

Vernon Schmidt  
World War II veteran and Concentration Camp Liberator  
(0-30 minutes)

1. What was Vernon Noren Schmidt's reason for joining the military after high school?
- He wanted to travel the world.
  - He was inspired by his brother, who had already enlisted.
  - He had completed college and was ready to serve.
  - He was drafted at 17.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What type of training did Vernon receive at Camp Roberts?
- Engineering and construction training.
  - Medical training for battlefield injuries.
  - Infantry replacement training, including rifle and bayonet use.
  - Pilot training for bomber aircraft.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why was the Queen Mary an effective troop transport during World War II?
- It had advanced radar to detect enemy submarines.
  - Its speed and zigzag maneuvers made it difficult for torpedoes to hit.
  - It traveled in heavily guarded convoys.
  - It was heavily armed with anti-aircraft weapons.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

4. What were some challenges Vernon faced during his time on the front lines in Europe?
- Extreme cold weather and frostbite.
  - Lack of adequate leadership.
  - Language barriers with European allies.
  - Insufficient food supplies.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What was the purpose of the Siegfried Line?
- It was a German supply route.
  - It was a defensive line of bunkers, tank traps, and artillery positions.
  - It was a network of German railways.
  - It was a propaganda campaign by the German government.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What did Vernon mention about the culture of hitchhiking during his time in the military?

- a. It was dangerous due to the war.
- b. People were willing to help soldiers in uniform without hesitation.
- c. It was discouraged by the military for safety reasons.
- d. Soldiers needed official passes to travel by hitchhiking.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What was Vernon's first combat experience like?

- a. He was immediately promoted for his bravery.
- b. He encountered heavy resistance while clearing German bunkers.
- c. He was injured and sent back to the rear lines.
- d. He was stationed at a safe distance from the front lines.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Written Response Questions\*\***

8. Describe the transition Vernon experienced from his life in Reedley, California, to being on the front lines in Europe. How did this change impact him personally and emotionally?

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9. Explain the significance of General Patton's leadership during Vernon's time in combat. Why did Vernon express gratitude for his leadership?

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10. Reflect on Vernon's description of camaraderie and teamwork among soldiers. How did this support system help them endure the challenges of war?

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Vernon Schmidt  
World War II veteran and Concentration Camp Liberator  
(31-60 minutes)

1. What city was described as being a large and well-defended area on the Rhine River, where soldiers encountered intense combat?

- A) Berlin
- B) Mainz
- C) Pilsen
- D) Flossenburg

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What key role did the Air Force play during the soldiers' advance in Mainz?

- A) Transporting troops across the Rhine River
- B) Dropping paratroopers behind enemy lines
- C) Providing air support by targeting enemy positions
- D) Delivering supplies to soldiers in the orchard

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What significant discovery did soldiers make in the Merkers salt mines?

- A) German blueprints for new weapons
- B) Stacks of looted art, gold, and money
- C) A hidden bunker with surviving Nazi leaders
- D) Underground tunnels used for troop movement

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Why were many of the German soldiers captured in Mainz willing to surrender?

- A) They ran out of ammunition.
- B) They were overwhelmed by the number of U.S. troops.
- C) They were demoralized by the airstrike from P-47 planes.
- D) They were given food and water in exchange for surrender.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What condition did the soldiers observe among the remaining prisoners at Flossenburg concentration camp?

- A) They were healthy but traumatized.
- B) They were severely emaciated and sick.
- C) They had escaped and were in hiding.
- D) They were armed and resisting liberation.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which of the following best describes the role of the 90th Infantry Division during the liberation of Flossenbürg?

- A) They provided supplies to survivors.
- B) They guarded the perimeter and ensured safety.
- C) They documented the conditions for the Nuremberg Trials.
- D) They rebuilt the camp for survivors to stay longer.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What event in the Czech Republic highlighted the gratitude of its citizens toward American soldiers?

- A) A parade with restored WWII vehicles
- B) A ceremony to commemorate WWII survivors
- C) An honorary meeting with General Patton's descendants
- D) A memorial dedicated to soldiers of the 90th Infantry Division

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Written Response Questions\*\***

8. Describe the significance of the Merkers salt mines in World War II history. What did the discovery there reveal about the Nazis' plans?

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9. Explain how the 90th Infantry Division played a role in liberating concentration camps and aiding Holocaust survivors. How did their actions leave a lasting impact on the survivors?

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10. How did the soldiers' actions in Mainz and beyond demonstrate the importance of teamwork and adaptability in combat? Use specific examples from the transcript.

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(61-90 minutes)

1. Where did Vernon and Laura Bailey meet during one of their interactions related to World War II?

- A. Normandy, France
- B. Fort Benning, Georgia
- C. Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
- D. Arlington National Cemetery

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What symbol of support did Vernon's church display for the soldiers who went to war?

- A. A flag with their pictures
- B. A marquee with their names and stars
- C. A statue in their honor
- D. A list of donations made for their support

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How many members from Vernon's small church went to war during World War II?

- A. About 25
- B. About 30
- C. About 40
- D. About 50

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

4. According to Vernon, what role did the American civilian population play during World War II?

- A. They avoided involvement in the war effort.
- B. They supported the troops by manufacturing military equipment.
- C. They only contributed through financial donations.
- D. They refrained from any direct contribution to the war.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What event marked the official surrender of Germany in World War II?

- A. The bombing of Pearl Harbor
- B. The liberation of France
- C. The signing of surrender on May 8, 1945
- D. The death of Hitler

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why did Vernon express distrust toward the Russian pilot he met near the end of the war?

- A. The pilot refused to engage in conversation.
- B. The pilot slapped Vernon's arm away when he reached for his weapon.
- C. The pilot was part of the German military.
- D. The pilot tried to take Vernon's weapon.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

7. According to Vernon, what is the key to maintaining a positive and healthy life?

- A. Complaining about challenges
- B. Remaining physically strong
- C. Being grateful, choosing good friends, and staying positive
- D. Avoiding all social interactions

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Written Response Questions\*\***

8. Describe how Vernon's community and church supported soldiers during World War II. Why does Vernon believe this support was significant?

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9. What lessons can be learned from Vernon's reflections on teamwork and unity during World War II, both among soldiers and civilians? How can these lessons apply to challenges faced today?

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10. Vernon emphasized the importance of faith, family, and patriotism in his advice to young people. In your opinion, how can these values shape a person's future? Provide examples from your own experiences or observations.

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