

Impact of War of Family Relationships

See a lesson plan related to this material on the [Wisconsin Historical Society website](http://www.wisconsinhistoricalsociety.org).



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Student Worksheet

Name _____

Directions: Your task is to write a letter, making it as historically accurate as possible. In this letter you will be writing to your father, who is overseas fighting in World War II. Take on the role of a teenage high school student. You can decide the size of your family, which town or city you live in, and the details of your daily life. Check with your teacher and textbook to determine additional details that will make your letter realistic. Write your letter on a separate piece of unlined paper.

Follow-up Questions for Small Groups. You will be reading another student's letter and answering the following questions to prepare for small group discussion on three or four letters.

1. How would you characterize the overall mood of the letter you read?
2. Why do you think that is?
3. List some of the subjects the teenager reported on to his/her father:
4. How are these subjects (and the way in which they are conveyed) both similar to and different from the daily conversations children might have with their father if he were not at war?
5. How do you imagine most children dealt with their fears, anger, and other ordinary childhood frustrations when their fathers were at war? Discuss how that might affect "traditional" roles of parenting.
6. Judging from the letter, how did teenaged life during World War II differ from that of teens today?

To conclude your small group discussion, talk with each other about the following question:
How do personal letters help us understand the war experience in ways that our textbooks cannot?
List specific examples: