

The Battle of Midway: Breaking the Japanese Code and Achieving Victory Against All Odds

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Individual Website

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The Battle of Midway is regarded as one of the most significant naval battles in history. The encounter was a decisive naval battle in the Pacific Theater of World War II, setting the stage for the U.S. to take the initiative in the war, leading to Imperial Japan's ultimate demise.

I have been interested in World War II since I was six years old. Upon visiting Pearl Harbor three years later, my interest for the Pacific War and the Battle of Midway grew. I realized its significance and this year, after further analysis, I understood how it related to the theme, thus, I chose it as my topic. It fits this year's theme, "**Breaking Barriers** in History," as in order for the Battle of Midway to be considered a turning point in the war, many **barriers** were **broken**. U.S. Naval cryptanalysts at Station Hypo in Hawaii were able to decipher that Japan was planning an attack on Midway Island in June 1942. Additionally, the Japanese plan to eliminate the U.S. from the Pacific War was **broken** when the communications intelligence supplied the information Admiral Nimitz needed to draw out his operation plan, leading to the American success of the battle. Moreover, after Midway, Japan had a difficult time replacing its losses, rapidly becoming more insufficient to cope with mounting casualties, while the U.S.'s massive industrial capabilities made losses far easier to replace.

I began my research by reading books and searching the internet for credible sources and experts. I was able to interview Dr. Craig Symonds, a historian, maritime history professor, and the author of *The Battle of Midway*. He told me that Midway was won not only militarily but also due to the U.S.'s flexibility. I then interviewed Dr. Robert Frakes, a professor of military history at California State University of Bakersfield, who said that Japan faced a **barrier** of their own: their overconfidence. I was also able to interview Jill Kleiss, daughter of late Midway dive-bomber pilot "Dusty" Kleiss. She told me some of the experiences her father had and referred me

to historians Tim and Laura Orr, whom I interviewed. The two emphasized how the battle not only affected the Pacific War but that it also influenced global geopolitics at the time.

I chose to create a website because I could utilize various elements. It would let me conveniently work on my project, allowing me to easily update information as needed. This year, despite technical issues regarding NHD WebCentral, I was able to adapt to the new web-editor.

The Battle of Midway was a turning point in the Pacific War. U.S. efforts allowed the nation to overcome the **barrier** of the opposing Japanese forces. The success boosted U.S. morale and paved the way for more successes, transferring the war's initiative from Japan to America. It began the decline of Japan and the rise of American domination in the Pacific. Because **barriers** were **broken**, ultimately, the Battle of Midway signaled victory for the U.S. in the Pacific War.