

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 code names: 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 four French coastal villages that lay within that stretch.

The Canadians were to establish a beachhead along an eight-kilometre stretch fronting the villages of Saint-Aubin-sur-Mer, Bernières-sur-Mer, Courseulles-sur-Mer and Graye-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 name was given to the portable docking facilities the Allies used to help deliver supplies after D-Day?

A narrow stretch of water, the English Channel, lies between England and France. "Mulberry Harbours" were used to help unload Allied supplies in the weeks and months following D-Day.

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?

Seven thousand (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 was the name of the ridge that Canadian soldiers captured south of Caen in July 1944 after multiple bloody attempts?

Canadians captured Verrières Ridge in Normandy after several attacks cost hundreds of our soldiers' lives.

8. Where did the Canadians help trap thousands of retreating German soldiers in the final stages of the Battle of Normandy?

Canadians help close the Falaise Gap in August 1944 in the closing days of the Battle of Normandy, trapping thousands of German soldiers.

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

Three hundred and fifty-nine (359) Canadian soldiers were killed on D-Day. More than 5,000 of our soldiers made the ultimate sacrifice in the Battle of Normandy and lie buried in a place far from their homes and loved ones.

10. Why do you think that D-Day and the Battle of Normandy are such famous events in the Second World War?

Answers will vary.