GREECE AND CRETE

AUSTRALIANS IN WORLD WAR II
Introduction

_Greece and Crete_ is the first in a series of books published by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs that explore theatres of war during World War II, other than the Pacific war. This set of classroom activities is designed to encourage students to become engaged with the text and the rich range of historical sources it incorporates.

A copy of the book was sent to every Australian secondary school in 2011. In addition, the text and images from _Greece and Crete_ are available online, allowing students to more easily access them.

Overview

This educational resource has five discrete activities, each one focusing on a different theme or aspect of the campaign.

**The Greece and Crete campaign**

This activity focuses on the reasons for Australia’s involvement in the campaign and familiarises students with the major events and movements during the campaign.

**Leadership**

This activity encourages students to analyse a variety of sources to develop theories about leadership during times of conflict. Students are asked to apply these understandings to their own lives.

**Courage**

In this activity, students explore the concept of courage. They are asked to assess the reliability of a number of sources by identifying their origin, purpose and context. The activity also assists students to identify, analyse and empathise with the perspectives of people from the past.

**Retreat and defeat**

Students explore sources portraying the military strategies adopted by the British forces in attempting to retreat from both Greece and Crete. They also explore the human response to defeat and develop empathy with the people involved.

**The legacy of war**

In this activity, students consider the cost of the Greece and Crete campaign by reflecting on source material. They also consider the appropriateness of this historic campaign from a contemporary context.

Each activity provides for a range of learning styles and develops lower and higher order thinking skills. Websites to provide for further student research are listed.
Curriculum outcomes
These activities have been developed with specific reference to Year 10 History in the Australian Curriculum, where a depth study of World War II is required. Each activity has listed at the beginning specific links to the relevant historical knowledge and understanding and historical skills. The learning content and activities also allow for the development of general capabilities relevant to this level.

More generally, the material can be easily adapted for use with other levels and curriculum areas, particularly English.

Using the resource
Teachers using these materials are encouraged to adapt them to suit their own purposes. Each of the five activities is discrete, allowing teachers to select and use specific activities or parts of activities.

All images and written sources used in these activities are from Greece and Crete. When quotations are used the relevant page from the book is indicated. Each image can also be viewed in the online photo gallery, allowing students to view large digital versions. Further historical information about each image can be found in the captions provided in the hardcopy of the book, or by using the image number provided to access the collection search on the Australian War Memorial website.

Further historical information about the campaigns in Greece and Crete can be found on the Australia’s War 1939–1945 website at www.ww2australia.gov.au

Disclaimer
This resource encourages students to explore and interpret a range of historical sources. The Department of Veterans’ Affairs cannot be assumed to agree with or endorse any content or opinions expressed in websites or other publications quoted or referred to in this resource.
1. The Greece and Crete campaign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Historical skills:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sequence events chronologically to demonstrate the relationship between events in different periods and places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use historical terms and concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify and select different kinds of questions about the past to inform historical inquiry</td>
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A: Why did we fight in Greece?

Any decision by a country to commit troops to a war zone is a difficult one. Such decisions are usually taken by balancing political and military considerations. Read the following sources and reflect on the challenge of balancing these two imperatives.

Source 1

Robert Menzies was the Australian Prime Minister in 1941 and on 20 February he arrived in Britain to discuss Australia’s involvement in World War II. This quote is from his diary on 24 February 1941 where he summarises the discussion at the British War cabinet meeting and his decision to commit Australian troops:

*At 5 pm attend War Cabinet at Downing Street. It is decided to proceed subject of course to assent of Aust. Cabinet to use of Australian troops. Nett view, the project has some reasonable chance of success … We cannot leave Greece in the lurch.*

*Greece and Crete, page 10*

**Reflection**

Source 2

Menzies’ diary entry continued with a reflection about the difficulty he had experienced when asking members of the British War Cabinet to look at the feasibility of the Greece campaign and attend to details about the support that would be available to the Australian troops:

*I was the only one to put questions, and feel like a new boy who, in the first week of school, commits the solecism [error] of speaking to the captain of the School.*

*Greece and Crete, page 15*
Source 3

Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Blamey was Australia’s chief military leader in the Middle East in 1941. He had serious reservations about the chance of success for Australian troops serving with British forces in Greece. On 9 March 1941, when Australian troops were already en route to Greece, Blamey advised:

*Military operation extremely hazardous in view of the disparity between opposing forces in number and training.*

Greece and Crete, page 16

What do these three sources tell us about Australia’s decision to send forces to Greece and Crete in 1941?

What do they tell us about Australia’s relationship to Britain at the time?
B: Mapping military movements

Read the timeline of the key military events that occurred in Greece and Crete in 1941. Using the maps provided, locate and highlight each of the places that are bolded in the timeline. Note that throughout the 1941 campaign in Greece and Crete, troops from Australia and New Zealand served as part of the British force.

Timeline: Greece and Crete, 1941

March to April
Lustre Force convos move 58,500 British, Australian and New Zealand soldiers from Alexandria, Egypt to Priaeus, Greece. The troops head north and establish the Vermion-Olympus line to prevent German troops entering through Bulgaria or Yugoslavia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 March</td>
<td>Battle of Cape Matapan, ships and aircraft of the British force stop the advance on Greece by Italian ships and forces.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 April</td>
<td>German troops enter Greece through the Monastiri Gap and take Florina.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–14 April</td>
<td>British troops begin withdrawing south: some withdraw from Vevi towards Sotir; others withdraw from Veria towards Servia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 April</td>
<td>Last British forces cross the Aliakmos River and withdraw south, destroying roads and bridges behind them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15–19 April</td>
<td>Australian and New Zealand troops hold off German troops advancing through the Pinios Gorge, which enables the British forces to safely withdraw most troops to Thermopylae.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24–29 April</td>
<td>An estimated 50,732 British forces are trucked to various ports throughout Greece and evacuated to the Island of Crete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 May</td>
<td>39,250 soldiers of the British force attempt to defend Crete — at Maleme airfield, Rethymno and Heraklio — as Germans bombard the island and paratroopers land to advance the German attack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28–29 May</td>
<td>British force withdraws from Crete and evacuates from Sfakia and Heraklio by ship to Alexandria. Over 3000 remain as prisoners of war.</td>
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</table>
C: A Challenging Campaign

Divide the class into 9 groups; each group reads one of the following chapters from *Greece and Crete* (which is available online). Use the worksheet provided to summarise the chapter you have been allocated.

As a group, make an oral presentation to the class about the main events outlined in your chapter. Present the reports in the order that the chapters appear in *Greece and Crete*: A notable success; A piece of Australia; The roof is leaking; We pulled him along; When the stukas struck; Come back – you must come back again; Adolf Hitler’s isle of doom; The place is alive with parachutists; Guarding it even in death.

**Student Worksheet**

Name of chapter: ____________________________

Members of the group: ____________________________

When did the events outlined in this chapter occur? ____________________________

Name the places where the events in this chapter occurred. ____________________________

Who were the key people involved? ____________________________

What were the main events? ____________________________

What were the challenges they faced? ____________________________

What strategies did they adopt? ____________________________
D: Research task

Invite students to explore *Greece and Crete* further by looking at the text and images with reference to one of the following themes.

- Communication
- Interdependence
- Military strategy

Students should present their observations and interpretations in a written and/or visual report.
2. Leadership

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past</td>
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</table>

A: What makes a good leader?

Read the sources below and identify the leadership attribute that is displayed or raised in each. Record the attributes you identify in the space provided.

**Source 1**

* Momentous discussion later with [British] PM about defence of Greece, largely with New Zealand and Australian troops. This kind of decision, which may mean thousands of lives, is not easy. Why does a peaceable man become a Prime Minister. 
* Robert Menzies, diary note, *Greece and Crete*, page 14

**Leadership Attributes**

**Source 2**

* There was no question of our being asked if we agreed. We attended and were given instructions to get ready to go … At that meeting my opinion was never asked. I was told the bare facts … In any case I never expected to be asked my opinion by the Commander-in-Chief. He was far from co-operative. He had the secrecy mania. 
* Major General Bernard Freyberg, reflecting on a meeting with the British commander-in-chief of the Army of the Nile, *Greece and Crete*, page 14

**Source 3**

* The task ahead though difficult is not nearly so desperate as that which our fathers faced in April twenty six years ago. We go to it together with stout hearts and certainty of success. 
* Lieutenant General Blamey making reference to Gallipoli in a speech to rally his troops, *Greece and Crete*, page 33

**Leadership Attributes**
Source 4

Here you bloody well are and here you bloody well stay.
And if any bloody German gets between your post and
the next, turn your bloody Bren around and shoot him
up the arse.

Brigadier George Alan Vasey quoted when giving
instructions about holding the line at Thermopylae,
_Greece and Crete_, page 54

Source 5

I am afraid it is beyond me to describe fully those last
few days in Greece and the loyalty and courage of the
Sisters. Their one thought was for the patients and the
Hospital. Their loyalty to me was the finest thing I have
known, never once did they question any decision made
for them, and they stood behind me and helped me in
every way they knew. No one wanted to leave but they
all knew the common sense of it.

Matron Katie Best reflecting on the withdrawal from
_Greece_, _Greece and Crete_, page 53

Source 6

I could have no mercy on them and I had to haze them
and threaten them and push them into a faster speed
… Falls were numerous … one of the A Company men
fell and refused to get up, wanting to be left where he
fell, and not caring if he was captured or not … I pulled
him up and supported him for the next eight kilometres;
every time we stopped he sagged and pleaded to be
left.

Major Henry Marshall reflecting on the withdrawal
from Crete, _Greece and Crete_, page 66

Source 7

So Walker said ‘Alright. Well if you can’t get my men
off put me back on the shore’. And him and his offsider
went back on shore again. And I remember seeing
them in POW camp. He used to walk round in a pair of
pyjamas. And he was CO of the battalion. He said ‘If it’s
good enough for them it’s good enough for me’. He was
safe, he was home, and he went back to his men.

A soldier’s description of Colonel Theo Walker during
the evacuation from Crete, who disembarked from an
evacuation ship to stay with his men, _Greece and Crete_,
page 66
B. Leadership

Leadership is often highlighted in times of conflict. Yet it is evident in many aspects of our lives. Reflecting on the sources above, answer the following questions:

Where do you see evidence of leadership in your life?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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What do you think makes a good leader?

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3. Courage

A: Defining acts of courage

When using historical sources, it is important to assess their reliability. Analyse each of these six sources by considering it in light of the following questions.

- Who created the source?
- When was it created? How close was this in relation to the event it relates to?
- For what purpose was it created and how might this impact on its reliability?
- What context was it created in? Might the situation in which it was created impact on its reliability?

The sources all reflect acts of courage. Read each of them and reflect on the ways that the stress of a war zone can influence the reliability of a source. Use the chart provided to record your assessment of the reliability of each source.

Source 1

At 7.30 am word is yelled from hole to hole to prepare to withdraw and we feel pretty shaky at the idea of having to run about 300 yards up the slope through this inferno completely exposed. The first man in our platoon to poke his head up gets a bullet through it and drops back dead. Not so good. One after another the boys jump up and start to run, while the volume of fire increases. I watch one of our section half way back. As he runs the earth spurts up all around him: he runs through the lot and disappears over the rise, safe for the moment. It is my turn…

Private Dick Parry during the retreat from Greece on 13 April 1941, Greece and Crete, page 32
Source 2

Greece and Crete, page 169
Bren gunners fire on enemy aircraft attacking their transport vessel, Costa Rica, during the evacuation from mainland Greece, April 1941. Despite their efforts, the Costa Rica was sunk on 27 April. (AWM 069346)

Source 3

I was dazed and almost suffocated by the cordite fumes. When I looked down I saw my legs were almost pulp. Using my arms, I yanked myself back into the main compartment. Ian McNeilage was slumped over the breech of the two pounder. I sensed he was dead. The blast from the shell had almost cut him in half … Something told me I had to get out of the tank … The tank was still in motion. It had been left in gear when the driver jumped out … Suddenly the bullets stopped hitting the tank. I ducked my head up and saw a building was between me and the Germans. Knowing it was now or never, I heaved myself up and rolled down the back of the tank. I don’t remember hitting the road. I just kept rolling until I fell into a gutter. My last view of the tank was it lurching along the road to Rethymno.

Gunner George Eldridge recalling the moments after the tank he was travelling in struck a mine on 27 May 1941, Greece and Crete, page 71

Source 4

I told them that those who volunteered to stay behind would almost certainly be taken prisoner. I asked them to write their name on a slip of paper, together with the word ‘Stay’ or ‘Go’. Not one Sister wrote ‘Go’.

Matron Katie Best reflecting on her actions when some nurses had to remain in Greece while others were withdrawn and evacuated, 23 April 1941, Greece and Crete, page 53
Source 5

He made contact with the Monastery who in turn notified the various groups . . . Then the following week and in the middle of the night about seventy of us assembled on the beach in the little bay of Limni just below the Monastery to rendezvous with a British submarine . . . A thick strong rope was soon connected from the sub to a large rock on the beach and the Captain sent word that he would pack us all in . . . Now came the time to say goodbye to our Cretan friends who had come down to see us off. There were emotional scenes as we thanked them for what they had done for us. They had proved true and trusted friends, as they had so little yet they had shared it willingly with us. We had nothing to offer them yet they had risked their very lives for us. I promised them that I would never forget them.

Geoffrey Edwards describing the collaboration between the British secret service and the Head Monk of the Preveli Monastery during the evacuation from Crete in May 1941, *Greece and Crete*, page 82

Source 6

*Greece and Crete*, pages 120–121

*Action in the Vale of Tempe, Greece*, by William Dargie, 1962, oil on canvas (AWM ART27554)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Is this a reliable source? What factors do you need to consider in making this assessment?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</table>

Use the six sources above to answer the following questions:

What is courage?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What motivates acts of courage?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

How do we differentiate an act of courage from an act of survival or ‘doing one's job’? In wartime experiences is this always possible?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Educational Activities

GREECE AND CRETE • AUSTRALIANS IN WORLD WAR II
B: Willoughby’s gallant team

The following quote describes an act of great courage by members of the 2/11th Battalion in Crete. Photographs of the men are also shown.

As the rest of the company opened rapid fire on the trenches and the houses to quieten the enemy’s guns Willoughby’s gallant team leaped from the ditch and started racing along a low hedge leading past the disabled tank to the well. Willoughby was nearly there before he fell. Behind him the Bren-gunner went down. The next rifleman caught up the gun in passing and went on until he was killed, and so the bren was relayed through the section until it almost reached the well in the hands of the last runner; and he too was killed as he went down kneeling over it, guarding it even in death. Eight brave men were lost there.

Captain Ralph Honner, *Greece and Crete*, page 71

Corporal Thomas Willoughby and his men of the 2/11th Battalion who were killed in action on 27 May 1941 at Perivolia, Crete, while trying to advance with a Bren gun.

Select one of the men involved in this incident. Now take on the role of the Commanding Officer of this battalion, and write a letter to the soldier’s next of kin explaining the circumstances and significance of their death.

To assist with this task look up the soldier’s records on the Australian War Memorial roll of honour


You may also like to follow the links to the service records for these soldiers.
Commanding Officer letter
Write your letter here
4. Retreat and defeat

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A. A strategic retreat

Explore each of the following sources and answer the questions relating to the strategic retreat of the British force during the Greece and Crete campaign.

Source 1

*On 16 April 1941 the 21st New Zealand Battalion was forced by heavy German attacks to abandon its positions on the seaward side of the gorge at Platamon. As the New Zealanders withdrew they were told that help was on the way and that the western end of the gorge must be denied to the enemy until at least 19 April. They were to hold on even if this meant ‘extinction’. Anzac Corps HQ now diverted two battalions on their way south to Thermopylae – the Australian 2/2nd and 2/3rd Battalions – to the western end of the Pinios Gorge near the village of Tembe. Here on 18 April, with the New Zealanders, they met the Germans advancing over the slopes of Mount Olympus and through the gorge. That day, according to Australia’s official historian Gavin Long, ‘seemed likely to be the critical hours of the campaign’. If the Germans broke through too quickly and reached the major road junction of Larissa, they could cut in two the whole British withdrawal down through central Greece.*

*Greece and Crete*, page 40

What does this source tell you about the strategic importance of ‘holding the line’?
Source 2
A truck of the Australian 6th Division attempts to negotiate a road at Servia congested with Greek troops from the north and a line of carts carrying their equipment.

What does this source tell you about the challenges faced by the troops as they retreated?

Source 3
By late on the evening of 20 April 1941, most of the British force, except for stragglers, was beyond the Brallos Pass and behind the new Thermopylae Line. The withdrawal had not been effected without loss in both men and equipment. An air attack on 19 April, for example, had seen two Australian battalions – the 2/6th and 2/11th – lose seventeen killed and thirty-five wounded. But many kilometres of cratered road now faced the Germans before they could advance on this new defensive position.

Greece and Crete, page 45

What role did aircraft play in hampering and facilitating the retreat from the north of Greece?
Source 4

The Aliakmos Bridge after it was demolished by Australian and British engineers on 13 April 1941. (AWM 128424)

Why were bridges significant in the Greece and Crete campaign?

To assist you, find the Aliakmos River on the map on page 8 of this booklet or in the online version.

Source 5

The mountain track leading west from Servia to the position held by the Greeks, April 1941. Later, the road was severely dive bombed by the Germans. There were few casualties suffered, but the road was made unusable and troops had to travel south cross-country. (AWM 007797; photographer George Silk)

What challenges did the Greek landscape pose for the retreating British force?
Source 6

*Heading for Suda Bay [Crete] with other ships loaded with troops. Germans attacked us with heavy bombs. Soldiers sleeping all over the place. No sleep last night. Pulled alongside jetty to unload troops. Went alongside another big ship and unloaded another 1000 troops. Pulled alongside wharf again and then went out and anchored. Dropped down in a corner dead beat and fell asleep straight away.*

Able Seaman Patrick Bridges on the work of sailors on the ships used to evacuate troops to Crete, April 1941, *Greece and Crete*, page 51

What was the role of the navy in effecting the retreat?

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Source 7

Freehand drawing by an AIF soldier who escaped from Crete, showing the area around Rethymnon and the position of units, Allied and German, and prisoner of war cages. (AWM MEB0021; photographer Laurence Craddock Le Guay)

How important was effective communication to a successful retreat?

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Educational Activities
B. Feeling defeated

Explore all of the following sources and, using them as inspiration, complete the accompanying Y chart.

Source 1

_I regret to have to inform you that the limit of endurance has been reached by the troops under my command here at Suda Bay … A small ill-equipped and immobile force such as ours cannot stand up against the concentrated bombing that we have been faced with over the last seven days._

Message sent by General Freyberg at Hania to General Wavell in Cairo, 26 May 1941, _Greece and Crete_, page 62.

Source 2

Some of the damage from the German bombing of Piraeus on 6 April 1941. (AWM 134866)

Source 3

_As he made his way up the narrow zig-zag road into the mountains, Charles Robinson, 2/2nd Field Ambulance, came upon an awful sight. A number of infantrymen who had been fighting hard for days at Maleme had fallen asleep by the roadside and had been run over by a truck which failed to stop. There were broken thighs, a fractured pelvis and broken ankles. The Australian medical team did what it could, then pressed on hoping that the advancing Germans would give proper care to their suffering comrades._

_Greece and Crete_, page 64
Source 4

Australian and new Zealand wounded prisoners of war sit in a courtyard at the main POW hospital, the Kriegsgefangenlazarette, formerly an orphanage, near Piraeus, Greece, May 1941. More than 150 members of the Australian 2/5th Australian General Hospital were taken prisoner when ordered to stay behind to treat Allied POWs who were too ill or injured to be evacuated. (AWM PO1333.006)

Source 5

I recall the march down the road at the end. Out front was that grand man, Lieutenant Colonel IR Campbell and with him, carrying a white flag, the commanding officer’s quartermaster. Our Battery Commander, Major Ian Bessell-Browne and I came next and behind us the troops — our troops, the Gunners. How, I wondered were they reacting to capitulation? Angry? Surlly? Complaining? Resentful? Noisy? I felt that I should not look round and kept ‘eyes front’ myself. But it seemed important to know and at last … I turned my head … What did I find? Every gunner was in step, every man erect, every man looking his own height and straight to the front. Not a word was spoken, not an eye twitched. Never, I felt, would 6 Battery be defeated. And never, I knew, would 6 Battery be humiliated.

Captain Cliff Mott reflecting on his surrender to German forces, 29 May 1941, Greece and Crete, page 72
Using the five sources as inspiration, complete the Y chart by writing key words which capture the experience of defeat.

**Defeat:**

- feels like
- sounds like
- looks like

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**C. Sergeant RA ‘Snow’ McBain**

Read the story about Snow McBain on pages 79 and 80 or the last online chapter. Then take on the role of ‘Snow’ and consider the ramifications of the decision he made to disguise himself as a Greek civilian in order to travel to Gaza to be reunited with his colleagues.

Record your thoughts about this decision on a PMI chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plus</th>
<th>Minus</th>
<th>Interesting</th>
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5. The Legacy of war

Year 10 History
Depth study: World War II

Knowledge and understanding:
- An overview of the causes and course of World War II
- The experiences of Australians during World War II
- The significance of World War II to Australia’s international relationships in the twentieth century, with particular reference to the United Nations, Britain, the USA and Asia

Historical skills:
- Use historical terms and concepts
- Identify and select different kinds of questions about the past to inform historical inquiry
- Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument
- Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past
- Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own)
- Develop historical texts, particularly explanations and historical arguments that use evidence from a range of sources

A: Fallen comrades

Read each of the following four sources and reflect on what they tell you about the 1941 campaign in Greece and Crete.

Source 1

*The scene was shocking. Most of the members of our particular section were dead. Those surviving, with a few exceptions, were shockingly burnt. The few survivors were removed and a naval fire control gang took over the clean up, which consisted mostly of stokers’ shovels along the red hot steel deck and the placement of the shovels’ contents into sandbags where any discs [personal identity discs] were extracted and placed in a heap.*

Bill Andrews’ description of the aftermath of a bomb explosion on the Dido during the evacuation of troops from Crete, 29 May 1941, *Greece and Crete*, page 78
Source 2

The British and Dominion dead of 1941 lie buried in either the Phaleron War Cemetery in Athens or the Suda Bay War Cemetery on Crete. After the war it was decided to bring the bodies of all British and Dominion servicemen killed in 1941 into these two cemeteries from smaller burial grounds all over Greece and Crete. On the Greek mainland, British units were assisted in this task by the 21st and 22nd Australian Graves Registration Units. The Australians themselves undertook the work on Crete. Those whose bodies were never recovered, or who were unidentifiable at burial, are commemorated on the Athens Memorial to the missing at Phaleron. There are 331 Australian names on this memorial, representing 56 per cent of the Australian dead of the Greek campaign. Above the north entrance to the memorial in English and above the south entrance in Ancient Greek, are these words attributed to the ancient Greek poet, Simonedes:

WE, WHO TO CLOTHE HELLAS IN FREEDOM FOUGHT,
LIE HERE AT REST IN PRAISE THAT FADETH NOT.

Greece and Crete, page 86

Source 3

Twelve-year-old Maxwell Reece, son of Stoker Petty Officer William Reece of HMAS Perth, receives his father’s Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) from Rear Admiral Muirhead Gould in Sydney, 2 April 1943. Reece’s DSM was awarded for his bravery during the evacuation of Crete in May 1941. He was killed in action on 1 March 1942 when the Perth was sunk in the Battle of the Sunda Strait. (AWM 014577)
Australia Hellenic Memorial, Anzac Parade, Canberra. Inscribed on the Memorial in Greek and English is the following text: This Memorial commemorates all those who died in the Greek Campaign of World War II particularly during the battle for Crete, those who died at sea while serving with the Royal Australian Navy and the Merchant Marine in the Mediterranean Sea, members of the Royal Australian Air Force, women of the nursing services, special covert forces, Greek civilians who risked their lives in helping Australian and other Allied soldiers to safety, together with those who died on Greek soil during World War II.

*Greece and Crete*, page 90
Reflect on the cost of the 1941 Greece and Crete campaign to:

- those who served;
- those who stayed at home; and
- Australia as a nation.

Create a poem to capture your thoughts about the cost of this campaign. Select a style and tone that reflects your ideas.
B: With the benefit of hindsight

Richard Reid, historian and author of *Greece and Crete*, concludes his analysis by asking whether, today, Australian visitors to Greece and Crete:

…ponder whether it was correct in 1941 to send Australian troops to Greece when Australia’s senior commander thought that the expedition could end in disaster. Or whether, to use Menzies’ phrase, Australia was right, whatever the odds, in taking ‘a great risk in a good cause’.

*Greece and Crete*, page 89

What is your response to this observation? Do you think that the decision to send Australian soldiers to Greece and Crete was the right one? Use the sources throughout this resource to inform your response.

One of the roles of historians is to challenge the decisions that have created history. How does this relate to your interpretation of *Greece and Crete*?