**D-Day: The Invasion of Normandy**

On June 6, 1944 the Allied Forces of Britain, America, Canada, and France attacked German forces on the coast of Normandy, France. With a huge force of over 150,000 soldiers, the Allies attacked and gained a victory that became the turning point for World War II in Europe. This famous battle is sometimes called D-Day or the Invasion of Normandy.


Leading up to the Battle

Germany had invaded France and was trying to take over all of Europe including Britain. However, Britain and the United States had managed to slow down the expanding German forces. They were now able to turn on the offensive.

To prepare for the invasion, the Allies amassed troops and equipment in Britain. They also increased the number of air strikes and bombings in German territory. Right before the invasion, over 1000 bombers a day were hitting German targets. They bombed railroads, bridges, airfields, and other strategic places in order to slow down and hinder the German army.

Deception

The Germans knew that an invasion was coming. They could tell by all the forces that were gathering in Britain as well as by the additional air strikes. What they didn't know was where the Allies would strike. In order to confuse the Germans, the Allies tried to make it look like they were going to attack north of Normandy at Pas de Calais.

The Weather

Although the D-Day invasion had been planned for months, it was almost cancelled due to bad weather. General Eisenhower finally agreed to attack despite the overcast skies. Although the weather did have some affect and on the Allies ability to attack, it also caused the Germans to think that no attack was coming. They were less prepared as a result.

The Invasion

The first wave of the attack began with the paratroopers. These were men who jumped out of planes using parachutes. They jumped at night in the pitch dark and landed behind enemy lines. Their job was to destroy key targets and capture bridges in order for the main invasion force to land on the beach. Thousands of dummies were also dropped in order to draw fire and confuse the enemy.

In the next stage of the battle thousands of planes dropped bombs on German defences. Soon after, warships began to bomb the beaches from the water. While the bombing was going on, underground members of the French Resistance sabotaged the Germans by cutting telephone lines and destroying railroads.

Soon the main invasion force of over 6,000 ships carrying troops, weapons, tanks, and equipment approached the beaches of Normandy.

Omaha and Utah Beaches

American troops landed at Omaha and Utah beaches. The Utah landing was successful, but the fighting at Omaha beach was fierce. Many US soldiers lost their lives at Omaha, but they were finally able to take the beach.

After the Battle

By the end of D-Day over 150,000 troops had landed in Normandy. They pushed their way inland allowing more troops to land over the next several days. By June 17th over half a million Allied troops had arrived and they began to push the Germans out of France.

D Day questions

1. Name the countries which attacked German forces in Normandy
2. How many soldiers did the Allies have?
3. Which word in the section: *Leading up the battle,* shows that the German forces had been growing?
4. How did the Germans know that an invasion was coming?
5. Look at the section: *The Weather. E*xplain how the poor weather helped the Allies and the Germans? (2)
6. What is a paratrooper?
7. Look at the section: *The Invasion.* What were the two stages of the battle? (2)
8. Why do you think the Resistance cut telephone wires and destroyed railroads?
9. What does the phrase *take the beach* mean??
10. What do you think was the biggest threat to the Allies? Explain your answer using evidence from the text (4).
11. Create your own questions