

Name _____ Period _____

American History 8 -- Mr. Ruppert
Chapter 26: World War II
Portfolio Assignment #11: My Operation Overlord Journal

This first-person type journal / essay should be approximately 1.5 to 2 pages in length (typed, double spaced, size 12 font, and one inch margins) and must also include related visual content.

Assignment: My D-day Experience / Thank You to America's "Greatest Generation"

It is not an exaggeration to state that the fate of the democratic and free world hung in the balance as the Allies invaded Nazi controlled Europe at Normandy (D-day) on June 6, 1944. A failure here, and perhaps we would live in a far different world (all Volkswagens?...but seriously...) Casualties in the lead units which "hit the beach" first were atrocious (in excess of 90% for many units). To this group of dedicated young men whose blood and ultimate sacrifice marked the beginning of the end of the Third Reich, we may owe our very freedom today. It is a freedom we have learned so much recently that we can never take for granted. Your assignment is to compose a first person letter from the perspective of an American soldier who landed on Omaha Beach. Start your personal reflections as your wait in Britain ready to board your ship across the English channel. Take the reader through your approach to Omaha Beach in the amphibious landing vehicle, and finally describe the progression of the assault in as much depth / detail / realism as you are able to. This may actually be a set of separate journal entries.

Ex: Entry 1 -- May 30, 1944 as you reflect back on your training, the planning for D-day, and your feelings about the imminent invasion across the English Channel.

Entry 2 -- June 6, 1944 as you cross the channel and prepare for the beginning of Operation Overlord, H-hour of D-day

Entry 3 -- June 7, 1944 as you describe the horrors you experienced in "hitting the beach" and taking on Hitler's Atlantic Wall.

If allowed, you may want to view the opening 30 minute sequence of the movie "Saving Private Ryan" to see what is as realistic a combat sequence as has been ever made by Hollywood. Remember, this is still just a movie and the camera men and actors went home at the end of the day. Even this realistic effort (and many veterans of D-day attest to how well done it is) pales to the bravery / ultimate sacrifice many men did make on June 6, 1944. If you've seen the movie, I don't recommend watching it again for reasons I discussed.

Entry 4

Conclude your journal entry by stepping out of "1st person character" and provide your own reflections on the meaning of the sacrifice these men made on June 6, 1944. Essentially, pay them tribute in the form of a modern day thank-you letter to these, the men of America's "greatest generation".

PART OF YOUR GRADE WILL BE BASED ON THE DEPTH / DETAIL OF THE NOTES YOU TAKE DURING THE DOCUMENTARY!!!
