Youth Remember D-Day
and the Battle of Normandy

Fact Quest
Answer Sheet

1. When did D-Day take place and which three Allied countries contributed the most troops for the landings?

   On June 6, 1944, D-Day, a massive Canadian, British and American force crossed the English Channel to engage in Operation Overlord.

2. How many Allied landing zones were there on the coast of Normandy on D-Day and what were their code names?

   There were five landing zones, given special codenames: Juno Beach (Canada); Gold Beach (United Kingdom); Sword Beach (United Kingdom and France); and, Utah Beach and Omaha Beach (United States).

3. How long was the section of beach for which the Canadians were responsible? Name three French coastal villages that lay within that stretch.

   The Canadians were to establish a beachhead along an eight-kilometre stretch fronting the villages of Courseulles-sur-Mer, Bernières-sur-Mer, and St. Aubin-sur-Mer.

4. Describe the kinds of enemy defences faced by the Allies on the coast of Normandy.

   The Normandy beach was littered with German land mines, barbed wire, heavy artillery batteries and machine-gun nests. There were also anti-tank walls, shelters constructed of thick concrete, anti-aircraft guns and many other types of defensive positions. For these reasons, the coastline from Denmark to the south of France was known as “Fortress Europe.”

5. What body of water lies between England and Normandy? What was one way that the Allies were planning to transport fuel across to France after landing on D-Day?

   A narrow stretch of water, the English Channel, separated the German forces from Great Britain. A long flexible pipe, called “Pluto,” (‘pipe lines under the ocean’) was to be built to carry fuel under the sea from England to Normandy.
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6. Approximately how many ships were in the Allied fleet that took part in D-Day operations? How many Allied bombers and fighter planes supported the landings?

7,000 vessels of all types, including 284 major combat vessels, took part in Operation Neptune, the assault phase of the D-Day offensive. Destroyers and supporting craft of the Royal Canadian Navy did their part and shelled German targets while many Royal Canadian Air Force planes were among the 4,000 Allied bombers (plus some 3,700 fighters and fighter bombers) that attacked German beach defences and inland targets.

7. What were some of the kinds of things that the Allies would need to transport to France after landing in Normandy in order to defeat the enemy in the months to come?

For the Allied offensive to be successful, harbours along the continent’s coastline would have to be secured for the many transport ships that would be needed to ferry food, medical supplies, weapons and fresh troops after the initial landings. As well, Allied armies would continue to need “Pluto” to transport the fuel needed to liberate occupied Europe.

8. When did the Battle of Normandy officially end? The liberation of what city is considered to be the end of the campaign?

Through the summer of 1944, the fighting continued through choking dust and intense heat. The living conditions were terrible and the enemy was ruthless, but the troops moved forward. On August 25, 1944, Paris was liberated by the Allies, bringing the Normandy Campaign to a close.

9. How many Canadians died on D-Day? How many Canadians in total lost their lives during the entire Battle of Normandy?

340 Canadians were killed on D-Day. More than 5,000 Canadians in the Battle of Normandy made the ultimate sacrifice, losing their lives, and lie buried in a place far from their homes and loved ones.

10. Based on what you learned in the D-Day and the Battle of Normandy historical sheet and other things you may know about Canada’s efforts in the Normandy Campaign, do you think that the difference our country made there was worth the great effort and sacrifice?

Answers will vary…