

1 **Presidential Address to Congress**

2 (Commonly referred to as the “Day that Lives in Infamy Speech”)

3 President Franklin D. Roosevelt

4 December 8, 1941

5  
6 Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Senate, of the House of  
7 Representatives:

8  
9 Yesterday, December 7, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy - the United  
10 States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air  
11 forces of the Empire of Japan.

12  
13 The United States was at peace with that nation, and, at the solicitation of  
14 Japan, was still in conversation with its government and its Emperor looking  
15 toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific.

16  
17 Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in  
18 the American island of Oahu, the Japanese ambassador to the United States  
19 and his colleague delivered to our Secretary of State a formal reply to a  
20 recent American message. While this reply stated that it seemed useless to  
21 continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of  
22 war or of armed attack.

23  
24 It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious  
25 that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago.  
26 During the intervening time, the Japanese government has deliberately  
27 sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of  
28 hope for continued peace.

29  
30 The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to  
31 American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that very many  
32 American lives have been lost. In addition, American ships have been  
33 reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

34  
35 Yesterday, the Japanese government also launched an attack against Malaya.

36  
37 Last night, Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong.

38  
39 Last night, Japanese forces attacked Guam.

40  
41 Last night, Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands.

42  
43 Last night, the Japanese attacked Wake Island.

44  
45 This morning, the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

46  
47 Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout  
48 the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday and today speak for themselves. The  
49 People of the United States have already formed their opinions and well

dishonor

request

50 understand the implications to the very life and safety of our nation.

51  
52 As Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, I have directed that all  
53 measures be taken for our defense.

54  
55 But always will our whole nation remember the character of the onslaught  
56 against us.

57  
58 No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion,  
59 the American people in their righteous might, will win through to absolute  
60 victory.

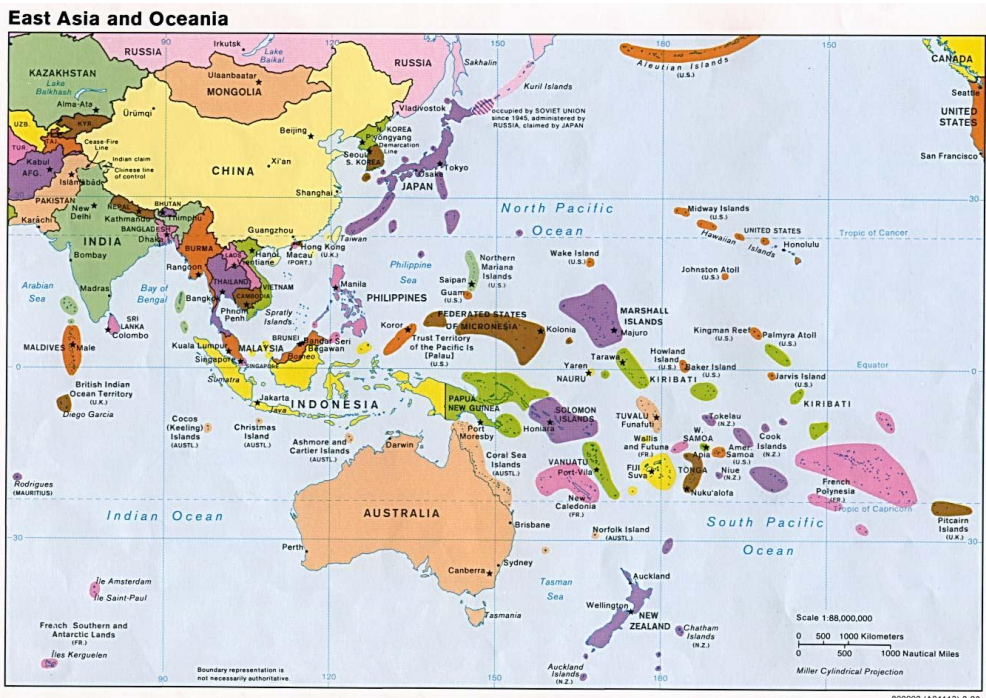
61  
62 I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the People when I  
63 assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make  
64 it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us.

65  
66 Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory,  
67 and our interests are in grave danger.

68  
69 With confidence in our armed forces - with the unbounding determination of  
70 our People - we will gain the inevitable triumph - so help us God.

71  
72 I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack  
73 by Japan on Sunday, December 7, 1941 a state of War has existed between  
74 the United States and the Japanese empire.

75  
76  
77



78  
79

# Teacher's Guide

Name of Text: Presidential Address to Congress (“Day that Lives In Infamy Speech”)

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**Standards:**

NV Standards - H4[6-8].7, G5[6-8].3, G5[6-8].1,

Common Core – R 8.1,8.2,8.3 W 8.1b, 8.2b SL8.1, 8.1b, 8.1c L8.1, 8.4

Text Dependent Questions	Teacher Notes and Possible Textual Evidence For Student Answers
Describe the author, audience, and occasion for this address.	This question helps orient students to the text. It ensures that every student understands that the President is addressing Congress (Senate and House) one day after an attack by the Japanese. An address is a speech, which is explained with the introductory lines “Mr. ...”
Why evidence from the text can you provide to explain why President Roosevelt use the word “infamy” in line 9 to describe the Japanese attack?	It was considered a deceitful act. The word is very strong and gives emphasis to the severity of the act. Students should understand the treachery of the Japanese. This was a premeditated attack on a neutral country. -suddenly and deliberately attacked (10) -US at peace and conversing with Japan about the “maintenance of peace” (13-15) -“no threat or hint of war or of armed attack” in Japanese reply
FDR used the word “deliberately” numerous times in his speech. Using evidence from the text what is the purpose of repeating this word?	Repetition is a rhetorical device often used in speeches to convey and reinforce a specific idea. Roosevelt wanted to convey to the American people that the Japanese were scheming, planned this attack and was not spur of the moment. It helps justify why we must go to war...it is a reaction to a deliberate attack and in no way are we to blame.  Students should understand that the attack was unprovoked while diplomats were still involved in negotiations. Deliberately is found in lines 10, 25, & 26.

Text Dependent Questions	Teacher Notes and Possible Textual Evidence For Student Answers
<p>What can you infer about the instantaneous change in the relationship between Japan and the U.S. in lines 14-22?</p>	<p>Line 14, both countries were looking to maintain peace in the Pacific, Line 17, Japan commenced bombing of Japan</p> <p>Students should understand that while “peace negotiations” were going on Japan was planning and attacking Pearl Harbor</p>
<p>In line 48, what does the statement “The facts of yesterday and today speak for themselves” refer to?</p>	<p>Students will generate a list of the islands attacked by the Japanese the previous day.</p> <p>Students should understand that the attack on Pearl Harbor was not an isolated incident.</p>
<p>Using the attached map, locate and circle the seven islands which were attacked. Determine the distance between Japan (use Tokyo) and each of the islands. What was President Roosevelt trying to accomplish by citing the various areas under attack by Japan?</p>	<p>Give students the hint that “Malaya” refers to what is now Malaysia.</p> <p>Students will determine the approx. miles to each island.</p> <p>Students should understand that there was great premeditation required to launch seven attacks at one time which were expansive, far reaching, and multinational. Some students might see this as a strategic mission to attack and occupy an entire region of the world. Controlling these islands would have created a decisive naval/military barrier between the US and Japan. <b>NOTE:</b> An interesting idea to pursue might be that we traditionally see Hawaii as an island chain off the coast of the United States. This map more accurately shows Hawaii as part of the Pacific Island region. Much of this requires some speculation by students.</p>
<p>What ideas is Roosevelt trying to invoke in the American people, and what words or phrases does he use to accomplish this?</p>	<p>Student answers may vary. But it is important that they understand that Roosevelt’s purpose is to engage the American people so that they feel united against an enemy. He was shaping the reaction of the American people and the national response to the attack.</p> <p><b>UNITED:</b> “the people of the United States have already formed their opinions” (48-49), “the very life and safety of our nation” (50), “our whole nation will remember...against us” (55-56), “us to overcome” (58), “interpret...the will of the people” (62)</p> <p><b>FEAR:</b> “onslaught against us” (55), premeditated invasion (58), form of treachery shall never again endanger us(64), hostilities exist (66), our interest are in grave danger (67), the unprovoked and dastardly attack (74)</p> <p><b>POWER/NATIONALISM:</b> righteous might (59), absolute victory (59-60), defend ourselves to the uttermost (63), confidence in our armed forces-with the unbounding determination-inevitable triumph (69-70)</p>

## **Writing Prompt**

In one paragraph (5-7 sentences) students need to answer the following prompt:

**What evidence does FDR use to argue that this attack “will live in infamy” and that Congress should declare war on Japan?**

Lines: 10-11 America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by the naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan

Lines 14-15 Japan and America are in conversations and looking towards maintenance of peace in the Pacific

Lines 21-22 While diplomatic negotiations seemed useless, there was no threat of attack or war

Lines 24-25 The distance of Hawaii to Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks.

Lines 30-48 Seven different attacks on Pacific locations in a 24 hour period.

Lines 66-67 Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.

## **Checklist identifying key points that will assist in measuring student success and/or difficulty with the close reading and/or writing prompt**

Students should be able to make the connection that while the United States and Japan are attempting to maintain a peaceful coexistence, Japan was clearly planning on attacking Hawaii and multiple Pacific islands.

Students will be able to site examples of the diplomatic negotiations between the two countries, but also identify the attack on Pearl Harbor as a very deliberate and specific attack.

Students should be able to identify the distance between Japan and its Pacific targets as evidence that lengthy and strategic planning was needed.