

**3. With what objectives did Japan enter World War II? What were the consequences of its defeat? Discuss.****Approach**

The question is asking you to Discuss which necessitates a debate where reasoning is backed up with evidence to make a case for and against an argument and finally arriving at a conclusion. In simple terms an examiner expects one to discuss various perspectives and present a logical argument.

**Introduction**

Hirohito (1901-1989) was emperor of Japan from 1926 until his death in 1989. He took over at a time of rising democratic sentiment, but his country soon turned toward ultra-nationalism and militarism. During World War II (1939-45), Japan attacked nearly all of its Asian neighbours, allied itself with Nazi Germany and launched a surprise assault on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbour.

**Body****WITH WHAT OBJECTIVES DID JAPAN ENTER WORLD WAR II?**

- In September 1940, Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, in which they agreed to assist one another should any of them be attacked by a country not already involved in the war.
- Japan sent troops to occupy French Indochina that same month, and the United States responded with economic sanctions, including an embargo on oil and steel.
- To Japan, war with the United States had become to seem inevitable, in order to defend its status as a major world power. Because the odds were stacked against them, their only chance was the element of surprise.
- A little over a year later, Hirohito consented to the decision of his government to battle the Americans.
- On December 7, 1941, Japanese planes bombarded the U.S. naval base at pearl harbour near Honolulu, Hawaii, destroying or crippling 18 ships and killing almost 2,500 men. The United States declared war one day later.

**WHAT WERE THE CONSEQUENCES OF ITS DEFEAT?**

- Atomic bomb largely destroyed the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6 and 9, respectively. On August 8 the Soviet Union declared war and the next day marched into Manchuria, where the Kwantung Army could offer only token resistance.
- The Japanese government attempted to gain as its sole condition for surrender a qualification for the preservation of the imperial institution; after the Allies agreed to respect the will of the Japanese people, the emperor insisted on surrender.

- The Pacific war came to an end on August 14 (August 15 in Japan). The formal surrender was signed on September 2 in Tokyo bay aboard the battleship USS Missouri.
- Aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay, Japan formally surrenders to the Allies, bringing an end to world war 2.
- By the summer of 1945, the defeat of Japan was a foregone conclusion. The Japanese navy and air force were destroyed. The Allied naval blockade of Japan and intensive bombing of Japanese cities had left the country and its economy devastated.
- By the end of the war, Japan's cities were destroyed, its stockpiles exhausted, and its industrial capacity gutted. The government stood without prestige or respect. An alarming shortage of food and rising inflation threatened what remained of national strength.

### Conclusion

Post-war investigators concluded that neither the atomic bombs nor the Soviet entry into the war was central to the decision to surrender, although they probably helped to advance the date. It was determined that submarine blockade of the Japanese islands had brought economic defeat by preventing exploitation of Japan's new colonies, sinking merchant tonnage, and convincing Japanese leaders of the hopelessness of the war while the bombing brought the consciousness of defeat to the people.

