



Intelligence's role in war



Activity

The teacher should write on the blackboard: "Ben Franklin," "Washington's Crossing of the Delaware," "Yorktown," and "D-Day."

The teacher and students should then discuss the role of intelligence and espionage in wartime. Discussion topics could include the main goals of intelligence during war, including tracking troop movements, enemy intentions, battle plans, and where arms are stored. Advancements in technology to enhance intelligence gathering could also be discussed, although the basic purpose of intelligence gathering has remained the same.

Below are four examples that highlight the use of intelligence from US history and how the successful use of intelligence has shortened conflict or effectively ended wars. (For more examples, see the supplemental materials suggested).

The teacher should divide the class into four groups and assign one of the following examples to each group. The students should research each example and report back to the class.

Objective

Students will learn the positive impact of gathering intelligence.

Materials

Pen/pencil and paper

Supplemental materials

1. *Cracking the code* briefing
2. Articles on cia.gov:
 - [The Legend of Hercules Mulligan](#)
 - [The Spymaster's Toolkit](#)
 - [Intelligence in the War of Independence](#)
 - [The Enigma of Alan Turing](#)



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Ben Franklin's Most Successful Intelligence Gambit: Revolutionary War: Knowing French spies followed him, Benjamin Franklin made sure he was observed meeting British government officials shortly after the American revolutionary victory at Saratoga. Worried that the Americans and British would reconcile their differences, the French rushed into an alliance – thanks to Franklin's ploy – with the Americans that helped lead to America's ultimate victory. Discuss Franklin's influence overseas as a diplomat and covert "spy," the political tenor in America before and after the Battle of Saratoga, and French and English relations in the era.

Washington's Surprise Attack: Revolutionary War: In 1776, American spy John Honeyman reported to Gen. George Washington how lazy and unprepared a garrison of Hessian troops in Trenton, New Jersey, had become. Honeyman was involved in persuading the Hessians that the Americans would not attack. Washington and his troops crossed the Delaware River at night and recorded a major victory on Dec. 26, 1777. Discuss American espionage in the Revolutionary War, Hessian troops in the Revolutionary War, Washington's army and their desperate situation at the time of the attack, and how the war turned with the American victory.

Code-Breaking Sets Stage for D-Day: World War II: A Japanese ambassador in Berlin, who was a military man, studied German military deployments and reported them at length back to Tokyo via "Purple"-enciphered messages. He reported troop placements on the Atlantic wall fortifications along the coasts of France and Belgium. Allied forces used the intercepted transmissions to plan the D-Day invasion of Western Europe. Discuss American espionage and intelligence operations in WWII, the German Enigma machine and the use of code-breaking in WWII, and D-Day invasion planning.

Eisenhower's D-Day Deception: World War II: Allied force commander Gen. Dwight Eisenhower chose to land in Normandy, France, because he knew the German command expected the invasion to come in Calais, France. The Germans posted 19 divisions in Calais as Eisenhower built an elaborate fake headquarters across the channel from Calais. Details of a Calais invasion were deliberately leaked to known German agents. For every aerial scouting mission flown over Normandy, one was also flown over Calais. The Calais area was bombed as heavily as Normandy. The deception worked so well that even after the Normandy invasion began, the German divisions stayed in Calais, sure that Normandy was just a diversion. Discuss American espionage, intelligence, and counterintelligence operations in WWII.

page 2 of 2

GRADE LEVEL

SUBJECTS INVOLVED

TIME

Middle/High school

Social studies/History

Several class periods, 60 min each