Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
 **The Afrika Korps Reaches El Alamein**Why did the fighting of WWII reach into Africa? Think back to the rise of totalitarianism in Italy and why the west (Allied powers) felt the need to intervene.  
  
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 While some German troops faced -50 degree temperatures on the Russian Front, others baked in the deserts of North Africa. The struggle for Africa had begun in about 1880 and had led to French-German conflicts in Morocco in 1905 and 1911.   
 During WWII, German colonies in east Africa (Tanzania) and southwest Africa (Namibia) were taken by the British. The Italian colonies were Libya on the north coast, and Ethiopia and Somalia in east Africa. In 1941, British colonial troops from Nigeria and India attacked Ethiopia from the north and from the south. In May, Haile Selassie, the new native-Ethiopian emperor, took control of Ethiopia. The Italians lost 289,000 men in their struggle to keep their colonies.  
 Between Italian-held Libya and British-controlled Egypt lay a vast area of the Sahara Desert - hot, sandy, and dry - miserable for men and machines fighting a modern war. The hold so vast an area, more Allied troops were sent in, mostly from New Zealand, Australia, and India. Strengthened with new antitank guns, Royal Air Force (RAF) squadrons, and British and American-made tanks, the British had the advantage.  
 However, after 2 defeats in Libya and Malta (an island in the Mediterranean), the British troops were taken from North Africa to fight in Greece, and Hitler sent *Panzer* (armored tank) divisions to Africa. In command of this newly formed Afrika Korps was Erwin Rommel (one of Hitler's most successful generals) who found the desert ideal for his hard-hitting style of fighting. Rommel had led Panzers into Poland and France, but he became a legend with his Afrika Korps. He was a careful planner who conditioned his men before they were sent to Africa by housing them in overheated barracks, giving them very little water, and kicking up artificial dust storms with large fans. In Africa, he saw that his men were well fed and provided rest areas for them to relax in comfort between campaigns. Rommel often took personal risks by moving along the front line at night to study enemy gun emplacements. He was so successful and highly respected that he was nicknamed the “Desert Fox.”  
 Commander of the British Eighth Army, General Sir Claude Auchinleck, had set up strong defenses at El Alamein, only 50 miles west of Alexandria and the Nile River. Beyond the Nile lay the oil fields of the Middle East. El Alamein proved to be a devastating loss for the Axis powers under Rommel. Along the 40-mile line both sides had planted thousands of land mines that were barely covered by sand. The British had time to build permanent fortifications along their line. Specialists in laying and disarming mines invaded each other's mine fields and neutralized as many as possible, but more were planted the next day. Both sides knew that tanks alone would not win; infantry, artillery, and air support were critical to victory. For 2 weeks before the battle, the RAF concentrated on destroying Luftwaffe landing fields.  
 From October to November of 1942, the critical battle of El Alamein was fought, with the British possessing the better weapons. Rommel had 540 tanks, 280 of them old Italian models; the British had 1,200 tanks, including U.S. built Grants and Shermans. By Nov. 4, Rommel only had about 80 tanks left. He broke off the battle and pulled back to Tripoli, Lybia. Two days later, an Allied invasion in west Africa had the Afrika Korps caught in a vise and won handily.  
Explain why you think the defeat of Hitler and the Axis powers in Africa was an important turning point in WWII.   
   
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**Pacific Theater Battles – Post Pearl Harbor**

**Fall of the Philippines – Dec-May 1941-42**- US territory since 1898 – strategic location  
- General Douglas MacArthur – funds to mobilize defenses   
- Day after Pearl Harbor -   
 Japanese surprise air attacks on US air bases in Pacific   
 - US airpower in the area destroyed   
 - Manila captured within a month  
 - Allied forces retreat to the Bataan Peninsula – April 1942 surrender   
 --starvation, disease, lack of naval/air support

**Bataan Death March**- Surrendered Filipinos/Americans to march 65 miles  
 - 5 day marches of 100 men  
 - Thousands died – brutality and starvation  
 - Survivors to POW camps: starvation, disease, mistreatment   
- "I Shall Return”   
 - March 1942 -- MacArthur after escape from Philippines to Australia   
 - Left troops behind  
 - Fulfilled on Feb. 1945 – US/Filipino forces recaptured Bataan   
 By March – Manila liberated

**Battle of Midway**- June 1942  
- Turning point – US gains advantage  
- Admiral Chester Nimitz intercepted intelligence  
- Japan's naval fleet and aircraft carriers destroyed

**Island Amphibious Landings**- Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands (Aug-Feb 42-43)  
 - Air-sea-land campaign to gain control of sea route  
 - Tactical surprise landing by Marine Corps  
 - First Allied offensive attack in Pacific Theater – Allies win

- Iwo Jima (Feb 1945)   
- Need for US base near Japan  
 - New Japan. tactics – inland caves, tunnels, underground bunker  
 - Demolished US troops, but US came out on top

**BACK IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER**  
- The Afrika Korps Reaches El Alamein  
 - German/Axis defeat  
 - One turning point of the Euro Theater