



VICTORY GARDENS

Lesson and Activity Suggestions for Grades 9 - 12

Pass the Ammunition

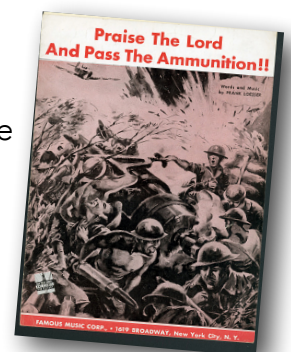
Food rationing became critical for wartime survival. You have already seen the importance of Victory Gardens, now it is time to think about other items that needed to be rationed or turned into different agencies to be recycled for the war effort.



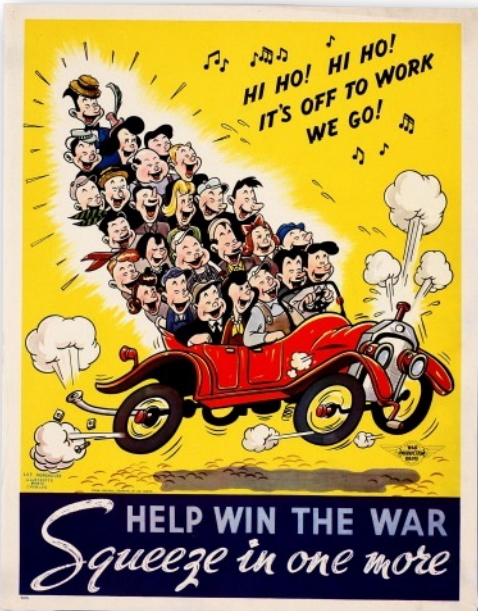
The four World War II propaganda posters above are encouraging Americans to save four different items so that our soldiers could have the ammunition it needed. Examine closely. What four items are Americans to ration or save and turn in, and what will that item be used for in terms of ammunition? The first one has been done for you.

1. Save _____ so the soldiers will have _____.
2. Save tin cans so the soldiers will have bullet casings.
3. Save _____ so the soldiers will have _____.
4. Save _____ so the soldiers will have _____.

Interestingly, there was a song written by Frank Loesser in 1942 called "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition!" It was very popular and its title phrase caught on as a World War II battle cry. There is a great soldier's story behind its creation. I hope you will read about it at https://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_670902.



Gas, paper, material, and scrap metal were some other items needed for military use. Examine the propaganda posters below and write down what item needed to be saved in each. There may be more than one or even two items per poster!



In order to keep inflation in check, President Roosevelt created the Office of Price Administration to try to keep prices low and provide access equal for all, not just the wealthy. Price limits or “ceiling prices” were set, limiting the price that stores could charge for items. Stores could not raise prices above what the price was in March of 1942! Ration books, coupons, and tokens were carefully distributed to each person or family by local boards. These coupons were turned in when a person wanted to buy rationed items. These coupons did not take the place of money, but had to be used in addition to money.

The wartime mantra of shortages and sacrifices was “Use it up, wear it out, make it do or do without!” Americans largely abided by that creed, but it was difficult, just as it would be today. The result was selfish and even illegal behavior by many. A black market developed as consumers paid prices above the established limits or bought goods without using the required coupons. Posters like this one to the right encouraged Americans to take a pledge to avoid giving in to those practices.



Watch “How to Use Your Ration Coupons” on YouTube to learn more (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60qOtTaz6VQ>). This video was created recently, but they captured the spirit of advertising in the 1940s. Notice the over-the-top narration, notice how they are portraying the female. Would this be an effective advertisement today? Why or why not?

In this activity, you are given a list of non-food items that were rationed during World War II and what use the troops needed it for. Your task will be to think about those items today. How are they used by you and your family? What could you do to substitute using those items?

Rationed item	Uses by military	How you use it today	Substitutes for items
Gasoline	Transportation for troops and supplies	Car, lawn mower	Ride a bike, walk, electric car
Copper	phone lines		
Zippers	Military uniforms		
Metal	Tanks, guns, ammo		
Silk	Parachutes, powder sacks		
Rubber	Tires and shoe soles		



Now it is Your Turn

Create your own commercial or public service announcement motivating young adults to change their beliefs or actions with current day topics. Your video can be from one to thirty minutes.

Make A Plan

1. Choose a current day topic. Here are some ideas:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| minimum wage increase | college affordability |
| immigration | do not litter |
| eat healthy | exercise more |
| recycle plastic bottles | conserve water |
| reusable grocery bags | preserve wildlife habitats |
| shop locally | reduce trash |

2. What conclusion do you want your audience to reach?

3. How will you accomplish this with images and words?

For more inspiration from the past, watch these videos for more ideas:

A look back at food rationing during WWII: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9W2jkgs-ugs>

Growth of the Black Market During WWII: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5o36EhTYBzM>

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