

# The pearl harbor address to the nation

War



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

When you watch any movie, TV show or documentary on World War Two, there is one quote that you hear in almost every single one of them. This timeless and moving quote is “ a date that will live in infamy. ” This was the opening line said by Franklin D Roosevelt in his National address the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor. It is one of the most replayed and well known speeches in American history. It was the declaration of war against the Empire of Japan and entered the United States into one of the greatest wars it would take part in.

Franklin D Roosevelt uses pathos, ethos and logos to deliver a resounding speech for the declaration of war and the entrance of the United States in to World War Two. He essentially assigns a third of the speech to each one of these rhetorical speaking tools. The speech was given at 12: 30 p. m. on December 8th 1941 to a joint session of congress and was broadcast over radio and television. It was key for the president to get the people as a whole for the war and united for the cause.

He wanted to arouse as many strong emotions from the people as possible. Luckily for him this was very easy to accomplish. At every point in history the American people have exploded with outrage at every deceitful military tactic ever used by another nation or people against America. The populace becomes very motivated to take the fight to the enemy to uphold core American values such as patriotism and justice. A prime example of this was the sinking of the U. S. S. Maine. The ship was unexpectedly sunk by Spaniards in the Havana harbor of Cuba.

This event is considered the precipitating event of the Spanish-American war. He plays upon the circumstances in the same way that the Americans did with this instance back in 1898. He portrays America as a purely passive victim through his diction in the portion of the speech. FDR mentions multiple times that America and Japan still had ongoing peace talks and that the attack was completely unprovoked. He elegantly uses Pathos at the throughout his speech and really harps on Americas emotions about the event.

After Franklin D Roosevelt talks about the surprise attack upon Pearl harbor, he goes on to list all of the other military advances Japan made shortly afterwards. This list of attacks is viewed as him trying to convince the American people why it is logical and necessary for their country to go to war with this aggressive nation. He lists islands all across the pacific and under American control. Each statement is staccato and kept to the point, followed a pause to let each one individually sink in.

He says when each attack happened and where. This is a particularly ominous portion of the speech, and was expertly done by the president. Logical explanations are very important to the American people and are the primary basis of why we do what we do. In the last part of the speech Franklin D Roosevelt makes an effort to talk about the character of the American people. Our countries ethics and moral values are the staple of our nation and the reason our people are willing to do everything necessary to preserve and protect it.

This acknowledgment of the American ethos is a testament to the greatness of this country and why the war must be fought and will be won. But the biggest portrayal of this ethics and patriotism shown by Roosevelt is unbeknownst to most Americans at this time. The president had polio early in his life, and was paralyzed from the waist down, but he refused to let the American people know this. When he gave the speech he walked up to the podium and stood tall.

This is a perfect example of the determination of the American heart to never let bad circumstances stop someone from what they must do. I consider this one of the most important and powerful speeches ever given on American soil. It speaks to every true Americans heart through patriotism and moral fiber. Franklin D Roosevelt delivered the speech fantastically and ignited a war engine within the United States that was unparalleled at the time. This speech is still a powerful symbol today of a great and shaping time of our country and its people.