

Attachment C: Writing Assignment for WWII: What Is War Like?

This writing assignment is focused on individual and personal experiences in WWII. There are two choices: a summary of a personal interview or a summary of two different journal accounts.

1. Interview a veteran of World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, or the Gulf War (Desert Storm) of 1991. Be sure the person is willing to be interviewed and not reluctant to share the story. Use the list of questions below as your guide, but ask other questions as your interviewee's answers raise more questions in your mind. You might want to ask whether you may record the interview for class use, but be sure to write his/her answers to provide a backup.

- What was your job in the war?
- How were you trained to do this job?
- Where were you sent during the war? How long were you gone?
- What were the conditions of the area where you were? (extensive description)
- What allowed you to do your job? What prevented you from doing it?
- Were you wounded? If yes, how serious?
- Were you captured? If yes, what happened?
- What was the most difficult part of your experience? What was the easiest?
- What is your strongest memory of that time?
- How do you think your experience affected your later life?

Use your notes (and tape) to write a summary of this person's experience. It should be at least four paragraphs long (each paragraph with three to five complete, thoughtful, and well-written sentences), and it should include an introductory paragraph, two or more middle paragraphs with most of the details, and a concluding paragraph.

2. Read the letters or journals of two people caught in the war in Europe or Asia. They may be military or civilian. They should be located in two different areas. Provide at least a two-paragraph summary of each person's circumstances. Be sure to include the following:

- Name and occupation of the person writing the letter or journal (including age, if given)
- Location and conditions at the location
- Main problem of the person (and family or fellow soldiers)
- What the person did to solve or escape the problem
- How the story ended for the person

3. At the end of the summary or summaries that you write according to the above directions, add one paragraph expressing your personal reaction to the information you have gathered about war. Include what you learned that was new, and your feelings about the person's experience. Be sure the last sentence of this paragraph provides a conclusion to your own experience with this assignment.

4. Grading criteria:

- Clarity of material presented _____
- Appropriate sequence of data _____
- Organization of material (appropriate paragraphing) _____
- Logic and thoughtfulness of paragraph expressing your reaction _____
- Attention to usage, spelling, and punctuation _____
- Neatness _____