

GEOGRAPHY ACTIVITY 7: RECONNAISSANCE MISSION

Learning Objectives

- To be able to understand and plot 6 figure grid references;
- To understand and use symbols and keys.

Resources

Activity 7 Reconnaissance Activity sheet

Prior Learning

Students should be happy using 4-figure grid references (although a review of this would be a good start to the lesson).

Starter

Show a picture of a WWI plane ([THIS ONE](#) for example). Ask students to discuss in pairs: What are these planes doing? How did the pilots do these things?

What was this kind of plane made of? What do you think it would have been like in these planes?

Discuss

These planes are either on a reconnaissance mission, gathering information about enemy positions and taking photographs for analysis and map-making, or they are on a bombing raid. Their use as bombers developed throughout the war – at the start of the war they were mostly used for reconnaissance. The pilots started off the war by taking photographs over the side of the plane, and also dropping bombs over the side! The cockpits were open and the planes were made of wood. It would have been very cold. In addition, pilots suffered chronic diarrhea as a result of the fumes from the use of castor oil, a laxative, in the fuel tanks, to lubricate the engines!

This would be a good opportunity to introduce the students to the stories of Mohan Singh, the Sikh Bomber, and William Robinson Clarke, the first Black Pilot in the RFC if they are not going to be researching these two themselves. Both can be accessed from [HERE](#).

Introduction

1. Review four figure grid references by drawing a quick sketch on the board.
2. Using the same sketch, introduce how we create a six-figure grid reference.

MAIN TASK

1. Explain to the students that they are pilots in the Royal Flying Corps (precursor to the RAF). They have been asked to go on a reconnaissance mission over Germany and check the current British intelligence of where the enemy airfields are, and to make a note of any new things they can see.

2. Go through the questions with the students. The map is a representation of what they can see from their aircraft. The first question asks them to check whether the grid references are accurate. The second questions requires them to check whether they have covered all the points on the map, and the third question asks them to create a key and plot different things on the map.

ANSWER SHEET ATTACHED

Extension Idea

For faster students, tell them they can see a network of trenches on the ground. Ask them to draw this on the map, and describe it using six figure grid references. For example, 'There is a trench running from 688, 313, to 692, 305. This is joined by a trench at.....' etc.

Review

Ask the students to write a set of instructions for how to find a six-figure grid reference.

OR

(for a quick fun fact) Tell the students about how there was a lot of confusion in WWI about maps on the side of the Allies – people couldn't understand how they kept ending up in the wrong place! It turned out the French and the English were using different scales on their maps, so they asked the Americans to standardise them all!