



SS Mooltan leaving Sydney

AW Savage, photo album, PXE 698, Mitchell Library,
State Library of New South Wales

TOPIC 1

Into battle

Australia goes to war

Recommended levels

UPPER PRIMARY

LOWER SECONDARY

MIDDLE SECONDARY

World War I and the Gallipoli Campaign

ESTABLISHING THE CONTEXT

Background information

World War I, the 'Great War' or 'The War to End all Wars', as it has been called, was fought between the great powers of Europe between 1914 and 1918. The United States of America entered the war on the side of Britain and France in 1917. Australia, a young nation and a loyal member of the British Empire willingly joined the war in support of the 'mother country'. The great majority of Australians of the time saw this participation as in Australia's best interests. The thousands of Australians who volunteered to fight in the first months of the war were initially destined for service on the Western Front in France and Belgium.

However, by early 1915 they found themselves in Egypt, preparing to fight against the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) in the Dardanelles. This was part of a British strategy to break the deadlock of war on the Western Front and provide assistance to our ally, Russia, who was faring badly against the Germans on the Eastern Front. It was also hoped that, with Turkey beaten, other Balkan nations such as Romania and Bulgaria would join the Allies in the war against Germany and Austro-Hungary.

When Australian and New Zealand soldiers went into battle on the Gallipoli peninsula, Turkey, north of Gaba Tepe on 25 April 1915, their enthusiasm and naivety was soon tested in the reality and the horror of the nine months of struggle that has come to be known as the Gallipoli campaign. That campaign witnessed the birth of the Anzac tradition, a tradition that has endured and strengthened. It is as strong now as it was 90 years ago when those first Anzacs stepped ashore to face Turkish gunfire.

Teacher briefing

Activity 1.1 in this section provides an opportunity for students to develop their knowledge and understanding of why Australia became involved in World War I and the reasons for the Gallipoli campaign. In *Activities 1.2* and *1.3* students use eyewitness accounts of soldiers, including a Turkish perspective, to investigate the fighting conditions and experiences of those who went into battle at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. The teacher may need to guide students in their reading of the sources and explain some of the more unfamiliar terms.

Focus questions

Why did Australia become involved in World War I?

Why did Australian and New Zealand soldiers go into battle at Gallipoli in 1915?

What were the fighting conditions and experiences of the soldiers who went into battle at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915?

Key terms for Topic 1

British Empire	signaller
strategy	shell shock
Dardanelles	stretcher bearer
Western Front	shrapnel
Eastern Front	annihilation

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

Activity 1.1 ■ ■ ■

Background to Gallipoli

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

This activity is designed to build students' knowledge and understanding of the circumstances in which Australia became involved in World War I and events leading to the Gallipoli campaign of 1915. Students are required to examine the maps and information provided to demonstrate their understanding of British strategy and the reason for Australia's involvement in the campaign.



GO TO CD-ROM

Work Sheet 1A: World War I and the Gallipoli Campaign
(1A_WS_ww1camp.pdf)

Activity

The teacher explains to the class the background information provided at the beginning of this unit. Working in small groups, students study the maps and fact file information in *Work Sheet 1A* and use this information to answer the questions. The teacher calls on groups to share their responses with the class and leads discussion to reinforce students' understanding.

Activity 1.2 ■ ■ ■

Source study



GO TO CD-ROM

Work Sheet 1B: Into Battle at Gallipoli
(1B_WS_intogall.pdf)

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

This source-based activity introduces students to the experiences of the soldiers who went into battle at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. Students build their knowledge and understanding of what it was like to go into battle at Gallipoli by investigating and comparing different eyewitness accounts of the same event.

Activity

Students work in small groups to study the sources about the fighting conditions and experiences of the soldiers at Gallipoli and answer the questions on the work sheet. Follow-up discussion might ask the students to compare and discuss their responses and reflect on the Turkish perspective of the event provided in Source 4. The teacher may wish to supplement the eyewitness accounts in *Activity 1.2* with other eyewitness accounts provided in *Australians at War Secondary Schools Education Resource*, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002, pp 38–9.



The Charge of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade at The Nek, 7 August 1915 by George Lambert.

AWM ART 07965

RESPONDING CREATIVELY

Activity 1.3 ■ ■ ■

Role-play dialogues – Gallipoli

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Students demonstrate their understanding of the conditions of battle and experiences of the soldiers at Gallipoli by creating short dialogues between different participants in the battle.

Activity

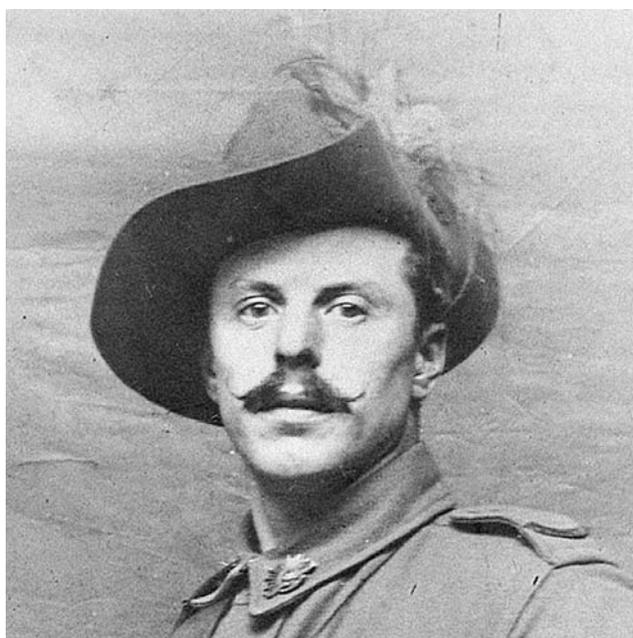
Working in pairs, students create and present short dialogues between the following participants in the first day of fighting at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915:

- Signaller Silas and Private Denning comparing their experiences
- Signaller Silas or Private Denning and Lieutenant Colonel Sefik Aker



Private Roy Denning in 1918. The stress of years at war shows on his face.

Reproduced with the permission of Lorna Lancaster



Signaller Ellis Silas in 1919. Detail from a studio portrait taken in London.

AWM P02801.001

In a little while, the sound of gunfire broke out. I saw a machine gun firing from a small boat in front of Ari Burnu. Some of the shots were passing over us ... I wrote a report to the battalion commander stating that the enemy was about to begin landing and I was going to a position on the far side with a reserve platoon. I ordered the withdrawal by telephone and set off immediately. On the way, we came under fire from the ships.

The Anzac landing described by Lieutenant Colonel Sefik Aker of the Turkish 27th Regiment.



Colonel Mustafa Kemal, one of the principal Turkish commanders at Gallipoli and later the first president of the Republic of Turkey.

AWM A05319

World War II and the New Guinea Campaign, 1942–1943

ESTABLISHING THE CONTEXT

Background information

When World War II broke out in September 1939, Australia immediately entered the war to support Great Britain, as we had done in World War I.

In the early years of the war, Australia's defence force fought in the Middle East and Europe. But when the Japanese began their advance in the Pacific, Australia was threatened. Prime Minister John Curtin established a new alliance with America and re-directed Australian troops, then stationed in the Middle East, to fight against Japan for the defence of Australia.

We now know that the Japanese ultimately decided not to invade Australia during World War II but they did plan to cut Australia's supply line with America by establishing bases in the islands to the north of Australia from which they could launch air and naval attacks.

During the Pacific war, which began with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the invasion of Malaya in December 1941 and ended with Japan's surrender in August 1945, Australia and America fought together to halt Japanese expansion. The Allied victory against the Japanese in New Guinea in January 1943 played an important role in preventing the Japanese from completing their conquest of the south Pacific.

In this campaign, which was vital for the defence of Australia, our soldiers fought many battles through atrocious conditions along the 80 km Kokoda Track in the Owen Stanley Range, at Milne Bay on the eastern tip of New Guinea and around the settlements of Buna, Gona and Sanananda on the north coast. During this period the soldiers were strongly supported by the men of the Royal Australian Navy and the Royal Australian Air Force and Australia's American allies. The Australian infantry lost 607 killed and 1,015 wounded.

For Australians, this campaign has come to be regarded as perhaps the most important battle of World War II.

Teacher briefing

The activities in this section are designed to develop students' knowledge and understanding of the reasons for Australia's involvement in World War II and the impact of World War II on our relationship with Great Britain and America.

The major focus of these activities is on the New Guinea campaign of World War II, the conditions under which our soldiers fought and the significance of the campaign for Australia.

Activity 1.4 builds students' knowledge of how World War II affected our relationship with Great Britain and America.

Activity 1.5 builds students' knowledge of the developments leading to the New Guinea campaign, the specific military objectives of both Japan and Australia and the importance of Australia's victory.

Activities 1.6 and *1.7* focus on the conditions under which Australian soldiers went into battle in New Guinea and the role played by different individuals and groups in the campaign.

Activities 1.8 and *1.9* are empathy tasks. The first encourages students to reflect on the different perspectives of the Allied war leaders and the second on the different experiences of the participants in the campaign.

Focus questions

What impact did World War II have on Australia's relationships with Great Britain and America?

Why did Australian soldiers fight against the Japanese in the New Guinea campaign?

What were the fighting conditions the soldiers faced when they went into battle along the Kokoda Track, at Milne Bay and at Buna, Gona and Sanananda?

What is the significance of the New Guinea campaign for Australia?

Key terms

jungle warfare	sniper
khaki	terrain
dysentery	camouflage
malaria	coastwatchers
scrub typhus	Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE

Activity 1.4 ■ ■

Australia's role in World War II

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Students should have a general understanding of the events leading to the outbreak of World War II. This activity builds students' knowledge and understanding of the reasons for Australia's involvement in World War II and emphasises how the war in the Pacific changed the direction of Australia's foreign policy. Students can go to *Activity 1.9* to demonstrate their understanding of the significance of these developments.



GO TO CD-ROM

Work Sheet 1C: Australia's Changing Relationships with Great Britain and America
(1C_WS_rels.pdf)

Activity

The teacher establishes context for the activity from background information provided. Students work in pairs or small groups to study the sources and answer the questions. This can be followed by general class discussion which could include an evaluation of Curtin's 'Australia Looks to America' speech and the significance of the American alliance for Australia's support of Great Britain during the war and our traditional relationship with Great Britain.



Activity 1.5 ■ ■

Background to the New Guinea campaign



GO TO CD-ROM

Work Sheet 1D: Background to New Guinea 1942-43(1D_WS_bgdNG.pdf)



CLICK AND FIND

Web pages for this activity.
www.wa2australia.gov.au/beachheads

Activity

The teacher explains to the class the background information provided at the beginning of this unit. Working in small groups, students study the maps and fact file information in *Work Sheet 1D* and use this information to answer the questions. The teacher calls on groups to share their responses with the class and leads discussion to reinforce students' understanding. The teacher might ask the students to write a short summary using, for example, the following questions to structure their response: What were the Japanese objectives of the campaign? What were the Australian objectives? What was the significance of the campaign for Australia?

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

This activity is designed to build students' knowledge and understanding of the events leading to the New Guinea campaign of 1942-43 and the significance of this campaign for Australia. Students are required to examine the maps and information provided to answer questions and draw some conclusions about Japanese and Australian military objectives.

Prime Minister Menzies on 3 September 1939, announcing Australia's entry into World War II.

National Library of Australia PIC/6524

Activity 1.6 ■ ■ ■

Conditions in New Guinea

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Students should be familiar with the conditions under which soldiers fought at Gallipoli. In this activity they will draw on their knowledge of those conditions and their knowledge of equatorial jungle regions to speculate about the kind of conditions and problems that faced Australian soldiers fighting in the different terrain and climate of the Owen Stanley Range in New Guinea. This activity could be used as a background for *Activity 1.7*.

Activity

The teacher explains the purpose of the activity and asks students to work in pairs or small groups to use their knowledge to complete the table for the fighting conditions of soldiers in the Gallipoli campaign. The class compares its notes at the conclusion of this part of the activity.

The teacher then conducts a class brainstorm and note making on the features of terrain, vegetation and climate of a mountainous, equatorial, rainforest region. Students continue working in pairs or small groups to discuss and suggest ideas for the rest of the New Guinea section of the table. The teacher then leads a class discussion to compare student responses. Note: Students may not be able, at this stage, to suggest points for all of the categories. The teacher may then introduce the next activity and ask students to complete the table when this has been done.

Activity 1.7 ■ ■ ■

Fighting in New Guinea



GO TO CD-ROM

Work Sheet 1E: Fighting Conditions
(1E_WS_fight.pdf)

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

In this activity students have the opportunity to test the ideas they suggested in the previous activity against a range of sources from the New Guinea campaign to learn what it was like for Australian soldiers going into battle there. Students examine a range of images relevant to the fighting conditions, categorise them and conduct a search of the web sites to gain more information about them.



This famous image from the New Guinea campaign was taken on Christmas Day, 1942. It shows an Australian soldier, Private George 'Dick' Whittington, being led through the kunai grass to a field hospital near Buna by a New Guinea native, (aka Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angel), Raphael Oimbari.

Whittington recovered from his wounds but died of scrub typhus at Port Moresby in 1943.

AWM 014028



GO TO CD-ROM

**Work Sheet 1F:
Into Battle, New Guinea in 1942–43**
(1F_WS_intoNG.pdf)

Activity

Explain the purpose of the activity to the class, reminding them that they can now test their theories (*Activity 1.6*) using primary sources for the New Guinea campaign. Working in pairs or small groups, students study the images and captions and make a decision about which aspect of the fighting is best represented in each image. They record this information on their work sheet and use the web address provided for each image to learn more about this aspect of the campaign. Students make a brief, point-form record of their findings. Students can use this information to complete the empathy task in *Activity 1.7*.

Activity 1.8 ■ ■ ■

Vocabulary building

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Students reinforce their understanding of some key terms and concepts for this unit by providing a definition for each within the context of the New Guinea campaign.

Activity

Students use the information gained from previous activities to write a definition for each of the following terms and concepts:

Key terms

jungle warfare	camouflage
khaki	terrain
dysentery	sniper
malaria	coastwatchers
scrub typhus	Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels



An Australian soldier with an Owen gun during the fighting at Sanananda, January 1943.

AWM 014185



Extraordinary Incident by Roy Hodgkinson, 1943, depicts the shooting down of a Japanese 'Zero' by Pilot Officer John Archer in the sea off Gona, December 1942.

AWM ART22743



Australian soldiers holding a Japanese flag in a Japanese landing barge captured at Milne Bay in October 1942.

AWM 013324

RESPONDING CREATIVELY

Activity 1.9 ■ ■

Role-play dialogues – World War II

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Students role play the conversations between key people involved in Australia's declaration of war in 1939 and the establishment of Australia's alliance with America to demonstrate their understanding of the significance of these events.



Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies with the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in England, March 1941.

AWM 006414



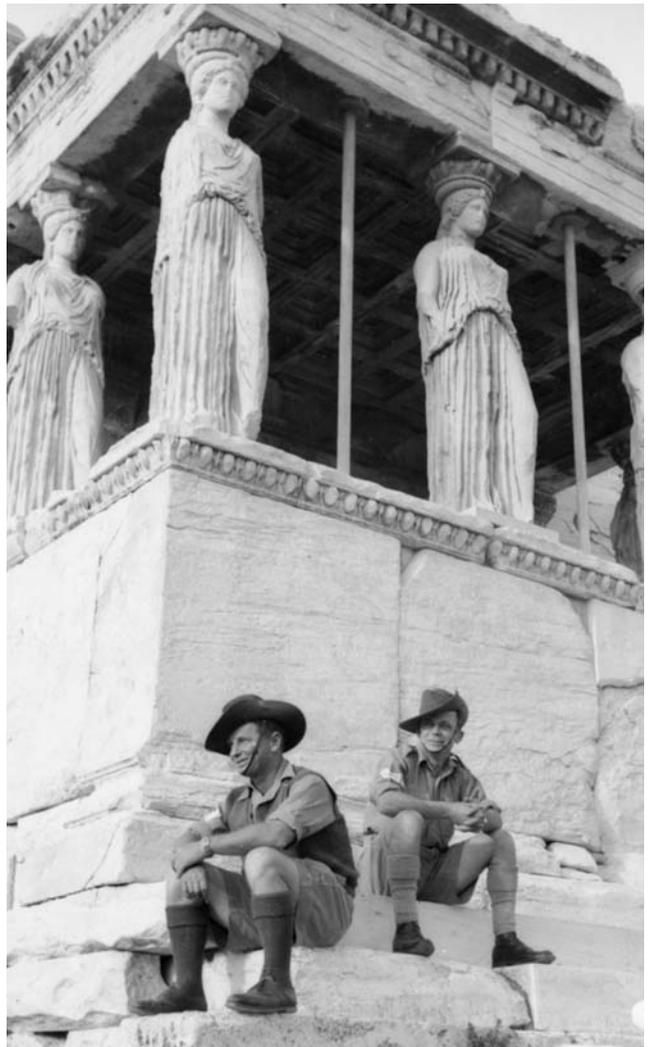
General Douglas MacArthur and Prime Minister John Curtin at a War Council meeting in Canberra, 26 March 1942.

AWM 042774

Activity

Students work in pairs using the knowledge they have gained from *Activity 1.4* to prepare and present short dialogues that might have been conducted between the following:

- Prime Minister John Curtin explaining to the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, in December 1941 the reasons for re-directing Australian troops to fight against Japan.
- The conversation between Prime Minister Curtin and General Douglas MacArthur negotiating the terms of cooperation between Australia and America for the war in the Pacific.
- The conversation between General MacArthur and President Roosevelt following MacArthur's negotiations with the Australian Prime Minister, John Curtin.
- The conversation between two Australian soldiers fighting in the Middle East who are being recalled to Australia to fight against the Japanese.



Australian soldiers on the steps of the Acropolis in Athens, March 1941.

AWM 006785

Activity 1.10

Role-play dialogues – New Guinea

LEARNING CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

In this activity students demonstrate their understanding of the role and experiences of different people in the New Guinea campaign by selecting and organising information from their investigation in *Activity 1.6* to present an oral report from the perspective of a participant in the campaign.

Activity

Using the information they have compiled in *Activity 1.4* students work individually or in pairs to prepare a two-minute oral report on the experience of the New Guinea campaign from the perspective of one of the following:

Australian soldier

doctor

coastwatcher

Japanese soldier

pilot of an RAAF plane

Captain of an Australian ship

Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angel

Victoria Cross recipient

Their report could include:

- an explanation of their role in the campaign
- an account of the problems and hardships they experienced
- how they coped with these conditions
- a summary of the significance of the campaign for them personally.

Extension activities

- 1 Students are encouraged to explore the website of the Kokoda Memorial Walkway, constructed at Rhodes Park, Concord in Sydney.

This website contains a guided walk along the Kokoda Track, with information about each of the main battles of the Kokoda campaign.

Students could reproduce the chart of the Kokoda Track for classroom display and work in pairs to investigate each of the 'stations' and report in either oral or written format on their findings.



CLICK AND FIND

Web pages for this activity.
www.kokodawalkway.com.au/and
www.kokodawalkway.com.au/stations/memorial_rose_garden.html

- 2 Who were the 'Chocolate Soldiers' (or 'Choccos') of the Kokoda campaign? Students can find out more about this controversial aspect of the campaign by visiting the following website.



CLICK AND FIND

Web pages for this activity.
www.users.bigpond.com/battleforaustralia/battaust/KokodaCampaign/KokodaOverview.html

Scroll down to the paragraph 'Australian Militia Battalions are sent to guard Australia's northern approaches'.

- 3 The newsreel film, *Kokoda Front Line*, by the famous Australian war photographer, Damien Parer, won Australia's first Academy Award for its producer, Ken G Hall. Find out more about the importance of this film on the National Centre for History Education website.



CLICK AND FIND

Web pages for this activity.
[www.hyperhistory.org>Ozhistorybytes](http://www.hyperhistory.org/Ozhistorybytes)
Issue 5, *Damien Parer's Kokoda Front Line*.

See also Neil McDonald, *Damien Parer's War*, South Melbourne: Lothian, 2004 (chapters 15–17 for the background, making and influence of *Kokoda Front Line*).

Teacher resources

World War I and the Gallipoli Campaign

Working the Web: Investigating Australia's wartime history, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2004

Australians at War Primary Schools Education Resource, 'Creating your Summary of WWI', pp 32–33 and 'Stories from Wars and Conflicts' p, 43, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002

Australians at War Secondary Schools Education Resource, Unit 2, 'Experiences of War', pp 34–43, and Unit 3 'Images of War', pp 66–69 Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002

World War II and the New Guinea Campaign, 1942–1943

Working the Web: Investigating Australia's wartime history, 'Australia under Threat: The defence of Australia 1942–43', pp 80–84, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2004 (see especially suggested research activities and website resources on p 82)

Australians at War Primary Schools Education Resource, 'Stories from Wars and Conflicts', p 45, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002

Australians at War Secondary Schools Education Resource, Unit 3, Images of War, 'Comparing different representations of the same event in World War II', pp 72–73, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002

Browne, Margaret, *Australia at War The Kokoda Campaign*, Lane Cove (NSW): Hodder and Stoughton, 1985

Brune, Peter and Neil McDonald, *200 Shots – Damien Parer, George Silk and the Australians at War in New Guinea*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1998

Brune, Peter, *A Bastard of a Place*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2003

Clark, Sylvia, *The Kododa Track*, Kenthurst (NSW): Kangaroo Press, 1997

Moremon, John, *Battle of the Beachheads 1942–43: Buna, Gona, Sananda – Papua New Guinea November 1942–January 1943*, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2003

National Centre for History Education: www.hyperhistory.org>Ozhistorybytes, Issue 5, *Damien Parer's Kokoda Front Line*

Parmeter, Sharron, 'Teaching the Kokoda Campaign', *Teaching History*, (Journal of the History Teachers' Association of NSW), December, 2004, pp 59–61

Reid, Richard, *Kokoda 1942: Papua New Guinea July–November 1942*, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002

Reid, Richard, *Milne Bay 1942: Papua New Guinea August–September 1942*, Department of Veterans' Affairs, 2002

Roberts, Captain ML, 'Recollections of the Papuan Campaign, July 1942–January 1943', *Teaching History*, (Journal of the History Teachers' Association of NSW), March 2004, pp 12–14

Summary of CD-ROM items for Topic 1

World War I and the Gallipoli Campaign

Work Sheet 1A: World War I and the Gallipoli Campaign (1A_WS_ww1camp.pdf)

Work Sheet 1B: Into Battle at Gallipoli (1B_WS_intogall.pdf)

World War II and the New Guinea Campaign, 1942–1943

Work Sheet 1C: Australia's Changing Relationships with Great Britain and America (1C_WS_rels.pdf)

Work Sheet 1D: Background to New Guinea 1942–43 (1D_WS_bgdNG.pdf)

Work Sheet 1E: Fighting Conditions (1E_WS_fight.pdf)

Work Sheet 1F: Into Battle, New Guinea in 1942–43 (1F_WS_intoNG.pdf)