

Leaders of World War II Essay Questions

Following are brief biographies of five influential leaders of World War II. With each biography are questions to answer in essay form. The first pages give you the biography and the questions. Notebooking pages you can use for your answers follow.

General Andrew McNaughton

Born on February 25, 1887, in Saskatchewan, Canada, Andrew McNaughton graduated with a degree of Master of Science, with Honors in Electrical Engineering from McGill University. He served as a gunnery officer in World War I, was wounded twice, won the Distinguished Service Order, and became a brigadier general by the end of the war. During the 1930s, he worked to establish army-administered work camps for the unemployed. The work accomplished at these camps helped create a network of air fields, which ultimately helped allow the creation of Trans Canada Airlines. He took command of the First Canadian Division at the beginning of World War II and went on to command the Canadian Corps and then the Canadian Army. He developed techniques for locating enemy artillery in order to disable it and was instrumental in the invention of the cathode ray direction finder, a forerunner of radar. Because of his fierce nationalism, he clashed with the Canadian government over civilian decisions he felt would fragment the Canadian Army by placing his soldiers under Allied command. He served as Canadian representative on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, as a permanent delegate to the United Nations from Canada, and in many other positions after the war. He died on July 11, 1966.

Although he was deeply involved in the science of soldiering, it is said he never completely mastered the relationship between politics and military leadership in war. What do you think the relationship between politics and military leadership in war should be? Do you think General McNaughton's approach of being involved in the science of war was the correct approach?

Lieutenant General Bernard Montgomery

Born November 17, 1887, in London, England, Bernard Law Montgomery attended the Royal Military Academy (Sandhurst). He was wounded twice while serving in World War I, and was appreciated for his ability to train troops. Early in World War II, he commanded troops in the southeastern section of England where an invasion of German troops was expected. In 1942, he was appointed commander of the British Eighth Army in North Africa. He worked with the troops who had recently been defeated by German Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, helping them gain the confidence necessary to force Rommel to retreat. He led troops in pursuit of Rommel across North Africa until Rommel finally surrendered in Tunisia in 1943. After other successful campaigns, he was called back to help lead the Allied armies into France in the Normandy invasion. He made recommendations to General Eisenhower which helped the invasion be successful, and he led his troops to many victories throughout the remainder of the war. After the war, he was knighted. He died on March 24, 1976.

Bernard Montgomery was known for being cautious and thorough in his strategy. While this often made other Allied leaders impatient, he was very popular with the troops, as he insisted

that both the men and the material needed for a strike be completely ready. This outlook brought slow, steady success. What is your opinion of slow, steady success in war, as compared to being less cautious at the risk of not being ready for the unexpected? Do you think it is best to be content with slow, steady progress in other life situations, such as a career? Why or why not?

German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel

Born on November 15, 1891, in Heidenheim, Germany, Erwin Rommel joined the German army in 1910. He served in World War I and demonstrated great courage and leadership. He remained in the army after Germany was defeated. When World War II began in 1939, Rommel served in Poland before leading an attack in France. He was transferred to North Africa in 1941 and became known as the "Desert Fox" because of his daring surprise attacks. He remained in command in North Africa until a final defeat in 1943, at which time he returned to Europe. Rommel made suggestions concerning the German defense of the beaches before the Normandy invasion, but others in power disagreed and placed troops elsewhere. This placement of troops in the coastal areas caused the German response to be less effective when the invasion came. As Rommel realized more fully the superiority of the Allied air forces, he reported to Adolf Hitler that he did not feel Germany could win the war. Rommel's friends, who were conspiring against Hitler, suggested Rommel would be the best one to take over Germany after Hitler was overthrown. Rommel did not disagree, but he did not know there was a plan to assassinate Hitler. Rommel did not accept the idea of murder for political reasons and had, in the past, disobeyed orders given to him by Hitler that called for the execution of someone for political purposes. When an attempt on Hitler's life failed, it was revealed that Rommel had had contact with those who tried to kill Hitler. Hitler sent two generals to see Rommel, who was recovering from serious injuries. The generals presented him the choice of a trial, where Rommel's name and that of his family would be ruined, or suicide. Rommel took his own life on October 14, 1944.

Why do you think Hitler gave Rommel the choice? Was it to protect Rommel's name and family or his own? What do you think motivated Rommel's choice? Was he protecting his family, and if so, why do you think their name and survival was more important to him than his own life? Did he make the decision out of pride? Fear? Something else entirely? Explain your answers.

Lieutenant Colonel James H. Doolittle

Born on December 14, 1896, in Alameda, California, James Doolittle was an Army aviator and flight instructor in World War I and continued his education after the war. He continued his service in the Army Air Corps until 1930 and then worked in aviation in the public sector. He returned to active service when World War II began. Just over four months after the attack on Pearl Harbor, James Doolittle led a bombing mission, often referred to as the "Doolittle Raid," that started from the deck of the aircraft carrier *Hornet*. This was the first time bombers were launched from an aircraft carrier. Sixteen B-25s attacked Japanese cities, including Tokyo. Most of the crews arrived safely on the Chinese mainland, which allowed them safe return to the United States. There was not much damage done from the raid, but it was a huge boost to American morale, and it caused the Japanese to move some of their resources to air defense. He received the Congressional Medal of Honor after leading this attack and was promoted. He led

air operations for the army on the European, North African, and Pacific fronts of the war and was promoted to lieutenant general in 1944. In 1944 and 1945, he commanded the 8th Air Force in attacks on Germany. After the war, he returned to work in the public sector. He was also active in the aerospace industry. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1989. James Doolittle died on September 27, 1993.

The ships used for the "Doolittle Raid" were discovered by Japan, forcing the aircraft to launch 650 miles from Japan rather than the 400 miles as originally planned. It was unclear if there would be enough fuel for all the crews to return safely. Do you think the men did the right thing in launching the raid anyway, or should they have waited until they were closer or more certain of the fuel?

As of the time of the "Doolittle Raid," it had been less than 39 years since the Wright brothers flew at Kitty Hawk. Not only did the bombers that took part in this raid have to be well-handled by the crews, the crews had to be trained to take off on a runway far shorter than what they were used to. Why do you think advancements were made so rapidly to aircraft after they were invented? Explain your answers.

Sir Frank Horton Berryman

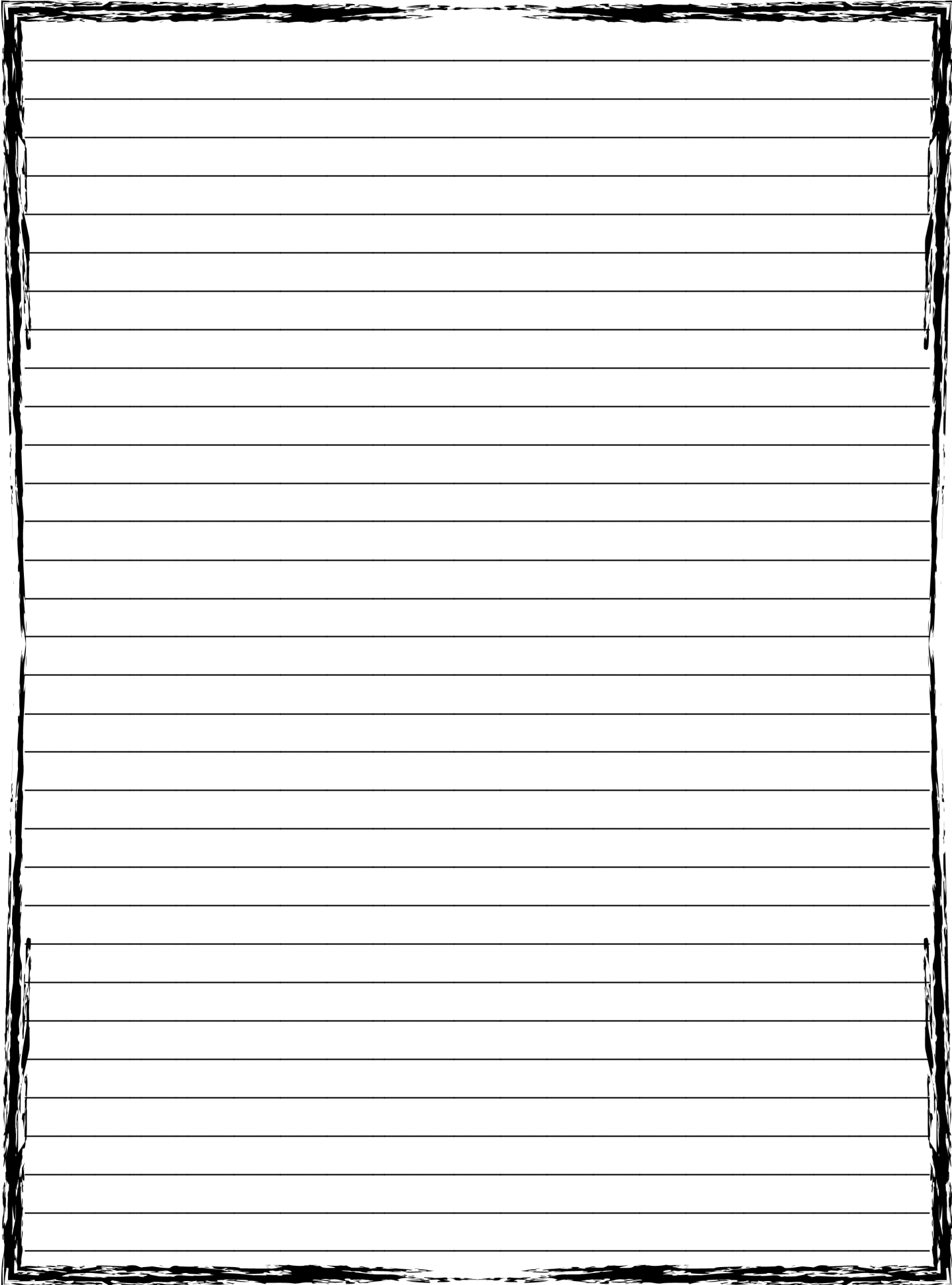
Born on April 11, 1894, in Victoria, Australia, Frank Horton Berryman attended the Royal Military College. After graduation, he was appointed lieutenant in the Australian Imperial Force on July 1, 1915. He served in World War I in various areas of the Field Artillery Brigade. He continued his service after the war, along with continuing his education. In April 1940, he was assigned to the 6th Division of the Australian Imperial Force. He was often praised for his supervision, planning, and leadership. As the war continued, his main duty became acting as liaison to General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters. While serving as liaison, he safeguarded Australian interests and gained the admiration of the American troops. He was present at the Japanese surrender ceremony in Tokyo Bay and when the Japanese Second Army surrendered at Morotai. After the war, his primary assignment was to make the army an important part of the community while stationed at Victoria Barracks in Sydney. He worked tirelessly with community projects, including drives to send food parcels to Britain and help provide support for war widows and children. Even after being placed on the retired list, he kept busy with many community projects. He died on May 28, 1981. His portrait is at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

While serving in the military and after retirement, Sir Frank Berryman gave every bit of energy possible to everything he did. He was admired by many because of that quality. Which is a better way to attack life, with Sir Frank Berryman's dedication or with an attitude of doing only what is necessary to "get by"? What light does Colossians 3:23 shed on the question?









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