

Lend-Lease: The Point of No Return

Senior Group Website

Process Paper Word Count: 500

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After creating a list of potential themes and their intricacies, we began to narrow topics down based upon their significance and relevance to current events. We struggled between two topics: 3/5ths Compromise and Lend-Lease. Upon further research into both topics, we established a general consensus that Lend-Lease had more potential. The topic includes a heavy domestic debate among FDR and isolationist Republicans in Congress and also foreign debate between Churchill and FDR regarding the extent to which the U.S. should supply the allies. In addition, Lend-Lease led to significant developments in diplomatic affairs among allied nations.

To begin, we researched the broader context and themes of Lend-Lease to gain a general understanding of our topic. We gathered information from websites, virtual museum exhibits, books, newspapers, and more. We then divided this information into smaller chunks so we could independently focus on specific aspects of Lend-Lease. We chose three aspects: debate on the domestic front, debate and diplomacy on the international front, and the consequences of Lend-Lease. Following the regional and state competitions, we took the judges' recommendations into consideration and edited our site based on their input. We continuously shared information on shared documents and communicated during bi-weekly meetings. Dividing and conquering was extremely effective because we were able to maximize our research volume, develop our own individual standpoints, and easily combine and build off each other's findings.

Constructing our website was by far the most fun and interactive part of the process; however, it required significant communication between group members. We started off by deciding what elements we'd like to include from previous projects and also examples from the NHD website. After agreeing on a consistent design, we created a general outline and gave each member responsibilities over specific pages. After finishing our research, we began building our

website from scratch. We had pre-written passages linked with images so we were easily able to transfer these elements onto our website.

Our historical argument revolves around the significance of FDR's interactions on domestic and international fronts and how American aid to the Allies' war effort ultimately helped them attain victory. By 1940, Britain was fighting virtually alone against the Axis powers and the country's resources were rapidly depleting. They reached out to the U.S. for help and, after negotiations, the two countries worked out the Lend-Lease Act, which offered direct aid to Britain while not jeopardizing the U.S.'s neutrality.

Lend-Lease had a plethora of both short-term and long-term consequences. Short-term, Lend-Lease enabled the U.S. to support the allied powers, ultimately aiding their victory, and it also paved the way for the U.S. to become directly involved in WWII. Long-term, the Act set the foundation for future international alliances, especially between the U.S. and Great Britain. Lend-Lease is an example of one of history's most successful acts of debate and diplomacy; we can certainly learn from the mistakes, risks, and successes that led up to the passage and implementation of the Lend-Lease Act.