

Portail de l'éducation de Historica Canada

Battle of Carpique

Overview

Canada participated in many battles during the Second World War. Some are well known and detailed in the majority of our history textbooks—Dieppe, Juno, Ortona are well documented as battles of some importance for various reasons. Other battles are lesser known and studied. One such battle was code named Operation Windsor and its objective was to gain control of the area of Carpique. This battle is not well known by Canadians. It was a challenging fight. Many consider it a failure. Some consider it a success. Should it be considered a battle of some significance? In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to study Operation Windsor and will be asked to write a newspaper account dated 6 July 1944 detailing the operation and its impact as a success or failure at that point of time.

Aims

Students will explore the following components of historical thinking:

1. Students will appreciate that historians are selective in the questions they seek to answer and the evidence they use.
2. Students should recognize that interpretation is an essential ingredient of history.

3. Students will employ processes of critical historical inquiry to reconstruct and interpret the past.
4. Students will challenge arguments of historical inevitability.

Required Knowledge and Skills

1. Students have to know how to analyze trace evidence in visual and audio documents.
2. Students have to know the difference between primary and secondary documents.
3. Students should have the ability to judge the credibility of primary documents and assess the value of secondary documents.
4. Students should be able to determine the relevance of various documents, summarize key points and apply them to the question under consideration.

Activities

Time Allowance: 3-4 classes

Procedures:

1. Class Discussion: Lead a discussion on past battles of significance for the Canadian military during the Second World War: Dieppe, Battle of the Atlantic, Juno, Ortona, etc. Why were these battles significant from an allied viewpoint or from a German view point? How would each side have reported these battles? Ask if students know of other battles involving Canadians which took place from 1940-1944? Discuss what they know of these battles. Discuss the role of journalists during the war years.

2. Explain to students that they are going to be studying Operation Windsor, one of many operations undertaken as the allied forces moved in from the Normandy beaches after 6 June 1944. Ask students to discuss the difficulties they imagine the Canadians encountered as they move inland. Advise students that they will be presented with various documents from which they are to glean details which will be used to compose a newspaper report of Operation Windsor and its impact on the war effort in Normandy at that time.

3. Give students a map which lays out [Operation Windsor](#) (Page 54 of The Canadian Battlefields in Normandy - A Visitors Guide by Terry Copp and Mike Bechthold). Identify for students the various regiments of the 3rd Canadian Division which were involved in this operation: The North Shore (New Brunswick) Regiment, the Queen's Own Rifles, Le Regiment de la Chaudiere, the Royal Winnipeg Rifles. Some general information could be provided by the teacher on each of these regiments as to what their role had been since landing at Juno on June 6th. The teacher could also present some information on the 12th SS German Panzer Division.

Ask students in groups to analyze this map and to determine:

- the date and purpose of the operation?
- what the objectives of each unit were?
- what tools from the allied military arsenal would be useful?
- what challenges and obstacles might this operation have to face?

Have students complete the [Document Analysis Worksheet](#).

After sufficient time has been given ask someone from each group to present the information that they have gleaned from this map.

4. Students will now listen to an [audio account](#) of the beginning of the Battle for Carpiquet as reported by Matthew Halton from the CBC Archives website.

Students are to listen and record all pertinent information. Have students complete the Document Analysis for the clip. Debrief with the class on their findings and other relevant information which can be included in their newspaper account.

5. Students will now analyze a map taken from the Marc Milner's book D-Day to Carpiquet – The North Shore Regiment and the Liberation of Europe, Page 88: [Defense of Carpiquet](#). This map details the defense of Carpiquet in the aftermath of the initial attack which took place on the morning of 4 July. Students are to study the map in small groups and determine what was accomplished as a result of the early morning attack. They are to hypothesize as to what will occur on the evening of 4 July and on 5 July. Again they are to use the Document Analysis worksheet. Each group will present their findings.

6. Students will now do a Co-operative Jigsaw reading of Chapter 5 of Marc Milner's book D-Day to Carpiquet – The North Shore Regiment and the Liberation of Europe (*if the resource is available*).

Divide the class into groups of 5. Each group will have a different 5 page section to read. They are to note page numbers and essential details. Once all groups have finished, gather up the readings and reconfigure the groups so that one student from each of the original groups is now in a new group. Each student will outline the pages read and will present the pertinent details again using the Document Analysis sheet. Students will add to their information in preparation of the final task. A whole class discussion will wrap up the findings from this jigsaw discussion.

7. Students are to now use all of the information gathered and compose a journalist's report for their local paper detailing Operation Windsor. This is to be an in-class assignment. Explain to students that as a journalist there are often tight deadlines. They have 60 minutes to put together a coherent piece which will shed light on the mission for the Canadian public. The write-up should indicate to what degree the mission met with success as of 6 July 1944. They may focus on the efforts of a particular regiment or they may look at the collective efforts of those involved. An evaluation rubric is [attached](#). Students are also required to hand in their Document Analysis sheet.

Resources

[Second World War – The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

[The Memory Project](#)

[Battle of Normandy - The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

Copp, Terry and Mike Bechthold. *The Canadian Battlefields in Normandy - A Visitor's Guide*. Waterloo, Ontario: Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies, 2004 Denos, Mike and Roland Case.

Teaching About Historical Thinking. Vancouver: The Critical Thinking Consortium, 2006.

Milner, Marc. *D-Day to Carpiquet – The North Shore Regiment and the Liberation of Europe*. Fredericton: Goose Lane Editions, 2007

[CBC Archives](#)