The Truman Committee

bit.ly/LbHTruman Runtime: 10:00



Video Guides

Guide A: Best for checking understanding of key events and details. Includes answer key with video timestamps.

Guide B: Best for active note-taking and connecting evidence to the video's big ideas. Does not include answer key, as student responses will vary.

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Truman Committee

Guide A: Comprehension and Discussion Questions

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Comprehension Questions

1) Before the United States fully entered World War II, what role did it play in supporting its European allies?

2) What problems did the Truman Committee uncover or identify at the Willow Run bomber plant?

3) How did women contribute to the war effort at Willow Run, and what does the Truman Committee's bipartisan approach reveal about American politics during World War II?

4) What were two major accomplishments of the Truman Committee, and what lessons does its work offer about the importance of congressional oversight and government accountability?

Discussion Questions

The takeaways from this investigation are:

1. When well done, oversight can effectively deal with waste, fraud, and abuse without hindering government activity.
2. Bipartisanship is possible and powerful.
3. Truman emphasized fact-based investigations and avoided the spotlight and political theater. His goal was to fix problems, not score points.

Which of these is the most important or lasting, and why? Do any of them still impact our lives today?

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Truman Committee ANSWER KEY

Guide A: Comprehension and Discussion Questions

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Comprehension Questions

1) Before the United States fully entered World War II, what role did it play in supporting its European allies?

Before entering the war directly, the United States acted as the "arsenal of democracy," supplying weapons and equipment to its European allies. Increasing B-24 production was important because bombers could strike enemy targets from the air and support the fight against Nazi Germany and the Axis powers. (2:30)

2) What problems did the Truman Committee uncover or identify at the Willow Run bomber plant?

The committee identified production challenges, including shortages of parts and labor, outdated or inadequate blueprints and tooling, and changing engineering requirements. The area also lacked sufficient housing for workers, causing some to leave for jobs elsewhere and making it harder to maintain the workforce. The hearings helped lead to the creation of temporary housing at Willow Run Village. (5:10)

3) How did women contribute to the war effort at Willow Run, and what does the Truman Committee's bipartisan approach reveal about American politics during World War II?

Before the war, women typically worked as homemakers. For the war effort, they took on industrial jobs such as welding, electrical work, mechanics, and operating cranes and trucks. (6:07)

4) What were two major accomplishments of the Truman Committee, and what lessons does its work offer about the importance of congressional oversight and government accountability?

Two major accomplishments were exposing waste and mismanagement in military spending and saving an estimated $10–15 billion while helping improve the quality and availability of military equipment. The committee also demonstrated that bipartisan cooperation, fact-based investigations, transparency, and accountability can reduce waste and protect public resources without preventing the government from carrying out essential work. (9:04)

Discussion Questions

The takeaways from this investigation are:

1. When well done, oversight can effectively deal with waste, fraud, and abuse without hindering government activity.
2. Bipartisanship is possible and powerful.
3. Truman emphasized fact-based investigations and avoided the spotlight and political theater. His goal was to fix problems, not score points.

Which of these is the most important or lasting, and why? Do any of them still impact our lives today?

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Truman Committee

Guide B: Evidence Graphic Organizer

Directions: As you watch the video, record facts, examples, or statements that support each takeaway.

https://bit.ly/LbHTruman

Takeaway	Fact, example, or statement to support it
When well done, oversight can effectively deal with waste, fraud, and abuse without hindering government activity.	
Bipartisanship is possible and powerful.	
Truman emphasized fact-based investigations and avoided the spotlight and political theater. His goal was to fix problems, not score points.	

Which takeaway was most compelling or convincing? Circle or highlight your answer. How does this investigation (and its consequences) still impact our lives today?

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