

WESTERN EUROPE 1939-1945: D-DAY**Film clip from "Commandos and Canadian Troops in action on D-Day" that shows a scene from Juno Beach soon after the D-Day landings, June 1944**

Catalogue ref: IWM A70 37-1

Courtesy of the [Imperial War Museum](#), London.

This beach was attacked by Canadian troops at dawn on June 6th 1944. The film gives a clear indication of how hard the fighting was and why the casualties were so heavy.

What is this source?

The Army Film and Photographic Unit for the War Office made this film. It was made soon after the beach was secured by Canadian troops. It is a good visual record of the aftermath of the Normandy landings and gives us an idea of what it might have been like on other invasion beaches.

The purpose of the film was to record the scene to see whether the military commanders could learn any lessons from it and improve future tactics. Also, parts of the film could be used in newsreels to be shown to the public in Britain, the Empire and the USA.

What's the background to this source?

By late 1942 the tide began to turn against Germany. From 1943 to 1944, British Empire and US forces began a build up of troops and equipment to drive the Germans out of the lands they had invaded in 1940.

The date of the D-Day landings was June 6th 1944. It was an incredibly risky operation, because the Allies had to cross the English Channel. Weather and tides had to be perfect for the invasion to work.

It's worth knowing that...

This film clip gives an idea of the scale and complexity of the operation. All the damaged equipment shown on the beach had not been there at the start of the day! It had to be transported in landing craft from England. The clip also provides evidence of how fierce the fighting had been and the number of casualties.

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Casualties were very high. This is not surprising since the troops had to charge at strongly defended beaches with barbed wire, mines and concrete forts. The scale of the D-Day campaign was small compared to the fighting going on between the Germans and the USSR in Eastern Europe. However, the casualty rates (casualties compared to numbers of troops involved) were actually higher than casualty rates in the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

How does this source help us to understand why D-Day was successful?

1. How many pieces of equipment can you spot in this clip?
 2. How do you know this was a major operation?
 3. What does the clip tell you about the fighting?
 4. How would you sum up the main value of this source to the historian?
- Will you include this source (or part of it) in your storyboard?
 - If you do use it, what are the main points you will make in your caption?

Use this framework to plan your storyboard.