September 1942. Australian artillery being pulled through dense jungle near Uberi on the Kokoda Track.

AWM 025854
Jungle Warfare

TOPIC QUESTION

What were the fighting conditions like in jungle warfare?

Key Concepts

1. Evidence
2. Analysis and Use of Primary Sources

Learning Outcomes

This topic focuses on the special problems presented by jungle fighting. Students explore evidence about the tactics of jungle war, including the devastating effect of malaria and dysentery on the soldiers.

1. Fighting conditions and personal challenges
2. Malaria and dysentery research project
Website and DVD Links


Kokoda DVD:
Part 1: The Invasion is a helpful source of information for students to understand the jungle environment. (See Chapter 6 – Jungle Warfare)

Teacher Briefing

This unit is designed to develop students’ knowledge and understanding of the features of jungle warfare and the special conditions experienced by soldiers in Papua New Guinea. By understanding fighting conditions, including terrain, weather, training, supplies and diseases, students gain a better appreciation and understanding of the difficulties faced by Australians along the Kokoda Track.

About the Learning Activities

Activity 1: Fighting conditions and personal challenges
Students are given a tactical jungle situation and asked to write to a friend about their experience of jungle warfare. This may be small group work or individual work where students consider the personal challenges faced by both Australian and Japanese soldiers. Class background material and instruction are on pages 44–46.

Activity 2: Malaria and dysentery research project
Students answer nine questions in a report format on one tropical disease contracted by soldiers in Kokoda in 1942. Students research from the www.kokoda.commemoration.gov.au website or use other websites or resources from the school library.
Overview: What were the fighting conditions like in jungle warfare?

The men fighting on the Kokoda track faced thick jungle where the enemy was often not seen until he was a few metres away. In the Second World War in Europe and Africa, vast arrays of tanks, aircraft and artillery supported the infantryman. Little of this was available in Papua which made the fighting a foot soldier’s war. The tactics of infantry fighting are built upon fire and movement. When attacking, one group moves towards the enemy while the other fires to keep enemy heads down. The former was called the rifle group, armed with rifles, submachine guns and grenades. The latter was the gun group using at least one light machine gun.

On more open battlefields, the gun group might be the size of a company (about 100 men) with mortars or medium machine guns. They would direct a large volume of fire towards the enemy while another company manoeuvred towards them. This was impossible in Papua because visibility in the jungle is poor, usually from ten to fifty metres, more often the former when fog and rain intervenes. This meant that the defender in his camouflaged fighting pit was not seen until the attacker’s lead scout was suddenly fired on by the hidden enemy. If the scout survived he may still not have been able to determine exactly where the fire was coming from unless he had seen a muzzle flash. The gun group, further back, was even worse off as it could not determine where to direct fire to support the rifle group.

Another challenge facing soldiers fighting in the jungle related to issuing and receiving orders. Steep slopes, few tracks, thick jungle and deep treacherous streams hindered communication. Typically the company commander could see few of his own men and his subordinates. The platoon commanders were often unsure where they were in relation to their own superior, other platoons and sometimes even their own sections.

The typical tactical experience of the infantryman on the Kokoda Track was fighting in a section divided into two small groups, a six-man rifle group or a four-man gun group. After locating the enemy, the gun group brings fire to bear on them while, under cover of the fire, the rifle group crawls carefully closer to try to lob grenades into the enemy’s fighting pit. Suddenly, another enemy opens up and the whole movement halts while the problem is reassessed. The platoon leader commits another of his sections to tackle the new threat. Slowly, usually by crawling and using every scrap of cover, and with long periods where no one can see the enemy and the enemy cannot see them, the attack proceeds. This was how the campaign along the Kokoda Track was fought. The popular image of large formations sweeping the enemy aside with heroic bayonet charges was far from how it actually was for the average soldier.

Activity 1: Fighting conditions and personal challenges

Teacher Briefing

› Print off the overview above, the student instructions and the letter exercise on pages 45–46.

› The first thirty minutes of the Kokoda DVD Part 1: The Invasion Chapters 1–6 are useful background for this exercise.

The Task

Introduce the topic by getting students to read the overview and use a highlighter to bold all the main ideas in the passage that talk about the conditions of jungle warfare. Discuss these with the whole class and discuss some of the environmental and personal challenges that soldiers may have encountered.

Students are to imagine they are a soldier on the Kokoda Track. Ask them to write to a friend about their experience of jungle warfare.

You may wish to use this exercise for individual assignment or group work. In the case of group work, one group could assume the perspective of an Australian soldier and the other could assume the role and perspective of a Japanese soldier.

Use the student responses for a class discussion. Focus on the similarities and differences, if any, experienced by the Australian and Japanese troops in jungle warfare.
Student Task
Activity 1: Fighting conditions and personal challenges

Read the information provided below and consider the features of jungle warfare that impact on soldiers. Think about the terrain, the weather and psychological factors.


Imagine that you are a soldier in your third week of fighting, locked in battle in the mountains. It is night time and raining. You are in a small patrol. You hear gunfire. You are hungry and wet. The rain is relentless and there are shadows moving in the night that might or might not be the enemy.

Take the perspective of either a Japanese or an Australian soldier. In the following text box below, highlight the text that suggests something about the conditions in which the Australians and Japanese lived and fought in the jungle.

Fighting in the jungle resembles night fighting

The attacker, who is manoeuvring, often cannot find his way and becomes lost. His sub-units cannot see each other so cannot easily coordinate fire and movement. The defender, who is in his fighting pit, cannot direct his fire on targets hidden by thick foliage. His weapons, which in other circumstances can fire accurately for hundreds of metres, are much less useful when he can only see 20 metres. If the jungle is also mountainous with frequent mist and heavy rain, as it was on the Kokoda track, these problems are compounded as all movement is greatly slowed and visibility further restricted.

The Japanese, it is said, were trained jungle fighters. This is not so, rather their advantage was that their doctrine and training stressed the importance of night fighting while the Australians in 1942 did not train to fight at night. Both sides were strangers to the jungle but the Japanese, owing to their night fighting training, found their feet first.

A patrol is a small group who leave the main body to seek information on the enemy. If the fingers of a hand are spread wide then the finger tips represent patrols, while the palm is the main body of troops which waits behind to act on the information the patrols obtain. The peculiar aspect of patrolling the vast jungle covered and rugged mountains of the Owen Stanley Range was that these patrols rarely encountered one another. Most patrols returned with no contact nor any sign of the enemy. For all the efforts of 2/1 Pioneer Battalion in the last two weeks of September their patrols encountered the Japanese just twice. On one of these occasions they clashed with the deepest known southward penetration of a Japanese patrol, on the Goldie River, well in the Australian rear and only 35 kilometres from Port Moresby.

Write your notes in the table provided

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Notes on the Jungle Warfare Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrain and Environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather Conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment (including uniform and weapons)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Factors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Health Factors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Letter to a friend – What is jungle fighting like?

Imagine you are a soldier, that it is the following day and you are safe. You are writing a letter to a friend, telling them about what jungle fighting is like. Describe in your own words what you thought and felt last night and how you feel now. There was no fighting but you were expecting there would be. Be honest with your friend. Were you scared? How do you feel now, particularly as there was no fighting?

Use your answers in class discussion to talk about the similarities and differences, if any, that the Australian and Japanese soldiers faced in jungle warfare. Use a separate piece of paper if you need extra space.

Dear
Activity 2: Malaria and dysentery research project

Teacher Briefing

› This research project asks students to answer nine questions in a report format on either malaria, dysentery, scrub typhus or dengue fever contracted by soldiers. Students may research the Kokoda website or use other websites or resources in the school library.

› Watch Chapter 6 the *Kokoda DVD* – Part 1: *The Invasion*, on Jungle Warfare.

› Print off the student sheet on page 48.

25 December 1942, Buna Papua. Private Goerge C. “Dick” Whittington being helped along a track through the Kunai grass towards a field hospital by Papuan native Raphael Oimbari.

AWM 014206

Image courtesy Jason Daniels, DVA.
Student Task

Activity 2: Malaria and dysentery research project

The dangers of jungle warfare were not only related to the enemy. In New Guinea, both the Australians and the Japanese lost more men to sickness than to battle.

The two main problems were malaria and dysentery. Soldiers also suffered from dengue fever and scrub typhus. Choose one of these diseases to research. Use the Kokoda website or your school library to write a report entitled ‘(name of the disease) on the Kokoda track’.

Divide your report into nine parts. The questions below are a guide to show you what to write about in each part. You don’t need to include the questions in the report but each part should have a heading.

Search for your own images to add to your report.

Include a chart or diagram that illustrates an aspect of your research.

Research into a Kokoda Track tropical disease:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction. What is your report going to be about?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What exactly is the disease?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the disease transmitted to humans?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the symptoms of the disease?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What drugs can prevent or minimise the disease?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were these drugs available in 1942?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did the disease affect the soldiers on the Kokoda track?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the disease still a problem in New Guinea today?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion. What is the most important thing you have learned from this report?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
October 1942. The party of the 2/14th infantry battalion arriving at the United States base camp after 42 days in the jungle. Kalikodobu, New Guinea. AWM 065249

A Fighting Retreat
A Fighting Retreat

TOPIC QUESTION

What was the outcome of the second engagement at Kokoda: August – September 1942?

Key Concepts

- Evidence
- Historical Questions and Research
- Contestability

Learning Outcomes

Students develop knowledge and understanding about the special significance of the second engagement at Kokoda. Students explore the reality of walking the Kokoda Track.

Learning Activities

1. The second engagement at Kokoda
2. Walking the Kokoda Track
Website and DVD Links


*Kokoda DVD:*
Part 1: *The Invasion.*

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Teacher Briefing

This unit provides the option to use one of the animated maps available on the Kokoda website. The unit is designed to develop students’ historical skills and interpretation. The second engagement at Kokoda was a small but complicated fight. It is an opportunity for students to understand:

a) the mechanics of the battle and the reason why armies manoeuvre as they do; and

b) the influence a small battle can have on larger events.

**About the Learning Activities**

**Activity 1: The second engagement at Kokoda**
The aim of this activity is to explore the concept of historical significance. The class is required to look at the animated map of the second engagement at Kokoda on the website at www.kokoda.commemoration.gov.au/fighting-retreat/second-engagement-kokoda.php and closely read the text on pages 53–54. Students are required to work out the sequence of events represented on the website’s animated map on a separate piece of paper, using the text as a guide. This activity may conclude with a class discussion.

**Activity 2: Walking the Kokoda Track**
This activity tests students’ knowledge about personal challenges faced by Australians on the track in 1942 and today. This may be developed through group or class discussion and draw on students’ personal bush walking and camping experiences. Kokoda terrain photographs are on page 55 and instructions to students are on pages 56–58.
Overview: What was the outcome of the second engagement at Kokoda: August – September 1942?

The second Kokoda engagement had notable strategic consequences. Australian Major Allen Cameron’s bold attack on Kokoda came as a surprise, not just to Japanese Colonel Tsukamoto, but also to his Japanese superiors in Rabaul who did not anticipate there would be many Australians on the north side of the Owen Stanley Range.

The 17th Army commander, Hyakutake reasoned that if the Australians were bold enough to retake Kokoda, even if only briefly, then they must have a large force, estimated to be 1,200 strong. This first prompted the Japanese to consider the idea of postponing the attack on Port Moresby until more troops arrived in Papua, more supplies were accumulated and Milne Bay was taken. This line of thinking was reinforced when news came in that the American landing at Guadalcanal, on 7 August, would be a greater problem for the Japanese than first thought.

By 16 August, the decision to postpone the attempt to take Port Moresby was made in Rabaul. Senior Japanese officers interviewed after the war thought that the factor most influencing the postponement was not Guadalcanal but rather ‘stronger than anticipated Australian resistance at Kokoda.’

Activity 1: The second engagement at Kokoda

Teacher Briefing

- Print off the overview above, the student task page 53–54

The significance of the second engagement at Kokoda was that it had strategic consequences out of all proportion to the size of the force engaged. The second engagement led to the Japanese decision to postpone the Japanese attempt to take Port Moresby.
Student Task

Activity 1: The second engagement at Kokoda

Look at the animated map of the second engagement at Kokoda on the website at www.kokoda.commemoration.gov.au/fighting-retreat/second-engagement-kokoda.php and read the following text. Using the text as a guide, work out the sequence of events represented on the website’s animated map on a separate piece of paper. Work out the sequence of events. Discuss in class.

Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cameron</td>
<td>Commander of the Australian Maroubra Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen</td>
<td>Previous Commander of Maroubra Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bidstrup/Symington</td>
<td>Company Commanders under Cameron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsukamoto</td>
<td>Japanese Commander of 1/144 Battalion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigade</td>
<td>A military force with 3 or 4 Battalions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battalion</td>
<td>Maroubra Force or Japanese 1/144 were battalion size with 500 men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Battalions are divided into companies of about 100 men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platoon</td>
<td>Companies are divided into platoons of about 30 men</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Second engagement at Kokoda: 8 August 1942

After the first Kokoda engagement on the night of 28/29 July, the Australians retreated to Deniki. Both sides awaited reinforcements. With the death of Owen at Kokoda, Major Alien Cameron arrived to take over Maroubra Force which, by the first week of August had grown to 550 men, mostly of 39th Battalion. Leaving a reserve at Deniki, Cameron now moved with 430 men to obey his orders to retake Kokoda. On 8 August, with his headquarters company and one other, he advanced directly down the track from Deniki towards Kokoda. A second force under Captain Bidstrup moved north-east to Pirivi to block the track by which Japanese reinforcements might come from the north coast to Kokoda. Between these two Australian forces was a third one, a company under Captain Symington. It marched along another track, unknown to the Japanese, that led from Deniki to Kokoda.

Cameron’s force on the main track bumped into a Japanese battalion coming the other way. By coincidence the Japanese battalion commander, Colonel Tsukamoto, had begun his attack on Deniki, where he knew the Australians to be, on the same day Cameron commenced his own advance. Tsukamoto had 522 men of 1/144 Battalion. Japanese combat engineers and about 660 Japanese were engaged against 430 Australians.

Soon realising he was considerably outnumbered on the main track, Cameron withdrew to Deniki. Tsukamoto, surprised to find the Australians had advanced on him when he expected to be the attacker, slowly and carefully followed Cameron’s withdrawal. On the central track, Symington found no Japanese at all until he entered Kokoda. There he encountered a platoon of Japanese engineers who did not stay to fight but retreated along the track to Pirivi. Symington’s men dug in on the ridge overlooking the Kokoda airstrip on the same ground Owen had defended nine days before.

The Japanese planned to establish a supply dump at Kokoda. For this reason a company of Japanese engineers was in the area improving their supply line. One platoon was building a bridge near Pirivi when Bidstrup’s company, which was the eastern most of the three pronged Australian attack, ran into them. The Japanese were reinforced later by another engineer platoon, the one which Symington saw leaving Kokoda in the direction of Pirivi. Bidstrup fought the Japanese engineers until dark when he too withdrew to Deniki.
By 9 August, both commanders’ plans had been confounded. Cameron, like Tsukamoto, had expected to be the attacker but then found himself under attack. His two outer prongs had been repulsed and the central one, under Symington, was holding Kokoda but cut off from the rest of the Maroubra Force. Tsukamoto brought the main body of his battalion up to Deniki but was reluctant to make his attack until he was sure Kokoda was cleared of what he believed was a small force of Australians. He sent back just one company to retake it. This company proved insufficient, all its attacks over that day and the following night were repulsed.

Because Cameron was unsure if Symington was even in Kokoda, no consideration was given to the possibility of flying reinforcements into Kokoda airstrip. On 10 August, Symington, having had no communication at all with Cameron and low on ammunition and food, decided to withdraw to Deniki. As the most direct routes were blocked his company eluded the Japanese by heading west across the airstrip then south towards Deniki.

Total Japanese casualties for the three days fight were 21 killed and 44 wounded. The Australians lost 23 killed and 17 wounded.
Activity 2: Walking the Kokoda Track

Teacher Briefing

This task can be done by students individually or as group work. Students should first look at the Kokoda terrain photographs on this page and then make their own list of items to take on the Kokoda Track. Only after they have made their own list should you provide them with the list made by experienced Kokoda Trekkers found on the CD ROM under Unit 5 Activity 2 and students complete the worksheet questions on page 57–58.

Alternatively, the questions on the worksheet can be used for class discussion.
Student Task

Activity 2: Walking the Kokoda Track

Your Task
Look at the photographs of the Kokoda Track on page 55. Make a list of at least 20 items you would need, and how many of each, for a ten day walk along the Kokoda Track.

Remember that you have to carry everything yourself so keep it down to a bare minimum. The only things you don’t have to take with you are water and food. Water can be obtained from mountain streams and three basic meals a day will be provided by the tour company which will guide you along the Track.

After you have completed your list, compare it with a classmate. Did you have a similar list? What items did you not have on the list?

Look at the Kokoda Trekkers’ Equipment List on the CD ROM under Unit 5 Activity 2.

Now answer the worksheet questions on page 57–58.

Hints
You will need the following: clothing, footwear, toiletries and camping equipment. There are many other things that you will need. Some of them will surprise you, so think carefully about what might be useful for a long walk in tropical mountains where there are no shops, hospitals or hotels.

Image courtesy of Volker Scholz, Department of Environment.
Answer each of the following questions:

1. Compare your own list to the Kokoda Trekkers' Equipment List. What did you take too many of and why do you think this list recommends taking less?

2. What was the most surprising item to find on this list and why did it surprise you?

3. Why is it so important to keep your feet and your walking boots dry?
4. Name as many items as you can that should be in the first aid kit?

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5. What does the list tell you about the dangers of walking the Kokoda Track?

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6. Did you have something on your list that is not on the Kokoda Trekkers’ Equipment List, but you think you should take it on the trek? Explain why.

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-
1943. Papuan native carriers taking supplies on the Kokoda Track at Uberi. AWM 061856

Into the Mountains
TOpIC QUeSTIoN

What happened in the Australian retreat from Eora to Templeton’s Crossing: 31 August – 5 September 1942?

K ey C oncepts

- Evidence
- Analysis and Use of Sources
- Explanation and Communication

L earning O utcomes

1. Students will investigate an Australian and Japanese account of the fighting. Students can also investigate the contestability of the reputation of one of the Australian fighting units, the 53rd Battalion.

L earning A ctivities

1. The engagement at Eora
2. Was the reputation of the 53rd Battalion deserved?
3 Website and DVD Links


Kokoda DVD:
View Part 1: The Invasion, Chapter 9 – Attack on Isurava and Chapter – 12 Fighting Withdrawal.

4 Teacher Briefing

This unit is designed to develop students’ knowledge and understanding of different points of view and to challenge the contestability of evidence. Students take on the Japanese perspective to analyse and interpret the event. The unit provides an empathy exercise from the Japanese perspective.

About the Learning Activities

Activity 1: The engagement at Eora
Students have the opportunity to compare and contrast the Japanese and Australian accounts regarding the engagement at Eora, reproduced from the Kokoda website on pages 63–64. Class instructions are at page 63 and questions are at page 65. The questions are designed to develop analysis and interpretation skills.

Activity 2: Was the reputation of the 53rd Battalion deserved?
Students exercise interpretative skills and role play as members of the 53rd Battalion and read excerpts from 3 texts on page 67.
Prior to viewing the Kokoda DVD the class should brainstorm their existing impression of the Australian fighting force at Kokoda.

The Kokoda DVD Chapter 9, Attack on Isurava and Part 2 The Counter Attack Chapter 19 Kododa Recaptured will assist students to understand the circumstances and later guide a class discussion about the behaviour of members of the 53rd Battalion.

If computers are available, students can map the progress of the 53rd Battalion at the Stand.

Open with a class discussion of the criticism of the 53rd Battalion and ask students to consider their defence.
Overview: What happened in the Australian retreat from Eora to Templeton’s Crossing?

Before Deniki the fighting took place in low lying country north of the Owen Stanley Range. Once the Japanese entered the mountains in pursuit of the Australians, two things changed.

First, the rugged, jungled slopes on which the fighting took place altered the tactics used. In the low country it was easy to march around the enemy flank to threaten their rear. In the mountains, both sides were to find this was still possible, but extremely difficult and slow. The Kokoda Track became the major tactical feature and if the Australians could block it, and not be cut off from supplies coming up the track, then they would stop the Japanese.

Secondly, the Maroubra Force was strongly reinforced and, abandoning a delay and retire policy, the Australians made three determined but unsuccessful attempts to stop the Japanese at Isurava, Efogi and Ioribaiwa.
Student Task

Activity 1: The engagement at Eora

Your Task

Major Koiwai Mitsuo (Japanese names have surname first) wrote an account of his participation in the engagement at Eora. Read this, and the Australian account of the engagement at Eora and answer the questions on page 65.

The Japanese perspective

Koiwai’s story begins on the morning of 2nd September, after the Australians had withdrawn from their position overlooking Eora village.

‘I thought it unusual for the hard working Australians to give up a position so quickly. Anyhow it was good news and took a load off my mind. Our loss since yesterday amounted to 17 dead and 27 wounded. This day we buried our dead in the mountains for the first time since landing in New Guinea. I issued an order to start the pursuit at 7am. Number 7 company, the most exhausted, was sent back. Numbers 5 and 6 company rested where they were while 8 and 12 companies took up the pursuit.’

Koiwai’s superior, Colonel Yazawa Kiyomi, arrived to rebuke Koiwai for advancing too slowly when, as Yazawa said, ‘There seemed to be no Australians about.’

‘Since yesterday’s failed attack he had not liked my cautious approach. He seemed to be anxious for a quick victory but it was not easy to attack the enemy without knowing where they were. Being too eager for a victory could result in delaying the pursuit and increasing our losses. This is the last thing a commander should do.’

The next day, 3rd September, Koiwai’s men caught up with the Australians.

‘After considering all the options I decided to attack the enemy at night. I had 8 Company on hand but they had been worked very hard since 1 September so I could not push that company too much. I was looking forward to the arrival of 7 Company because of the quality of the commanders. Lt Nakao had experience in China and his Warrant Officer, Kaneshige, was also a great fighter with lots of experience. I had one artillery piece. It is usually not done to fire artillery at night but human psychology is kind of beyond tactics. My plan was that after firing a few shells at the enemy position and terrifying them out of their senses we would charge with bayonets and they would be in fear of us in the darkness of the jungle.

It all went as I had hoped. After hard fighting my men got in among the Australians. I then ordered them to hold their positions as I expected a counter attack. It never came and at dawn we were surprised to find that the Australians had again retreated.’

Autographed good luck flag carried by a Japanese soldier. The signatures on the flag are from friends and family wishing a traditional long-lasting good fortune in war. AWM REL/18488
The Allied perspective

As a result of the defeat at Isurava, the Australians withdrew rapidly south along the Kokoda track. Covering the withdrawal was a large rearguard composed of 2/16 and 2/14 Battalions. These battalions, especially the latter, had been dispersed as a result of the Isurava fighting and had only 700 men between them. The fighting done by 2/16 and 2/14 as they covered the withdrawal of the Maroubra Force in the week after Isurava, is known as the first Eora-Templeton’s engagement. Colonel Key of 2/14 was among those missing after Isurava so Colonel Caro of 2/16 commanded the force.

The first position the Australians held was just south of Aloa on the night of 30 August. After dark they withdrew. It was well that they did as a fresh Japanese pursuit group, elements of 41 Regiment, none of which had participated at Isurava, was advancing rapidly after them. With 1305 men its aim was to overtake and destroy the Australian rearguard. When Yazawa, the regimental commander, saw the Australians drawn up south of Aloa he thought the position too strong to attack frontally. At night he sent his main force into the jungle to the west, to circle around and attack the Australians from the rear. While this was in progress, the Australians withdrew and, for the third time in the campaign so far, a Japanese battalion wandered lost in the jungle unable to find its enemy.

A day lost to the error, Yazawa’s pursuit group caught up with Caro’s force dug in on the southern heights above Eora village. The line was held by 2/16 while 2/14 was behind it ready to act as a reserve or respond to a Japanese flank attack. The Japanese placed their artillery and machine gun company on the same height to the north of the village that they were to use when they defended this area during their retreat in October. Five infantry companies were available to them. After an artillery bombardment of the Australians, they made a night attack. Two were held in reserve, one attacked the Australian frontally and two went around the Australian right flank.

By early morning of 2nd September, the Japanese had penetrated the Australian position in several places. Caro decided he must withdraw. The Japanese followed cautiously and the following evening found the Australians further down the track at Templeton’s Crossing. This time Caro withdrew before the Japanese had time to develop their attack. On the following night, the Australians crossed Eora Creek onto heights south of it and here made another stand. The Japanese had only one gun forward to support their infantry which again made a frontal pinning attack combined with a sweep around a flank. Both attacks were successful and the Australians had either to withdraw or face destruction. This withdrawal uncovered Myola, the dry lake in the mountains from which the Australians were receiving their supplies by air. The Australian rearguard then fell back to Efogi where they rejoined the Maroubra Force.

First, Eora-Templeton’s is rightfully regarded as a successful rearguard action on the part of the Australians. The Japanese were faced with the choice of a fast advance which would cost them more casualties or a less costly slow advance. In this phase of operations in the Owen Stanley Range, Yazawa opted for a slow advance in an attempt to keep casualties down. He failed as Eora-Templeton’s cost the Japanese 43 killed and 58 wounded against an Australian loss of 21 killed and 54 wounded. Horii, the Nankai Shitai commander, was highly dissatisfied and removed Yazawa’s regiment from the pursuit.

He replaced it with a 144 Regiment which had been resting since Isurava. From an average advance of two kilometres per day under Yazawa, the speed of the pursuit increased to eight kilometres per day. From the Australian perspective, the slow Japanese advance in the week after Isurava gave them time to prepare to make another stand, this time at Efogi.

August 1942. Australian troops enjoy a respite from heavy fighting against the Japanese in the Kokoda area. Their rest camp consists of native huts. AWM 150656
Answer the following questions about the Japanese and Australian accounts.

1. How does Koiwai’s version of events differ from the Allied account?

2. Watch the animated battle of Eora 1 and 2 on the Kokoda website kokoda.commemoration.gov.au/battle-maps/. Is there anything in Koiwai’s version that you think might be incorrect?

3. Considering both accounts, who would you say won the fight?

4. What does Koiwai think of the Australians?
5. Explain in your own words, the reason for the tension between Koiwai and Yazawa.

6. What was Koiwai particularly worried about?

7. What does Koiwai’s account tell you about the problems faced by the Japanese?

8. What does the account tell you about Koiwai’s personality?
Student Task

Activity 2: Was the reputation of the 53rd Battalion deserved?

Watch the Kokoda DVD Part 1 The Invasion, chapter 9 Attack on Isurava and Part 2 The Counter Attack, Chapter 19 Kokoda Recaptured.

Imagine that you are a member of the 53rd Battalion.


Read the three secondary sources below and answer the following questions.

Source 1: Extract from Kokoda, Paul Ham 2005
The 53rd Battalion was not destined to share the glory of the 39th. The story of this unfortunate unit is one of the sadder episodes of Australian military history, and rarely told in the accounts of the Kokoda campaign. They were similar men of similar backgrounds as those in the 39th. And many were as brave and committed. But incompetent leadership and a splinter group of malcontents, fatally compromised them. (Ham, Kokoda, 2005 :29) Everyone criticised their (the 53rd) lack of training, but no one seemed prepared to do much about it, far less accept responsibility. It was always someone else’s job. This was a constant theme throughout this miserable war. (Ham, Kokoda, 2005 :486)

Source 2: Extract from A Bastard of a Place, Peter Brune 2003
In summary, it should be said that the formation of the 53rd Battalion, its deployment in Port Moresby, its subsequent treatment during its garrison days and, critically, the quality of its leadership in the collective sense – all of it is a national disgrace. And a further point should be noted. The notion that an Australian citizen need only enlist in his armed forces and almost immediately become the stuff of a new legend is quite simply nonsense. The citizen requires, and deserves, trained, dynamic leadership; he should have adequate equipment and the time to train and learn how to engender esprit de corps. The legends come later. In August 1942, all this was denied the young men of the 53rd Battalion. (Brune, A Bastard of a Place, 2003 :166)

Source 3: From 53rd Battalion War Diary, AWM Collection 52 8/3/91 War Diaries

27 August 1942 - Attacks were not successful due to lack of offensive spirit and general physical condition of troops. Runner returned with message Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Ward... had been killed.

30 August 1942 - Dysentery cases increasing,...morale not good.

31 August 1942 - Major Spring reported his Company dispersed during an attack while he was absent..... The company could not be located.

1 September 1942 - Companies appeared to lose control and [there was] far too much straggling.

2 September 1942 - 53 Battalion to be relieved of all automatic weapons, rifles and equipment and the Battalion less one company to move back to Port Moresby.
Look for evidence that supports the three sources and the *Kokoda* DVD’s views about the 53rd Battalion. Write down a list of evidence and where the evidence comes from that supports those views.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Was the reputation of the 53rd Battalion deserved?</th>
<th>Notes on evidence found in the sources</th>
<th>Notes on evidence found in the Kokoda DVD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Source 2</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source 3</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Answer the following questions:

1. What did the 53rd Battalion do wrong?

2. Do you think that criticism of the 53rd Battalion was fair?

3. Do you think that the whole 53rd Battalion should be criticised?

4. If you were a member of the 53rd Battalion what would you say in your defence?
September 1942. Milne Bay.

AWM 026620

Milne Bay
Milne Bay

TOPIC QUESTION
What led to the Japanese defeat at Milne Bay?

Key Concepts
- Chronology
- Contestability
- Analysis and Use of Sources

Learning Outcomes
Students learn of the first Japanese defeat in New Guinea. This unit identifies the events, causes, outcomes and broader impact of the campaign. It also invites interpretation of different media to draw conclusions about the motivations and intentions of the participants. The unit also examines heroism and the life and story of Corporal John Alexander French VC who won his Victoria Cross at Milne Bay.

Learning Activities
1. The Japanese landing and defeat at Milne Bay
2. Milne Bay – veteran account
3. Depth study: Corporal John Alexander French VC
Website and DVD Links


Kokoda DVD:
Part 2: The Counter Attack, Chapters 15-23

Teacher Briefing

About the Learning Activities

Activity 1: The Japanese landing and defeat at Milne Bay
An exercise designed to develop knowledge and understanding of the Japanese perspective and the turning point in the fighting. Class instruction and questions are on page 73. Guide the students through the text and questions. Direct class discussion about the influence of weather and terrain on the war in New Guinea. You may alternatively set this as a research assignment.

Activity 2: Milne Bay – veteran account
Explain personal narrative as a source of historical evidence and ask the students to imagine the perspective of a veteran of Milne Bay.
Students are asked to give a short talk (3-5 minutes) to the class, imagining that they are a 90 year old veteran of the Battle of Milne Bay. The students can use their imagination to tell the group about their experiences. Students acting the part of the veteran may use the opportunity to create or bring mementoes to explain their story. Mementoes could include medals, a diary from 1942, an old photograph of his best mate, a mud stained map, a letter from his mother, a bullet, or a button from his uniform. Students can make the mementoes, at least five of them, with cardboard, paper, coloured pencils, glue and whatever else they can find. Provide coloured pencils, cardboard and other materials or set the making of mementoes as a homework assignment. Some examples are included with the student instructions are on page 74.

Activity 3: Depth study: Corporal John Alexander French VC
In this activity students gain knowledge about definitions of a hero and explore the story of Corporal John Alexander French VC. The Victoria Cross, is the highest military decoration awarded for valor in the face of the enemy to armed forces in the Commonwealth. The Australian War Memorial website www.awm.gov.au/people/ has a list of Australian Victoria Cross recipients that you may wish to use for broader discussion about the award of a VC. Information on the only other VC Recipient at the Kokoda Track is available on the CD ROM under Unit 7 Activity 3. Instructions and materials to distribute to students are on pages 76–78.
Provide students with a copy of the definitions of a hero found on the CD ROM under Unit 7 Activity 3.

Small metal bottle of anti-freeze used by the Imperial Japanese Army, c 1942 Recovered from an abandoned Japanese camp at Efogi on the Kokoda Track. Probably used with gun sights and mortar equipment. AWM REL34277
Overview: What led to the Japanese defeat at Milne Bay

Milne Bay is on the eastern tail of New Guinea. In 1942, aircraft based there could project air power towards a number of vital strategic locations: Port Moresby, Sanananda, Lae, Far North Queensland and across the Coral Sea.

Both sides were well aware of the advantages of controlling Milne Bay. The Allies made the first move. They began construction of an air base at the western end of the bay in June 1942. The Japanese intended to build an airfield at nearby Samarai Island but when they discovered the Allied airfield at Milne Bay, they decided to attack and take that instead. The moment seemed right as it could be timed to coincide with the Japanese attack at Isurava. More importantly, two weeks earlier, the Imperial Japanese Navy sank an Allied cruiser group, including the HMAS Canberra, near Guadalcanal. Admiral Mikawa deduced, correctly, that the American carriers would be unlikely to intervene in a Japanese naval operation to take Milne Bay, now that the carrier’s cruiser escort had been sunk.

The Japanese landed on the beaches of Milne Bay on 26 August 1942 to seize the Allied airfield. They were comprehensively defeated by the Australians who thus became the first to obtain a victory over the Japanese since the Pacific war began.

Student Task
Activity 1: The Japanese landing and defeat at Milne Bay

Poor weather and bad terrain can influence the outcome of a battle. Read the text below carefully and answer the following questions. Use a highlighter to mark the problems that led to the failure of the Japanese advance.

The Japanese landing at Milne Bay

With an escort of cruisers and destroyers, the first Japanese landing of 1178 troops, took place between Waga Waga and Wandula on the northern coast of Milne Bay on the night of 25 August 1942. This was seven kilometres east of where they intended to land, a fact that had important consequences. To understand the effect of this error on the course of events it is vital to take into account the weather and terrain.

Where the Japanese landed was a narrow coastal strip between the bay and rugged mountains. There were tracks in the mountains but they ran from north to south, as did the ridges leading down from the mountains, while the Japanese wanted to advance from east to west. The Australians were able to block Japanese access to the airfields along the coastal flats.

Secondly, almost constant rain throughout the operation turned all tracks into mud wallows and much of the area into a swamp, slowing troop movement. The third effect of heavy rain and banks of low cloud was on air power. The Royal Australian Air Force, with an airstrip only minutes away, could quickly attack Japanese ground troops when any break in the weather was observed.

Japanese aircraft, in contrast, had to come from Buna, Lae and Rabaul. Communications with their own troops at Milne Bay often failed so they had no way of knowing when breaks in the cloud might occur. Perhaps three quarters of all Imperial Japanese Navy air raids over Milne Bay failed to find any targets.

October 1942. Leather wallet with a woven cloth cover. This wallet was picked up by an Australian soldier at Templeton’s Crossing. More information about this artefact can be found on the AWM collection database. AWM REL33902
Questions

1. List the factors that led to the defeat of the Japanese at Milne Bay.

2. What, in your opinion, was the most important factor and why?

3. What could the Japanese have done to minimise the effects of the weather and terrain?
Student Task

Activity 2: Milne Bay – veteran account

Look at the artwork above and identify the tasks being done and the setting. Imagine that you are a veteran of this battle. You are now 90 years old. You have been asked to talk of your experiences at a local school. You decide to bring some of your personal mementoes. Mementoes are a reminder of the past, a keepsake. You will show them to the students and tell them something about each one.

Use your imagination. Think about what things an old soldier would keep in his box of souvenirs from the war. Which ones would he think the students would be interested in? He might bring his medals, a diary from the war, an old photograph of his best mate, a mud stained map, a letter from his mother, a bullet, or a button from his uniform.

You can make the mementoes, with cardboard, paper, coloured pencils, glue and whatever else you can find. You should talk to the class for three minutes. Think about how a 90 year old veteran might talk. Start by telling the students who you are and where you come from, and what your strongest memory of the Battle of Milne Bay is. Then show the class your mementoes one at a time. Make up a very short story about each one. After you have finished, ask if the students have any questions and try to answer them as the veteran might.

You may wish to use the Australian War Memorial collection search function on their website to find other artefacts or objects from the Second World War. Some examples are provided below for you.
Use this table to assist you to structure the content of your talk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memento</th>
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<td>Why did you choose it?</td>
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<td>What is the relevance of your memento?</td>
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<td>How does it add to your veteran’s story?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Is it an artefact?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Is it a primary or a secondary source?</td>
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</table>
Student Task

Activity 3: Depth study: Corporal John Alexander French VC

The Qualities of Heroes
1. Write a list of people who you think are heroes.

2. Use the “Definitions of a hero” sheet located on the CD ROM to inform your discussion on the qualities of a hero. From this discussion construct a list of four or five essential qualities of a hero.

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<th>Heroic qualities</th>
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3. Go back to your original list of heroes. Do they have the qualities you have described in your list? Discuss in class why you originally considered these people as heroes.

What is a Victoria Cross?
1. Read the following information about the Victoria Cross.

The Victoria Cross

The Victoria Cross is the highest award for acts of bravery in wartime. It was instituted in 1856 by Queen Victoria and made retrospective to 1854 to cover the period of the Crimean War. It is possible for any serving member of the armed forces to obtain this award. The Victoria Cross is designed in the form of the Maltese Cross and in the centre of the medal is a lion guardant standing upon the Royal Crown. The words “For valour” are inscribed below. The Victoria Cross is suspended from a crimson ribbon. On the reverse of the cross, the date of the act of bravery is inscribed, along with the name, rank and unit of the recipient.

Source www.awm.gov.au
2. Only one other Victoria Cross was awarded at the Kokoda Track to an Australian of 2/14 Battalion. Go to the Australian War Memorial website at www.awm.gov.au/people/ and find out who gained the award, the location of the action and the date. The answer can be found on the CD ROM under Unit 7: Activity 3 or your teacher can provide the answer from the CD.

3. Examine the following three sources about the VC awarded to Corporal John Alexander French who was killed at Milne Bay.

Source 1

CORPORAL JOHN ALEXANDER FRENCH VC

Date of birth: 15 July 1914
Place of birth: Crows Nest, near Toowoomba, QLD
Date of death: 4 September 1942
Place of death: Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea
Service Number: QX1071

John French was typical of many single young men who had enlisted early in the war. He went on to serve in Britain, Egypt, and Libya. By the time that he was sent to Papua with the 2/9th Battalion, in August 1942, he was an experienced infantry non-commissioned officer.

In early September, French's company came across Japanese positions near Goroni and was held up by intense fire from three machine-gun posts. Ordering his own section to take cover, French successfully assaulted two positions with grenades. He then attacked the third with a sub-machine gun but finally fell dead in front of the enemy gun pit. He is buried in the Port Moresby (Bomana) War Cemetery.

Source: www.awm.gov.au

Source 2

Go to www.naa.gov.au and conduct a record search for John French. Under his service number view a digital copy of his records.

Digital copies of his service records are also provided on the CD ROM under Unit 7, Activity 3.
Source 3
The London Gazette records French’s VC Citation.

QX 1071 Corporal John Alexander FRENCH
2/9th Australian Infantry Battalion, AIF
4th September 1942, at Milne Bay, New Guinea

At Milne Bay on the afternoon of the 4th September 1942, a company of an Australian infantry battalion attacked the Japanese position East of the K.B. Mission where it encountered terrific rifle and machine gun fire. The advance of the section of which Corporal French was in command was held up by fire from three enemy machine gun posts, whereupon, Corporal French, ordering his section to take cover, advanced and silenced one of the posts with grenades. He returned to his section for more grenades and again advanced and silenced the second post. Armed with a Thompson sub-machine gun, he then attacked the third post, firing from the hip as he went forward. He was seen to be badly hit by the fire from this post, but he continued to advance. The enemy gun then ceased to fire and his section pushed on to find that all members of the three enemy gun crews had been killed and that Corporal French had died in front of the third gun pit. By his cool courage and disregard of his own personal safety, this non-commissioned officer saved the members of his section from heavy casualties and was responsible for the successful conclusion of the attack.

London Gazette:
14th January, 1943.

1. Discuss why VC recipients are considered to be heroes. Do you agree that Corporal John French deserved this award? Why?

AWM 026826

The Tide Turns
The Tide Turns

TOPIC QUESTION

Did General Blamey mean to insult the troops in his ‘rabbit speech’?

3 November 1942, Papua. The Australian flag is raised over Kokoda, watched by soldiers of 25th Australian Infantry Brigade.

Photo: John McNeil
AWM 053572

Key Concepts

- Evidence
- Perspective and Interpretation

1 Learning Outcomes

Students test evidence regarding the perspectives of the Australians and develop skills of interpretation, analysis and synthesis. An exercise on General Sir Thomas Blamey draws on material in the Kokoda DVD and explores the controversial ‘Rabbit Speech’. An empathy exercise from the perspective of a war bride is also included.

2 Learning Activities

1. Esma Myer’s story
2. General Blamey and the ‘rabbit speech’
3. Perspectives of war by analysing historical sources
Website and DVD Links

www.awm.gov.au
www.kokoda.commemoration.gov.au

Kokoda DVD:
Part 2: The Counter Attack, Chapters 13–15, particularly Chapter 14. General Blamey’s Rabbit Speech

Teacher Briefing

About the Learning Activities

Activity 1: Esma Myer’s story
This is an exercise designed to develop students’ understanding of, and empathy for the impact of war at home. The story is about Esma, a young bride whose husband, Herbert Warne, was killed at Templeton’s Crossing (Eora region) in October 1942. Students answer the questions using Esma’s wedding photograph as the source. Esma’s photograph and class instructions are on page 82 and 83. Esma’s husband’s Roll of Honour information is included to give further depth for class discussion.

Activity 2: General Blamey and the ‘rabbit speech’
This activity explores historical contestability and how history can be perceived differently by those there and those interpreting it later. On 9 November 1942, General Sir Thomas Blamey came to New Guinea and gave an address to the exhausted troops of the 21st Brigade at the Koitaki Cricket Pitch. The text of the speech was never kept but reactions to the speech are found in personal records and other historical accounts. This speech is referred to as the ‘Rabbit Speech’ and was perceived very differently by those present. Most of the evidence indicates that the men were expecting praise but were largely insulted by what General Blamey had to say. Other evidence indicates Blamey did not intend to criticise the troops but was widely held in contempt for this misinterpretation by the 21st Brigade. View the Kokoda DVD: Part 2: The Counter Attack – Chapters 13–15 to establish the story. Then print out the portrait of General Blamey and the two reactions to the speech on pages 84–85. Guide a class discussion on whether General Blamey meant offence by asking ‘Did Blamey mean to insult the troops? What is the evidence? Can we ever know the truth?’ You may wish to raise concepts of interpretation, perspective, bias and personality.

Activity 3: Perspectives of war by analysing historical sources
This exercise aims to develop critical appraisal using different primary and secondary evidence for historical inquiry. Historical inquiry yields knowledge that is based on the available evidence, but remains open to further debate and future reinterpretation. Students develop the ability to recognise varying interpretations of history and to determine the difference between fact, opinion and bias. Give the students the instructions, which contain the eight sources of evidence and ask them to complete the table on pages 86–89. Students need to use research skills to find out further information about the sources and develop skills to draw different interpretations of evidence.
Overview: Did General Blamey mean to insult the troops in his ‘rabbit speech’?

This Unit relates to events during the fighting from September to December in 1942. At the end of September 1942 the Japanese retreated from their southernmost point of advance, just 40 kilometres from Port Moresby. The reason for the Japanese retreat was that the campaign on Guadalcanal was going badly for them and Imperial Headquarters in Japan deemed it wise not to over stretch their position in Papua New Guinea until the Guadalcanal problem was resolved. They did not however abandon hope of making another attack on Port Moresby in the future, so they only retreated as far as the Templeton’s Crossing – Eora region. It was there that the Australians attacked and defeated them in October 1942. The Japanese fell back to Oivi-Gorari but in November were again defeated, this time decisively. The remnant of the Nankai Shitai now had no choice but to retreat to Sanananda to try to hold their base.

Student Task

Activity 1: Esma Myer’s Story

This is a formal wedding portrait taken on the day of the wedding of Lieutenant Herbert Warne and Esma Myers. They had met before Herbert first went overseas with the army, to the Middle East. On his return they were married and they moved to their new home at 9 Francis Street, Richmond, a suburb of Sydney. Within a few weeks, Herbert’s Battalion, the 2/33rd, was once again sent into battle and on 14 October 1942 he was killed in action on the Kokoda Track. He is buried at Bomana Cemetery near Port Moresby.
Imagine that you are Esma. Look closely at the wedding photograph and decide what kind of person you are. You were 22 years old when the photograph was taken and now you are nearly 90.

Writing as if you are Esma, tell her story in one page as a diary, letter or photo essay.

The following questions may assist you to write your piece.

Where was she born and what did she do before she met Herbert?
Was it a happy marriage?
Were they rich or poor?
How did she cope when he went off to the war?
Did she ever go to see his grave?
Did she keep a memento of her short time with Herbert?
What happened to her after the war?
Did she re-marry?
Does she have children, grand children, or even great grand children about your age?
Does she still think of Herbert sometimes?

Roll of Honour – Herbert Arthur Warne

Service number: NX59611
Rank: Lieutenant
Unit: 2/33rd Battalion (Infantry)
Service: Australian Army
Conflict: 1939-1945
Date of death: 14 October 1942
Place of death: Papua New Guinea
Cause of death: Killed in action

Source: AWM147 Roll of Honour cards, 1939-1945 War, 2nd AIF (Australian Imperial Force) and CMF (Citizen Military Force)

Go to www.naa.gov.au and conduct a record rearch for Herbert Warne. Under his service number view a digital copy of his records. Print these out.

What information would this have provided to Esma?
Student Task

Activity 2: General Blamey and the ‘rabbit speech’

General Sir Thomas Blamey

Blamey was a former school teacher who turned to the Army and rose to become Australia’s only Field Marshal. During the Second World War, Blamey was appointed to command the 6th Division. Returning to Australia in 1942 he became Commander-in-Chief, Australian Military Forces and Commander Allied Land Forces in the South West Pacific. Blamey retired in 1945 but in May 1951, shortly before his death, was recalled to the active list and promoted to Field Marshal.
Your Task

Watch the Kokoda DVD, Part 2 The Counter Attack Chapters 13-15 particularly Chapter 14. There is no written version of Blamey’s speech. All we know is what witnesses said (primary sources) and historians argue (secondary sources). Look at General Blamey’s portrait and consider the two sources with conflicting interpretations and answer the following questions.


On 9 November 1942, Blamey addressed the men of the 21st Infantry Brigade on a parade ground. Maroubra Force expected congratulations for their efforts in holding back the Japanese. However, instead of praising them, Blamey told the brigade that they had been “beaten” by inferior forces, and that “no soldier should be afraid to die”. “Remember,” Blamey was reported as saying, “it’s the rabbit who runs who gets shot, not the man holding the gun.” In a later letter to his wife, an enraged Brigadier Potts swore to “fry his [Blamey’s] soul in the afterlife” over this incident. According to witnesses, when Blamey subsequently visited Australian wounded in the camp hospital, inmates nibbled lettuce, while wrinkling their noses and whispering “run, rabbit, run” (the chorus of a popular song during the war) (Brune, P. 2003: 257-258).

Thereafter, “he was almost invariably” referred to as “that bastard Blamey”. (Horner, D. 1998)

Even Blamey’s war-long and closest colleague, Lieutenant Colonel Norman Carlyon OBE wrote that he was amazed that Blamey could deal so insensitively with the men of such a well proven Brigade. The regimental medical officer of the 2/16th Battalion, Major General Henry Steward, who was also present at the parade, wrote that he was shocked that Blamey could talk to the men the way he did: “The entire parade, men and officers, were almost molten with rage” James, 2006, The Kokoda Track: 134

Source 2: Extract from South West Pacific Area – First Year Kokoda to Wau, McCarthy.

On 9 November General Blamey addressed a parade of the 21st Brigade at the Koitaki cricket ground. During the course of his speech, he said that ‘the Jap was like a gorilla: he would get into a hole and he would not surrender: while in his hole and protected by it he would kill; to be dealt with he had to be got out of his holes and put on the run’. Blamey added that it was ‘like shooting rabbits: while the rabbits were in their burrows they could not get shot; they had to be got on the run and then the man with the gun could get them’.

‘It never entered my head as I stood there on parade that the general had any idea he was being offensive, or that he intended to be so’ wrote Brigade Commander Dougherty (then a newcomer to the brigade) afterwards. ‘But the Brigade gave to what he said the interpretation that ‘they ran like rabbits’. This interpretation of what he said spread through New Guinea and indeed back home and resulted in bitter feelings. Following his address to the whole brigade, General Blamey addressed the officers separately. He was direct with them and said that a few officers had failed. This caused bitterness. But after both addresses, Blamey told me that he thought highly of the brigade and repeated to me what he would have told the whole brigade, ‘that I, as their new brigade commander, would be very proud of them’.

When the brigade was reorganised at Ravenshoe in 1943, Blamey’s PA one day asked me if he could speak to my officers. He had been genuinely upset at having hurt my brigade when he addressed them at Koitaki, as he had not intended to do so. When speaking to the officers on this occasion he referred to the Koitaki incident. He said that he had said certain things to the officers, and he had meant all that he had said. He endeavoured to explain the meaning of what he had said then, and to put his remarks into their correct perspective. His comments on this occasion, frank and sincere, were well received.” McCarthy, D. South West Pacific Area – First Year Kokoda to Wau. Canberra AWM, Series 1 Army, Volume 5 footnote: 334

Do you think that Blamey meant offence?

Can we ever know the truth?
Student Task

Activity 3: Perspectives of war by analysing historical sources

Your Task

Look at the eight source images provided and complete the table on page 90.

Use the web addresses provided with each source as a starting point to find out more about the source and the people and events it depicts.

To complete the table you will need to research:

1. **The type of source:** It may be a photograph, painting, eyewitness account, diary etc.
2. **Description of contents:** This will be what the source shows and how it is depicted.
3. **Perspective:** You need to identify the person or organisation that produced the source. For example, a soldier, artist or war photographer.
4. **Main idea or message conveyed:** This information needs to include who produced the source, their purpose and their target audience.
   Is the main idea to try to persuade the viewer about a particular point of view?

Source 1


See AWM website Collections and other websites for more information about the Coral Sea and HMAS Australia.

Source 2

Sergeant Katue, Papua Infantry Battalion, William Dargie, charcoal and coloured conte crayon on paper, October 1942. AWM ART25017.

See Kokoda website Four Peoples at War for more information about Sergeant Katue.
Source 3

October 1942, Papua.
A Japanese prisoner with malaria captured near Nauro, being cared for by Australian stretcher bearers.

AWM 026826

See www.ww2australia.gov.au/beachheads/thin.html for more information on Japanese starvation or the AWM Collections website.

Source 4

Trooper Ben Love's diary. Trooper Benjamin (Ben) Love was 34 when he fought at Sanananda. His diary recorded the ordeal. Born in England, Ben enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) in July 1940.


Also a copy of the diary can be found on the CD ROM.
Source 5

‘The crab’s claw’ cartoon [The Argus, 9 January 1942].

Source 6

3 October 1942. Papua. Pictured, left to right: US General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander, South West Pacific Area; Sir Thomas Blamey, Commander Allied Land Forces, and Major General G. S. Allen, Commander 7th Division AIF, at Owers’ Corner during General MacArthur’s first visit to New Guinea. This photograph became the basis of a portrait of MacArthur and Allen painted by Australian artist Alan Moore in 1972. Blamey was not included in the portrait. AWM 150818

See the AWM Collections website, Kokoda DVD and Kokoda website for more information.
Source 7

Australian Action at Buna, Geoffrey Mainwaring, 1962, oil on canvas, 274 x 137 cm. AWM ART27547

18th Australian Infantry Brigade, 2/6th Australian Armoured Regiment; Australian infantrymen attacking Japanese positions, supported by tanks.

See AWM Collection website and Kokoda website for more information on this attack.

Source 8

In 1942-43 Australians were deluged with posters and advertisements representing invasion as likely. The most infamous was “He’s coming south”, which was so alarmist that the Queensland government and the Town Clerk of Melbourne refused its release.

He’s coming south, Lithography on paper, 75.9 x 50.4 cm. AWM ART09225

## Analysing Historical Sources

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type of Source</th>
<th>Brief description of contents</th>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Main idea conveyed</th>
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