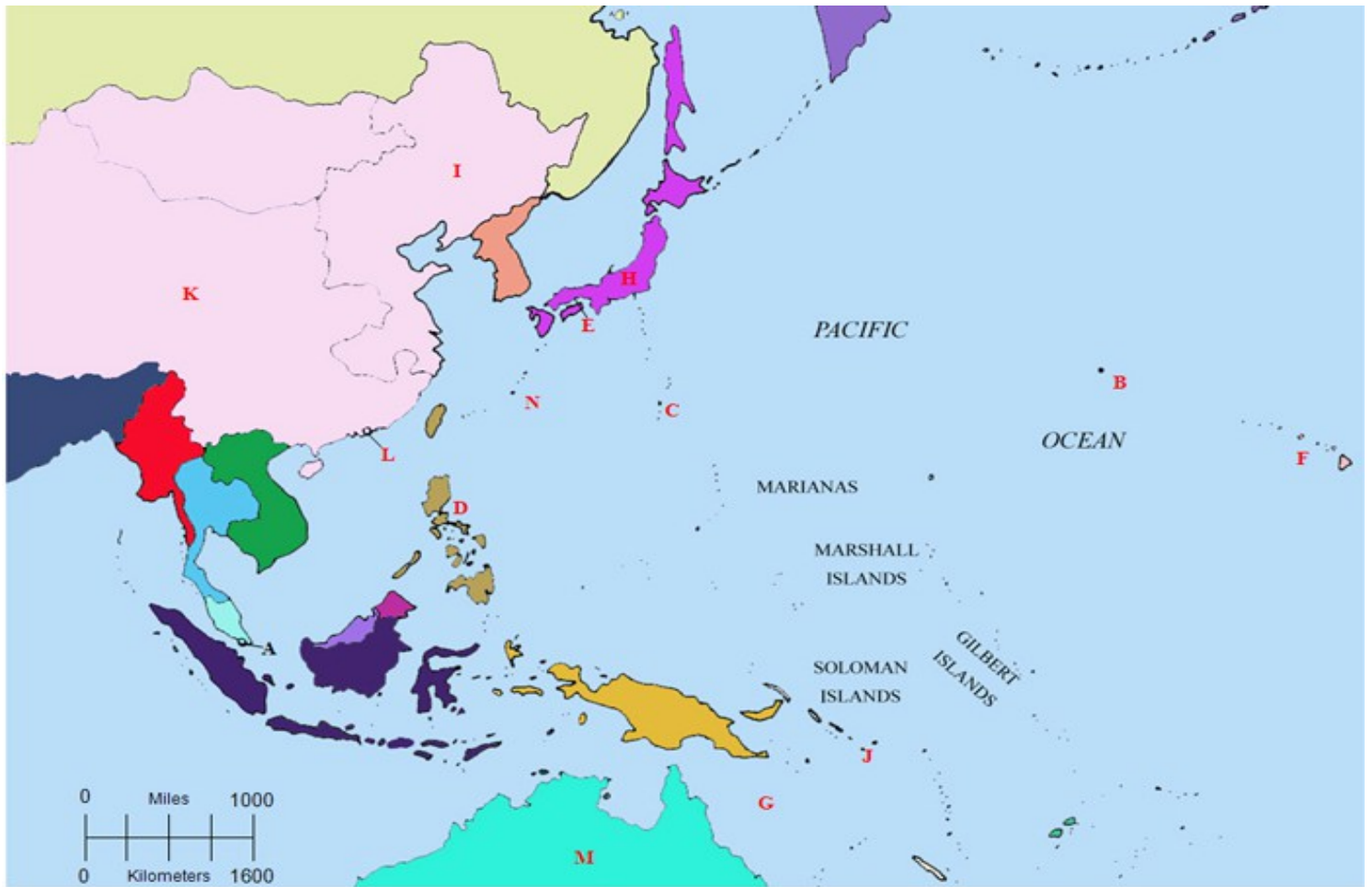


# Student Geography Sheet: The Pacific

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Period: \_\_\_\_\_



Almost 70 years ago, a generation of young Americans left their homes to fight a world war. That war was waged in two distant and very different places. In Europe, Americans faced hardship and danger. But they did so amid people and places that—while foreign—had important connections with their lives back in America. Terrain, weather, place names and, sometimes, ethnic ties were familiar links that provided some measure of comfort against the hardships of war.

Americans who fought the Japanese in the Pacific fought a very different kind of war. Whether in the jungles of New Guinea or on tiny atolls in the central Pacific, they confronted environments and cultures with fewer reference points. Their war involved vast distances, isolation, and harsh, unfamiliar surroundings that placed special burdens on them.

Over two million young Americans went to war in the Pacific. They served in places as remote and far-flung as the Philippines, the Solomon Islands and Okinawa. Many struggled and died in places their families had never heard of. They waged a bloody war against a determined enemy.

Consider this: when the Japanese attacked the U.S. Pacific Fleet on December 7, 1941, most Americans had never heard of Pearl Harbor and did not even know where it was.