south, cut sugar cane in Louisiana, be PX clerks at army camps, work in sawmills, factories, and other types of industries. With so many of America’s men off overseas in the military, there were always shortages of manpower. A new source was found.

Here in western Louisiana the US Army had established Camp Polk, La. in 1941. This large sprawling base in western Louisiana housed a large contingent of German Prisoners of War until 1946. According to information I have gathered through interviews, in 1943 German POW’s began to arrive in Leesville, La. by rail. The POW’s would embark at the rail depot and would march several miles to their new home at Camp Polk. These German POW’s were veterans of the AFRIKA KORPS and had been captured in North Africa. After being processed in North Africa, they were placed on ships and were transported to ports in the United States. Many POW’s were in tattered uniforms, many in blood stained uniforms, and many were confused at their new surroundings, and many hard core Nazi’s were outright hostile. But upon their arrival one thing began to change their minds. What was it? Good high quality food! Yes, under the Geneva Convention these POW’s were provided good food and decent barracks. Our POW’s taken by the Germans were not given such luxury and underwent many hardships.

The German POW’s proved to be very good workers in Louisiana. Many were from farms and were good farm hands who knew how to milk cows, plant crops, harvest crops, and do odd jobs. They were eager to get out from behind the barbed wire. In Leesville, POW’s helped to paint many of the downtown buildings, with one German artist painting beautiful pictures of German topics.

Throughout their stay at Camp Polk the Germans made many friends with local Americans that have lasted over the many years. By 1946 the POW’s were all on their way back to their homes in Germany. The POW camp was located just south of present day La. Hwy. 10. It was a large camp made up of tar paper wooden barracks for the POW’s. Today at this site is present day HONOR FIELD where Fort Polk conducts ceremonies of all types. Nothing is left of the old camp to make anyone think that during World War II there were German POW’s housed there. Hopefully in the future a historical marker can be placed at this site before it fades into history and is forgotten like so many other historical locations in our area. So now the folks in Sabine and Vernon Parishes know of another bit of rare military history for our area.