Articles and Questions

Each **free article** of ***What in the World?*** includes:   
  
1) a PDF file

*and*

2) a Word file

These files contain **only** the article and questions. They do **not** contain Answer Keys.

This **Word** file allows students to complete assignments using a computer either at school or at home. Teachers can assign all or parts of the file by email attachment or a school website. The **Word** file also allows teachers to:

• easily modify and format content including changing *fonts* and text sizes

• create a PDF document and use Adobe Reader's 'Read Out Loud Mode'

• save paper and copying costs and help protect the environment

• promote and encourage students’ computer skills

What Else Can You Do With The Word File?

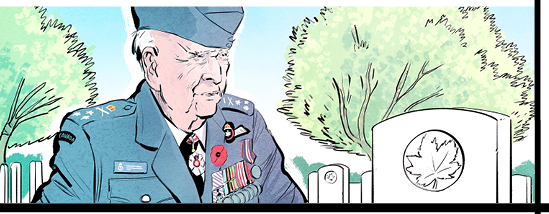
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<https://support.google.com/drive/answer/2424368?hl=en>

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<https://support.google.com/docs/answer/187189?hl=en&co=GENIE.Platform=Desktop>

**Celebrating Canada’s Courage During WWII**



Eighty years ago, in 1945, as World War II was winding down, Canadian soldiers helped free an entire country—the Netherlands. The Dutch in northwest Europe had suffered under a brutal **Nazi** **occupation** for four gruelling years. People were starving, many cities were destroyed, and despair was a daily reality.

The First Canadian Army was Canada’s main fighting force in northwest Europe. They faced fierce obstacles in the push to **liberate** the Netherlands. They fought strong resistance to deliver desperately needed food and aid to towns and cities. The price was high. Some 7600 Canadians lost their lives. But their sacrifice was not in vain. On May 5, 1945, German forces in the Netherlands surrendered. Three days later, all fighting stopped and the **Allies** declared Victory in Europe   
(V-E Day).

**An emotional return**

The Dutch never forgot the Canadians' courage and losses. A warm connection formed between the two countries has lasted for decades. In early May, 22 Canadian veterans made a moving return to the nation they helped set free. They were part of a Canadian delegation marking the 80th anniversary of the war ending.

Now in their late 90s or older, the veterans were warmly welcomed. Dutch residents lined streets and attended ceremonies in their honour. They waved Canadian flags, decorated their homes with red maple leafs, and took photos with the vets, eager to express their appreciation.

“It’s a sense of wonder,” said former pilot George Brewster. At 102, he was the oldest returning vet. He was deeply moved by the reception after all these years.

**The tide of war**

Liberating the Netherlands was part of a longer conflict. During the war's first phase, Germany held most of western and central Europe. Great Britain and the Commonwealth (including Canada) fought alone.

But in late 1941, the Soviet Union and the U.S. joined the war against the Axis. The Allies began to build up their military resources. On June 6, 1944, U.S., British, and Canadian forces crossed the English Channel and invaded “Fortress Europe.”   
The tide was turning.

Canada played a critical role in the invasion, known as D-Day. Over 14,000 Canadians landed at Juno Beach, one of five main sectors along France’s Normandy coast. As they approached the shore, they faced pounding surf, barbed wire, and enemy fire.

The Canadians advanced further inland on the first day than any other Allied force. By nightfall, 1074 of them had died.

The bravery of young Canadian soldiers changed the course of the war. The Juno landing and the fighting afterwards helped the Allies' armies advance into occupied France.

The Canadians pushed toward Caen, a strategic crossroads. In August, they helped close the Falaise Pocket, trapping 50,000 German soldiers. That collapsed Nazi defenses in Normandy.

Next, the First Canadian Army pushed across northern France and into Belgium. The terrain was difficult, the weather harsh, and the enemy resisted. German soldiers realized their homeland was now threatened.

It was the coldest winter in 50 years. Rain, snow, and icy temperatures turned the low-lying landscape into a muddy **quagmire**. Troops advancing along narrow **dikes** were exposed to German attacks.

The Canadians crossed open causeways under heavy fire. They suffered many **casualties**. Yet they went on to open the port of Antwerp so the Alliescould get supplies as they advanced into Germany. It was a turning point.

Many street battles were difficult and fierce. Often every building and every block was fiercely contested. Many civilians fed and sheltered the Canadians, and risked their own lives to pass on information.

**A lasting legacy**

More than one million Canadians joined the military during WWII. Many were just teenagers who left schools and farms. Some 45,000 died in battle. Rows of graves in foreign lands mark their resting places.

As for those who returned? Tens of thousands were wounded. Some carried physical scars. Others bore invisible wounds. Yet they helped build postwar Canada, starting families, businesses, and communities.

Canada's part in liberating Europe—especially the Netherlands—helped define its identity as a supporter of human rights. In fact, the nation’s **peacekeeping** commitment can be traced to the courage our soldiers showed during the war.

And the friendships formed between Canadians and the Dutch aren’t just about the past. They’re examples of how we can build a better future.

**WWII: A Global Conflict**

World War II began on September 1, 1939 when Nazi Germany invaded Poland. The **Allies** (Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States) fought the **Axis** coalition (Germany, Italy, and Japan).

In June 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union, opening the Eastern Front in Europe. The U.S entered the war after Japan’s surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Germany surrendered in May 1945, and Japan surrendered in September 1945 after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

WWII was the deadliest war in history, resulting in the deaths of an estimated 70 to 85 million people, including many civilians.

**Did You Know**

Every year, the Netherlands sends thousands of tulip bulbs to Canada as thanks for its role in liberating the Netherlands and for sheltering the Dutch royal family in Ottawa during the war.

**Allies:** the WWII military coalition that opposed the Axis

**Axis:** the coalition that started WWII and opposed the Allies

**casualty:** someone injured or killed in an accident or war

**dike:** a dam or high wall built to prevent flooding

**liberate:** to free a country from the control of somebody else

**Nazi:** a member of the fascist party that controlled Germany from 1933 to 1945

**occupation:** when an army or group of people moves into and takes control of a place and the population

**peacekeeping:** to prevent or stop fighting between countries or groups

**quagmire:** an area of soft, wet ground that you sink into

**On The Lines**

1. Which countries were the **Allies** in World War II?

2. Which countries were the **Axis** powers in World War II?

3. When did World War II start? When did it end in Europe? When did it end in Asia?

4. When did the Allied armies invade Fortress Europe? What was the name of this invasion?

5. What was the name of Canada’s main fighting force?

6. Describe the conditions faced by many Dutch civilians under the German occupation.

7. Describe the conditions faced by Canadian soldiers. How many Canadians were killed?

8. Describe how the Dutch people remember and appreciate what Canadian soldiers did in 1944-1945.

9. What did some Canadian veterans recently do? Describe the response that they received.

**Questions for Further Thought**

1. Thousands of Canadian soldiers lost their lives in battle trying to free Europe from Nazi rule in World War II. What do you think helped motivate soldiers to keep fighting in spite of the terrible conditions?

2. If you could speak to one of Canada’s veterans who helped free the Netherlands, what questions would you ask? What else would you want to say to this person?

3. Would you consider a career with the Canadian Forces in the future? Why or why not?

**Questions For Online Exploration**

*Note*: The links below are listed at **www.lesplan.com/links** for easy access.

1. Watch this video of Liberation Day celebrations in the Netherlands:  
**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\_iSRi2VMVw** [2:30]

In what ways did participants show their appreciation to Canadian veterans?

2. Find out more about the gift of 100,000 tulip bulbs from Princess Juliana of the Netherlands to Canada: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOEtyN-RWAg&t=194s** [5:15]

Why was a gift of tulips given to Canada? How does this gift continue to remind Canadians of the appreciation of the Dutch people for their liberation?

3. Listen to a 91-year-old Dutch woman share her memories of being liberated by Canadian soldiers in 1945: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6-oMt8PvCU**

What special memories of that day have stayed with her for over 80 years?

4. A group of 21 Canadian WWII veterans returned to the Netherlands for the 80th anniversary of the end of the war. Watch their emotional return: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmivedodXoc** [1:10]

Why might veterans want to return to the Netherlands for this celebration in spite of their advanced age?

5. What do a 101-year-old war veteran and an 18-year-old Dutch student have in common? Find out how they became pen pals and eventually met during this year’s 80th anniversary celebrations:  
**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=040kfU2ifRM** [2:26]

Why do you think the young man stayed in touch with the veteran after his school project was over? How do you think this might have affected the Canadian veteran?

6. Visit the Canadian Armed Forces website to see where Canadian forces are stationed. Choose one of the current operations. Click on it and read about what Canadian soldiers are doing: **https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/operations/military-operations/current-operations/list.html** What did you learn?

**Putting It All Together**

**A. Write the letter that corresponds to the best answer on the line beside each question:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Which country did Germany invade to start World War II?**  
 a) Soviet Union b) France  
 c) Poland d) Netherlands

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Which country was an Axis power in World War II?**  
 a) United Kingdom b) Italy  
 c) United States d) France

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Canada’s main fighting force in Europe in 1944 was called:** a) Canadian Expeditionary Corps b) First Canadian Army  
 c) Canadian Second Field Army d) Canadian Marine Corps

**B.** Mark the statements **T** (**True**) or **F** (**Fals**e). If a statement is **True**, write one important fact to support it on the line below. If a statement is **False**, write the words that make it true on the line below.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. **True** or **False?** The Allied invasion of Fortress Europe was called D-Day.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. **True** or **False?** 45,000 Canadian soldiers lost their lives in the campaign to liberate the Netherlands.

\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. **True** or **False?** Japan surrendered before Germany in World War II.

**C. Fill in the blanks to complete each sentence.**

7. Allied Troops landed in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , France on June 6, 1944.

8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years have passed since the end of World War II.

9. Twenty-two Canadian \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ returned to the Netherlands to participate in V-E Day ceremonies.

**D. Respond to the following question in paragraph form. *(Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.)***

10. "***Stories about soldiers’ bravery are powerful reminders that ordinary people can do extraordinary things when they stand up for what’s right.***" What is your understanding of this quote? Support your response with facts from the article.

**Assessment Rubric**

This rubric may be helpful in providing students with formative, strength-based feedback and/or assessing students’ responses holistically. This easy-to-modify activity is included in the doc file which you can download from:   
**www.lesplan.com/subscribers**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Emerging** | **Developing** | **Proficient** | **Extending** |
| **Supports thinking** | Answers or reflections are brief and include obvious facts/details/ evidence. | Answers or reflections are general and supported with some relevant facts/details/evidence. | Answers or reflections are clearly supported with specific, relevant facts/details/evidence. | Answers or reflections are insightful and supported with specific, relevant facts/details/evidence. |
| **Shows understanding** | Responses show a basic understanding of the text, topic, issue or message. | Responses are thoughtful and show a general understanding of the text, topic, issue or message. | Responses are thoughtful and show a complete understanding of the text, topic, issue or message. | Responses are insightful and show a deep understanding the text, topic, issue or message. May synthesize ideas or explain the ‘so what’. |
| **Thinks  critically** | Makes straightforward connections or inferences. Focuses on retelling. | Makes logical connections to self (T:S) and/or background knowledge (T:S). Inferences are logical | Makes meaningful connections to self. Considers ideas between texts (T:T).  Inferences are plausible. | Makes powerful connections that go between texts and/or beyond the text (T:W).  Inferences are plausible and insightful. |

