

# The Push to Victory: The Normandy Landings

## Comprehension **Answers**

1. What was D-Day and when did it take place?

**The first day of Operation Overlord, the campaign to invade occupied Europe during the Second World War. It took place on 6th June 1944.**

2. How did the Second World War start?

**Germany invaded Poland in 1939 and Great Britain and France declared a state of war.**

3. What was the Holocaust?

**The persecution and genocide of over six million Jewish, Romany, homosexual, and mentally and physically disabled people – which was carried out by Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler, and supported and facilitated by other Axis powers.**

4. What recent military successes had the Allies had?

**They had regained control in North Africa; they had invaded and were pushing through Italy; they had control of the Atlantic; and in the Soviet Union they had won the Battle of Stalingrad.**

5. What was Operation Bodyguard?

**A campaign of disinformation and deception to cover up the real details of D-Day.**

6. How was the Normandy coastline divided and what were the names given to the areas?

**Answers could include:**

**Operation Fortitude North used secret agents to leak false information to the Germans that the Allies were planning to invade Norway.**

**Operation Fortitude South leaked the myth that the Allies were planning to cross the channel north-east of Normandy, at the Pas de Calais.**

**Operation Ironside allowed communications to be intercepted that indicated that the Allies would invade at the Bay of Biscay.**

**Operation Zeppelin implied that troops would be landing in the Balkans.**

7. How did the Allies keep the Germans away from the Normandy beaches before D-Day?

**Roads and railway lines were bombed by Allied forces and the French Resistance movement, making the area difficult to reach for German soldiers. The night before the invasion, dummy paratroopers were dropped away from the beaches, so the Germans thought they were being invaded by air, and small ships simulated an invasion fleet at the Pas de Calais.**

8. How was the Normandy coastline divided and what were the names given to the areas?

**It was divided into five key beaches: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword.**

9. How did the troops arrive on the beaches on D-Day?

**Just after midnight on 6th June 1944, around 20,000 paratroopers parachuted in. Over 7,000 vessels, carrying 132,000 troops, arrived around six hours later.**

10. When did the Germans finally surrender in the Second World War?

**May, 1945.**

Extension:

How did the troops arrive on the beaches on D-Day?

**Answers will explore the Allies' need to establish a foothold in continental Europe, which was occupied by the Axis powers. This enabled them to push forward into France and finally overcome the Germans.**

Why was it necessary to confuse and trick the Germans in the run up to Operation Overlord?

**Answers will explore the need to divert attention and resources away from the Normandy beaches, so that the Allies met with as little resistance as possible. Some students may also discuss the effect of disinformation and confusion on morale.**

How successful do you think the Normandy Landings were?

**Answers may discuss:**

- the casualties;
- the progress made on D-Day and the significant obstacles faced by the soldiers;
- the Allies' ultimate victory in the war;
- the fact that the victory took another year to be secured.