

Battle of the Atlantic

Learning Resources

Exploring the Battle of the Atlantic - Activity 1
Teacher Answer Sheet #3 - The Merchant Navy



Read the 'Canada Remembers the Merchant Navy' historical sheet and answer the following questions.

Section A - True or False

- 1) The Battle of the Atlantic can be described as the struggle between the Allies and the Germans for control of the Atlantic Ocean.

True

- 2) More than 50,000 merchant ship voyages were made during the Second World War.

False

- 3) Some merchant crews were given training at special schools such as the Marine Engineering Instructional School in Prescott, Ontario.

True

- 4) The German production of U-boats was so efficient that for a time, they could turn out U-boats faster than the Allies could sink them.

True

- 5) The casualty rate of the merchant mariners during the Battle of the Atlantic was one in seven.

True

Section B – Multiple choices

- 1) Canada decided to conscript all merchant ships...
- a) before the beginning of the Second World War.**
- b) the first day of the Second World War.
- c) six months after the beginning of the Second World War.
- d) one year after the beginning of the Second World War.
- 2) When the Second World War began, Canada had 38 ocean-going merchant vessels. By war's end, how many merchant ships had been built in Canada?
- a) 75
- b) 125
- c) 410**
- d) 660
- 3) The German Navy continued to improve submarine technology during the war. German scientists invented the schnorkel, a technology that allowed the U-boats to...
- a) dive deeper than 100 meters for at least fifteen days.
- b) locate Allied ships in thick fog.
- c) store and tow 50 torpedoes.
- d) charge their batteries underwater.**
- 4) During the Battle of the Atlantic, German U-boats sank ships in these Canadian waters:
- a) Gulf of St Lawrence**
- b) Miramichi River
- c) Saguenay River
- d) Lake Ontario
- 5) Approximately how many Canadian merchant mariners died during the Second World War?
- a) 500
- b) 1,000
- c) 1,500**
- d) 2,500

Section C – Written answers

- 1) How many Canadian men and women served in the Merchant Navy during the Second World War?

A total of 12,000 men and women served in Canada's Merchant Navy.

- 2) On August 26, 1939, the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) took control of all shipping. Were merchant crews compelled to sail on the dangerous ocean passages? Please justify.

No. Despite the fact that merchant crews were not compelled to sail on the dangerous ocean passages, most did.

- 3) What does the term 'U-boat' mean?

The term U-boat is from the German word for submarines, Unterseebooten (undersea boats).

- 4) What did the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) do to help protect merchant ships?

To help protect merchant ships, the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) supplied air escorts and the Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) organized merchant ships into convoys that were accompanied by armed naval escorts.

- 5) What were the Merchant Aircraft Carriers (MACs)?

The Merchant Aircraft Carriers (MACs) were tankers or grain carriers equipped with a deck and three or four aircraft.