



UNDERSTANDING
SACRIFICE

Activity: Travelling with the Troop Carriers: An Overview of World War II in Europe and Beyond



Guiding question:

How do primary source objects like short snorters document the geographic expanse and chronology of World War II and provide insight into the personal experiences of the individuals impacted by the war?

DEVELOPED BY KATHY TUCKER CARROLL

Grade Level(s): 6-8

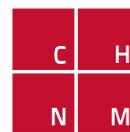
Subject(s): Social Studies

Cemetery Connection: Florence American Cemetery

Fallen Hero Connection: First Lieutenant John Anthony Boronko



NHD
NATIONAL
HISTORY DAY



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History AND
New Media

Overview

Students will analyze World War II era banknotes called short snorters to explore World War II in the Mediterranean Theater from the vantage point of a Troop Carrier pilot. Using interactive technology from the American Battle Monuments Commission, they will explore the various military campaigns that took place in the locations represented by this artifact. Students will chronicle their learning by composing a brief V-mail letter written from the vantage point of a person participating in one of those campaigns.

Historical Context

Flying unarmed, the 64th Troop Carrier Group operated across the vast geographic expanse of World War II. These pilots flew their C-47s in campaigns in North Africa, Sicily, Italy, France, and Greece, as well as the China-Burma-India Theater. Along the way, pilots collected currency from many of the countries they visited. Sometimes autographed, these collections were known as short snorters, and they were the prized possessions of many World War II aviators. Today, the short snorters serve as important artifacts that chronicle both the history of World War II and the personal experiences of those it affected.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Examine primary source materials in order to determine what they reveal about World War II;
- Compare primary source and secondary source materials in order to describe the scope of World War II in the Mediterranean Theater; and
- Conceptualize the varied experiences of those who served in the Mediterranean Theater by writing a letter home from the perspective of a person who participated in World War II.

“While fighters and bombers immediately come to mind in thinking of World War II aviation, General Dwight D. Eisenhower called the unarmed Douglas C-47 Skytrain one of the four most important weapons of World War II. These planes and their pilots travelled vast distances to deliver men and materiel into the theaters of battle. Along the way the aviators created souvenirs called short snorters to chronicle their travels and experiences. These artifacts not only document the military history of World War II but also offer insight into the more personal nature of war.”

— Kathy Tucker Carroll

Carroll teaches at St. John's Episcopal School in Dallas, Texas.

Standards Connections

Connections to Common Core

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Connections to C3 Framework

D2.His.11.6-8. Use other historical sources to infer a plausible maker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where this information is not easily identified.

D2.His.1.6-8. Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.

Documents Used ★ indicates an ABMC source

Primary Sources

"2 Lt. John A. Boronko," *News Sheet*, October 3, 1944
Sodality of Our Lady for Alumni in the Armed Forces
University of Scranton Archives

Have a Coca-Cola=Welcome, Short Snorter, 1943
Coca-Cola Company

Short Snorter, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, 1935-1944
Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Short Snorter, Damon Weeks, Sr., 64th Troop Carrier Group, 1942
Courtesy of the Family of Damon L. Weeks, Sr.

Short Snorter, Joseph Gabrosek, Jr., 64th Troop Carrier Group, 1943
Courtesy Joseph Gabrosek, Jr.

Zach Moseley, "Smilin' Jack." April 2, 1944
Chicago Tribune

<http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1944/04/02/page/73>

Secondary Sources

First Lieutenant John A. Boronko Fallen Hero Profile ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

<http://abmceducation.org/understandingsacrifice/soldier/john-boronko>

Map of the World, 1942

Library of Congress

<https://lccn.loc.gov/00556407>

The Short Snorter Project

<http://www.shortsnorter.org/>

World War II: A Visual History Interactive ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

https://abmc.gov/sites/default/files/interactive/interactive_files/WW2/index.html

Materials

- Think Like a Historian Worksheet Packet
- V-Mail Letter Assessment
- V-Mail Letter Form (Front and Back)
- V-Mail Letter Research Organizer
- V-Mail Letter Assessment Rubric
- Computer with projector, speakers, and internet capability to access web material
- Computer access for each student or at five to six stations for group work

Lesson Preparation

- Explore the ABMC *World War II: A Visual History Interactive*.
- Visit *The Short Snorter Project* website to learn basic information about short snorters.
- Make one copy of the following for each student:
 - *Map of the World*
 - Think Like a Historian Worksheet Packet
 - V-Mail Letter Assessment
 - V-Mail Letter Form (Front and Back)
 - V-Mail Letter Research Organizer
 - V-Mail Letter Assessment Rubric

- Make one copy of sources 4 through 12 so that each pair of students has one document to analyze. Make additional copies if needed for larger classes.
- Set up classroom technology.
- Divide students into pairs for Activity One.
- Test all online resources before class.
 - Activity One:
 - Project the *Map of the World*.
 - Activity Two:
 - Project the First Lieutenant John A. Boronko Fallen Hero Profile.
 - Project the *Have a Coca-Cola=Welcome, Short Snorter* advertisement.
 - Project "2 Lt. John A. Boronko" *News Sheet*.

Procedure

Activity One: Analyzing Short Snorters (60 minutes)

- Divide students into pairs.
- Project the *Map of the World* in the front of the room and distribute individual copies to students.
 - Identify and label North America, South America, the Atlantic Ocean, North Africa, the Caribbean Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, Western Europe, and India with the class.
 - Distribute sources 1, 2 and 3, to each student pair and remind students to record their observations on the Think Like a Historian Worksheet Packet as each object is discussed.
- Direct students to examine both images of source 1 and source 2.
 - Ask students to analyze the source using the questions provided.
- Ask student pairs to analyze source 3 and respond to the questions.
 - Debrief student responses and ask them to share their responses.
 - *Teacher Tip:* Remind students that even though one bill is dated as early as 1935, most bills are from the early 1940s. How might that be an important clue?
- Assign each pair of students a different portion of the short snorter (sources 4 through 12).
- Guide student pairs to analyze their banknote, assisting when necessary.
 - *Teacher Tip:* Some students who have languages other than English written on their currency may become frustrated. Though they will be able to answer questions using the information in the captions, encourage them to make other observations or predictions about what the language could be conveying.
- Discuss students' observations and answers to the prompts.
- Discuss students' predictions about the possible function of these artifacts.

- Post Think Like a Historian Worksheet: Sources 4-12 from each pair around the classroom to reference in Activity Two.

Activity Two: Contextualizing the Short Snorters (60 minutes)

- Explain that the next document will reveal the historical significance of the objects they have been studying and will challenge or corroborate their predictions from the day before.
- Project *Coca-Cola=Welcome, Short Snorter* advertisement from 1943.
- Lead a class discussion:
 - *What do you observe in this advertisement?*
 - *Where is this image taking place?*
 - *Why do you think aviators are encouraged to drink Coca-Cola?*
 - *Do your observations about the information in this advertisement support the prediction you made about the common purpose of the short snorters we analyzed yesterday?*
 - *What are these objects and what is their purpose?*
- Contextualize the short snorters by explaining that each belonged to someone who served with First Lieutenant John A. Boronko.
- Project the Fallen Hero Profile for First Lieutenant John A. Boronko. Read it out aloud as students follow along, or watch the video at the end of the page.
 - *Teacher Tip:* Encourage students to relate the information in the Fallen Hero Profile to the locations represented by the short snorters by pointing out when the bills might have been collected.
- Project “2 Lt. John A. Boronko,” *News Sheet* from the University of Scranton, 1944. Ask students:
 - *Based on the letter’s date and the information in the Fallen Hero Profile, what places do students think First Lieutenant Boronko is referencing?*
 - *What does his letter reveal about what he is experiencing?*
 - *Teacher Tip:* Help students to contextualize the experience of many World War II pilots who were young, seeing new places in their nation and the world for the first time. Students may observe that the News Sheet lists him as a Second Lieutenant.
- Project the blank V-Mail Letter Form (Front and Back) for the class to analyze. Ask students:
 - *What is the purpose of V-Mail?*
 - *What information on this form might help to explain why First Lieutenant Boronko might have used such mysterious language in his letter?*
 - *Why is there a space for a “Censor’s Stamp”?*
 - *How does it help to explain the language First Lieutenant Boronko used in his letter to the University of Scranton?*
 - *Based on the letter’s date and the information in the Fallen Hero Profile, what places do students think Boronko is referencing?*

- Project the *World War II: A Visual History Interactive*. Ideally, students can access online individually as well.
 - Compare locations on the *Map of the World* to the map background on *World War II: A Visual History Interactive*.
 - Which areas were controlled by the Allies? Which areas were controlled by the Axis?
 - Explore the year-by-year timeline and identify the locations represented by the short snorters.
 - Compare the *World War II: A Visual History Interactive* with the information in Lieutenant Boronko's Fallen Hero Profile.
 - Discuss, *When would squadron members have come into contact with these currencies?*
 - *Teacher Tip:* Point out the "Approved" stamp on the campaign summaries in the interactive. Remind students that everything has to pass the censor.

Assessment

- Distribute one copy of each of the following to students:
 - V-Mail Letter Assessment
 - V-Mail Letter Form (Front and Back)
 - V-Mail Letter Research Organizer
 - V-Mail Letter Assessment Rubric
- Review and clarify the directions and expectations. At teacher discretion, assign a campaign to each student (or allow students to choose a campaign).
- Allow students to access the *World War II: A Visual History Interactive* to complete their V-Mail Letter Research Organizer.
 - Circulate and assist as needed.
 - *Teacher Tip:* Remind students to "read" the primary source videos carefully. What would it be like to load a mule in a plane or to drive a tank? What would it be like to be a nurse who treated the wounded or a soldier who had to bury a fallen friend? Encourage them to use their imaginations to infer what people may have been feeling.
- The V-Mail Letter Assessment Rubric can be used to score the letters.

Methods for Extension

- Students can analyze another example of short snorters in popular culture by analyzing the "Smilin' Jack" cartoon printed in the *Chicago Tribune*.
- Students can be encouraged to reflect on their V-Mail letter by returning the assignments to

students after it has been scored. At this point, they could:

- Reflect on how they could have improved the information in their letter;
- Revise one or two sentences of the letter; or
- Rewrite these sentences in coded language in order to reflect censorship rules.
- Students can compile the revised excerpts into a News Sheet detailing the class' "military experiences" during World War II. Connect this to the ways students use social networking groups today to keep up with each other.
- Students can listen to music from the World War II era. The original "Army Air Corps Song" or "Straighten Up and Fly Right" by Nat King Cole would connect well to the lesson.
- Students can explore other short snorters collected via the Short Snorter Project to learn about other theaters of World War II.
- The American Battle Monuments Commission maintains U.S. military cemeteries overseas. These cemeteries are permanent memorials to the fallen, but it is important that students know the stories of those who rest here. To learn more about the stories of some of the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice, visit www.abmceducation.org/understandingsacrifice/abmc-sites.

Adaptations

- Younger learners can investigate the individual banknotes of the short snorter to learn about the culture and geography of the countries represented.
- Teachers can help English Language Learners to connect the commonalities that exist among the currencies. This short snorter collects the languages of French, English, Italian, Greek, Latin and Arabic in one artifact.
- Teacher can guide the students proficient in different languages to use the short snorter and translate for peers.

Short Snorter, Damon Weeks, Sr., 64th Troop Carrier Group, 1942

Courtesy Family of Damon Weeks, Jr.

Reverse



Obverse



Detail



Short Snorter, Joseph Gabrosek, Jr., 64th Troop Carrier Group, 1935

Courtesy Joseph Gabrosek, Jr.

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, 1935-44

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, Morocco, 1943

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, Allied Military Currency, Italy, 1943

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, Italy, date unknown

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, France, 1942

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, French West Africa, date unknown

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, India, 1940

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, Greece, 1944

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, British Military Authority, circa 1943

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Short Snorter Detail, Bill D. Tucker, 64th Troop Carrier Group, United States, 1935

Courtesy of the Family of Bill D. Tucker

Obverse



Reverse



Think Like a Historian: Source 1

Short Snorter, Damon Weeks, Sr., 64th Troop Carrier Group, 1942

Courtesy Family of Damon Weeks, Jr.

Circle and label the location of the evidence on the banknote to support your answers below.

- Where did this banknote originate? Mark it on your map.

- When was it made?

- What clues on this banknote might be valuable to historians?

Think Like a Historian: Source 2

Short Snorter, Joseph Gabrosek, Jr., 64th Troop Carrier Group, 1935

Courtesy Joseph Gabrosek, Jr.

Circle and label the location of the evidence on the banknote to support your answers below.

- Where did this banknote originate? Mark it on your map.
- When was it made?
- When was it modified?
- What clues on this banknote might be valuable to historians?
- How is it similar to or different from the first banknote?

Think Like a Historian Worksheet: Sources 4-12

Circle and label the location of the evidence on the banknote to support your answers below.

- What is the name of your source?
- Where is this from? Record your answer and mark it on your map.
- Who made it?
- When was it made?
- What was going on in the world when it was made?
- What images or messages on this banknote might be valuable to historians?
- Predict: What might be the common historical significance of these objects?

Have a Coca-Cola = Welcome, Short Snorter, Coca-Cola Company, 1943

Coca-Cola Company Archives

Have a Coca-Cola = Welcome, Short-Snorter



It's natural for popular names to acquire friendly abbreviations. That's why you hear Coca-Cola called "Coke".

...or how to bring folks closer together

When short-snorters (trans-ocean flyers) meet and compare their auto-graphed dollar bills, the invitation *Have a "Coke"* is fairly sure to follow. In three short words people strike the spark of comradeship. From the family fireside to far-flung fronts, Coca-Cola stands for *the pause that refreshes*—has become a symbol of those who see things in a friendly light.

BOTTLED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE COCA-COLA COMPANY BY
SPRINGFIELD COCA-COLA BOTTLING COMPANY



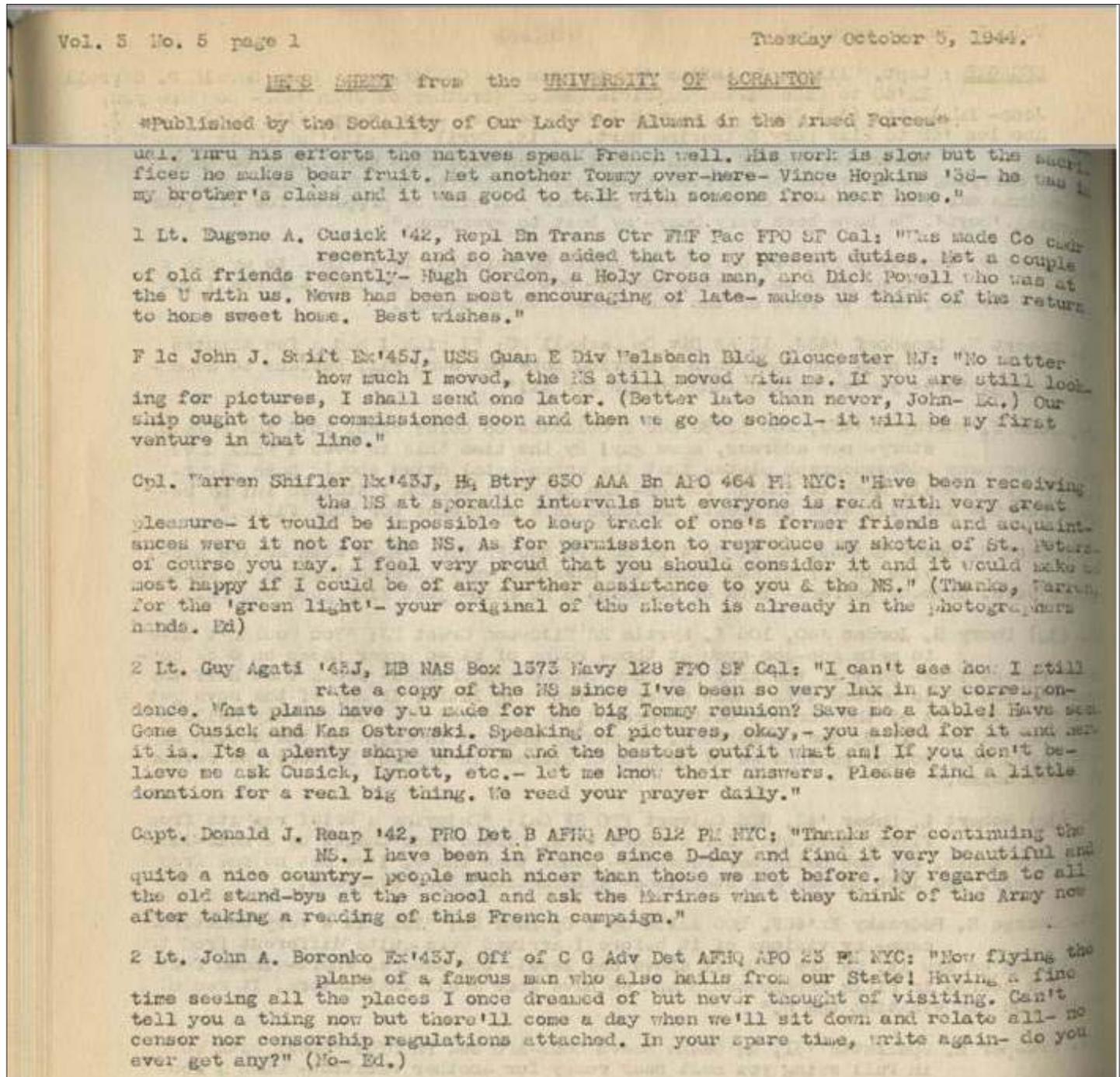
—the global high-sign

© 1943 The C.-C. Co.

"2 Lt. John A. Boronko," *News Sheet*, October 3, 1944

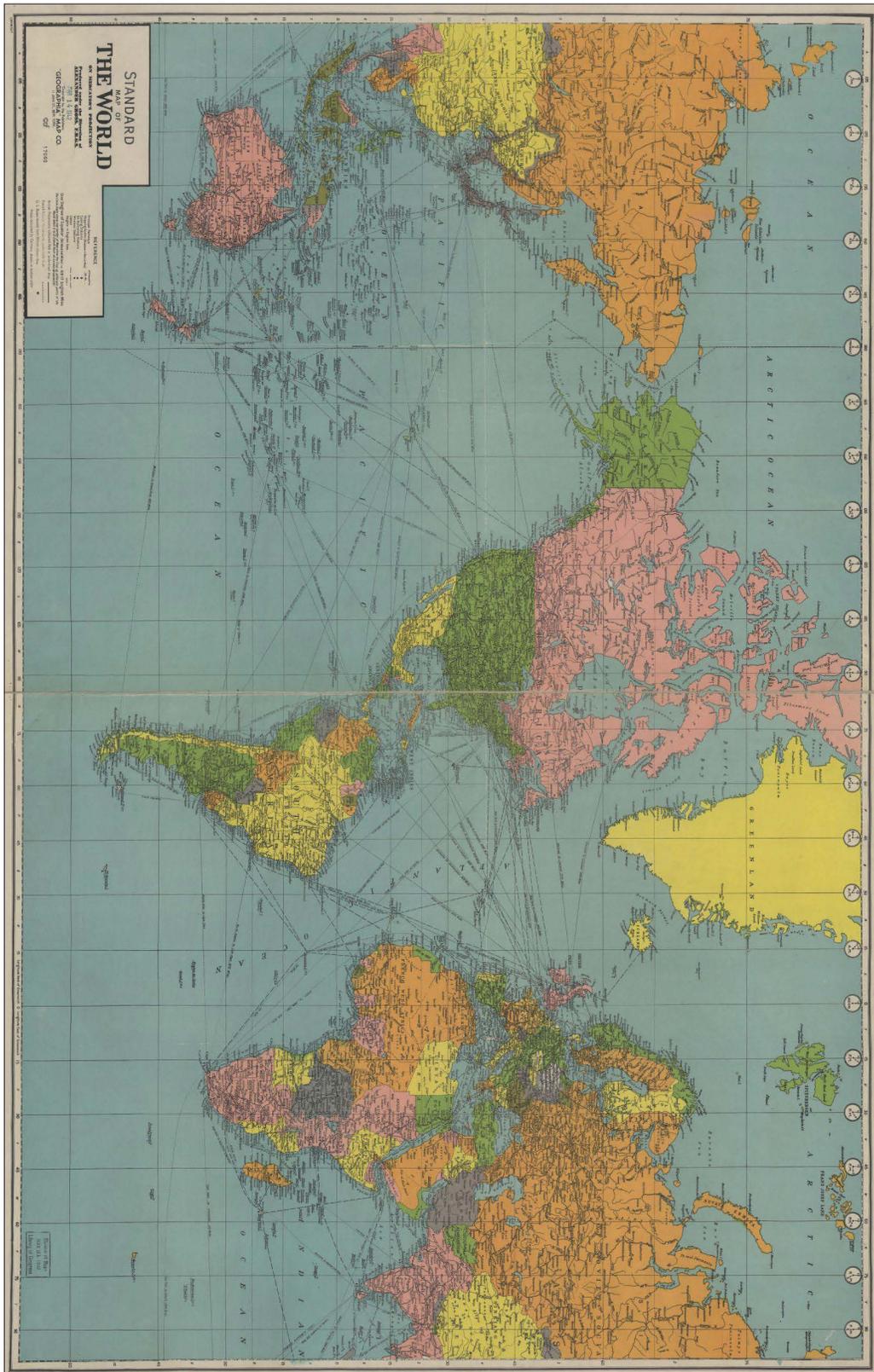
Sodality of Our Lady for Alumni in the Armed Forces

University of Scranton Archives



Map of the World, 1942

Library of Congress



V-Mail Letter Assessment

You have been assigned to explore one of the campaigns in which the 64th Troop Carrier Group participated. While you explore the campaign on *World War II: A Visual History* interactive, pay attention to the readings, timeline, maps, and video footage. Choose one person represented in the information and think about what he or she might have experienced. Predict what he or she might have been feeling about those experiences. Use the V-Mail Letter Research Organizer to make notes as you explore the interactive.

Once you have completed your research, compose a letter as if you were the person you saw represented in the video. Compose a brief letter home explaining your contribution to the specified campaign in World War II. Describe one of your basic duties and how you might feel about your experience. Make sure to include factual details from the *World War II: A Visual History* interactive such as the campaign name and objective, date, location, weather conditions, etc. For the purposes of this assignment, censorship regulations have been greatly relaxed.

Make sure to read and follow all official government directions included on the V-Mail Form. Double check your work against the information in the V-Mail Letter Assessment Rubric before submitting it.

Some ideas to consider as you plan your letter:

- Think about how the tone of the letter might be different based on the intended audience. Would it be different written to a mother versus a brother who is also in the war?
- Censorship guidelines have been greatly relaxed. Write one detail in the letter using coded language.
- Print your letter neatly using dark ink or pencil. Very small writing is not suitable.
- Stay inside the lines on the V-Mail Form. If you need more than one page, you must completely fill out an additional V-Mail Form.
- Use BLOCK letters in both of the the address spaces.

Campaign Assignments:

- Algeria–French Morocco (1942)
- India–Burma (1942-1945)
- Naples–Foggia (1943-1944)
- Northern France (1944)
- Southern France (1944)
- Rome–Arno (1944)
- Anzio (1944)
- North Apennines (1944-1945)
- Po Valley (1944-1945)

V-Mail Letter Form (Back)

Print the complete address in plain block letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided. Use typewriter, dark ink, or pencil. Write plainly. Very small writing is not suitable.

No. _____

To _____

From _____
(Sender's name)

(Sender's address)

(Date)

(CENSOR'S STAMP)

FOLD SIDES OVER AND THEN FOLD BOTTOM UP AND SEAL
NO OTHER ENVELOPE SHOULD BE USED

V-MAIL

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT PERMIT NO. 1

V-Mail Letter Research Organizer

1. Campaign Objectives:

- What is the name of the campaign?
- What is the objective of this campaign?
- Which countries participated in this campaign?
- What leaders were associated with this campaign?

2. Campaign Location:

- Generally speaking, where did this campaign occur?
- Is it represented by one of the locations on the short snorter?
- Make note of a few specific locations discussed in the campaign.
- When did this campaign occur?

V-Mail Letter Research Organizer cont.

3. Campaign Details:

- Describe one of the people you see represented in the video. Give him or her a name.
- What is his or her job?
- What is the terrain like? Is it on land or at sea?
- What other specific details do you see?

4. Inferences Made Using Historical Thinking Skills

- How might this person feel about his or her job?
- How would this person feel about the place in which he or she is stationed?
- To whom might this person want to write a letter?

V-Mail Letter Assessment Rubric

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Emerging
Campaign Objective	The letter reveals a complex understanding of the objectives of the campaign.	The letter accurately describes the objective of the campaign.	The letter describes the objective of the campaign, but there are some inaccuracies.	The letter describes the objective of the campaign, but there are many inaccuracies.
Campaign Location/Date	The letter accurately describes the general location and dates of the campaign and includes a more specific geographic location as well.	The letter accurately describes the general location and dates of the campaign.	The letter describes the general location and dates of the campaign, but there is at least one inaccuracy.	The letter describes the general location and dates of the campaign, but there is more than one inaccuracy.
Campaign Assignment Details	The letter accurately describes a specific role in the campaign and notes at least two specific details gathered from the primary source videos.	The letter accurately describes a specific role in the campaign and notes one specific detail gathered from the primary source videos.	The letter accurately describes a specific role in the campaign but does not include any details gathered from the primary source videos.	The letter describes a specific role in the campaign but contains inaccuracies.
Inferences Made from Historical Thinking Skills	The letter reveals deep understanding about how your service member might have felt in the historical context.	The letter reveals a general understanding about how your service member might have felt in the historical context.	The inferences about how your service member might have felt in the historical context are present but seem inaccurate.	The letter does not include inferences about how your service member might have felt in the historical context.
Polished Product	The letter has no grammar or spelling mistakes and is written to an appropriate recipient.	The letter has a few grammar or spelling mistakes and is written to an appropriate recipient.	The letter has many grammar or spelling mistakes and is written to an appropriate recipient.	The letter has many grammar or spelling mistakes and does not include an appropriate recipient.
Instructions	All official government instructions on the V-Mail form, including an attempt to pass censorship regulations, have been followed.	All official government instructions on the V-Mail form have been followed.	Most official government instructions on the V-Mail form have been followed.	Most official government instructions on the V-Mail form were not followed.