

AIRBORNE
SAINTE MÈRE ÉGLISE



MUSEUM



Educational notebook
12 to 15 years old

Make a sketch following your visit. Draw what moved you most, or an item you especially liked :



A bientôt à l'Airborne Museum !

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AIRBORNE
SAINTE MÈRE ÉGLISE



MUSEUM



visit guide
12 to 15 years old



You're about to visit the Airborne Museum. It opened in 1964 in the heart of Sainte-Mère-Eglise, where the first fights between Allies and Germans took place, in 1944, aiming to set France free from German occupation.

This museum traces the history of the parachutists of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions, dropped above Sainte-Mère-Eglise and the surrounding countryside in the night of the 5th to 6th June 1944.

Enjoy your visit !

MUSEUM MAP



HISTORY CHECK

1940

May 10th : Nazi Germany invades France via Belgium and Luxembourg. France is overcome by the «blitzkrieg».

June 22nd : France is defeated. Marechal Petain signs the armistice with Nazi Germany.

June 18th : From London, General De Gaulle appeals to the French people to join the resistance.

October 24th : The French Vichy regime adopts a collaboration policy with Germany. The other part of France is subjected to German occupation.

1941 1942

December 1941 : The US declares war on Japan. The war becomes total and global.

1941-1942 : Battle in the deserts of North Africa.

November 1942: Operation Torch in North Africa.

1943

May : Arrival of the paratroopers of the 82nd airborne division in Morocco.

July : Operation Husky in Sicile.

September : Operation Avalanche in Italie.



ZOOM SUR June 6th to August 21st : Landing and battle of Normandy.

August 15th : Operation Dragoon in Provence.

August 25th : Paris is liberated.

September : Operation Market Garden in Holland.

December : Battle of the Bulge in Belgium.

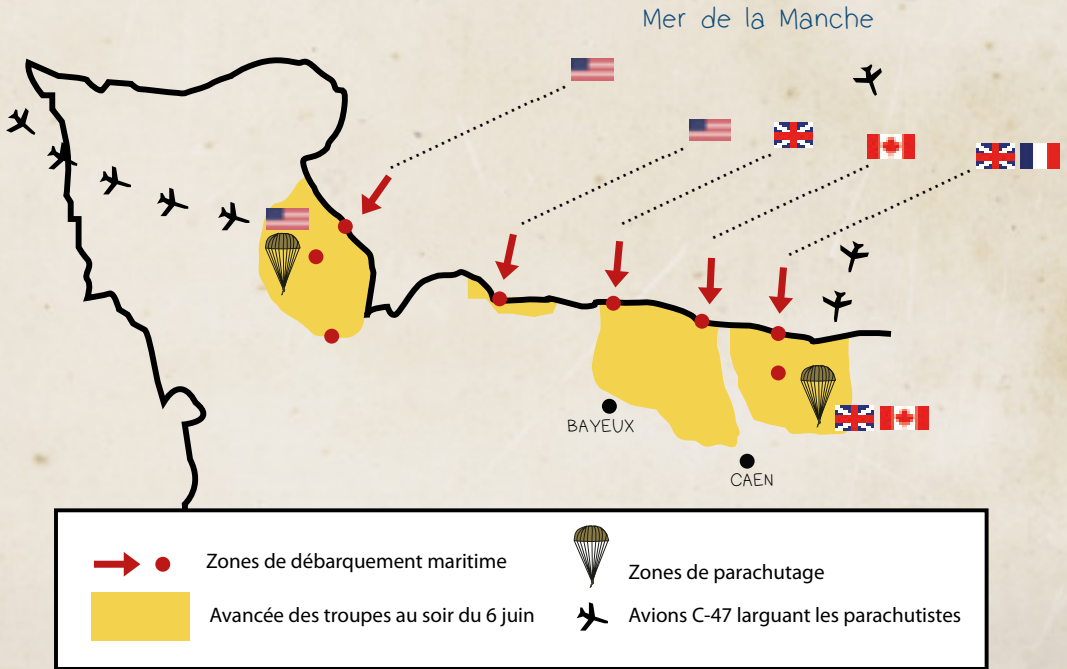
1945

May 8th : Armistice - End of the war in Europe.

Avant de visiter ...

1

Circle the red dot matching Sainte-Mère-Eglise on this Normandy map (if you don't know, maps around the museum will help you). You need to know that in Sainte-Mère-Eglise, American soldiers landed by parachute and glider :



Airborne operations secure the eastern and western sides of the landing area. Through your visit, you'll be able to complete this map, to add the names of the Landing beaches. Watch closely!

Airborne divisions' mission was to gain control of the roads and bridges, thus preventing Germans to reach the coast.



An airborne division is a group of soldiers transported by aircraft and parachuted, or by glider.

WACO BUILDING



THE WACO GLIDER

2

Whereas parachutists were the first to land in Normandy in the night of the 5th to 6th June, they were followed a few hours later by gliders stowed by airplanes.

What was the gliders' function?

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3

By looking at the panels nearby, what can you tell about the gliders' landing ?

Why did this happen ? :

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Supplies, medical equipment, etc, also arrived by glider.

4

In the display cases, find a beverage brought by American soldiers in France in 1944, still on the market to this day.

What is it ?

5

Go to the first case containing «First aid» equipment..
In your opinion, it was used for :

- Minor domestic accidents
- Fast, on-the-spot healing of the wounded



ALLIES : AT WAR FOR THE LIBERATION OF FRANCE

6

Each soldier going to war wears a «dog tag». Theses plaques indicate the soldiers' identity..

Find this item. Why are there two plaques ?

.....

.....

.....

7

Which airborne division landed in parachute near Sainte-Mère-Eglise?

Find the panel where these two badges are to answer the question :

-

-



C-47 BUILDING

TRAINING IN ENGLAND AND DEPARTURE

8

In this building, find the reconstituted scene matching this photo.

Soldiers are about to board the C-47 that will take them to Normandy. Ready to fight, they're carrying more than 50kg of equipment.

Look at this scene. One of the parachutists in front of you has black marks on his face.

Why did he do that ?

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.....



In this scene, it's June 5th 1944 in England, just a few hours before ally troops (including the parachutists) depart for Normandy.

9

Dwight D. Eisenhower was the supreme commander of ally forces during Operation Overlord. Find his photo :



10

Judging from the paras' badges, can you tell which division they belong to?

11

Use your knowledge to link the countries and cities to their respective locations on the map.

England

Normandy

Calais



In 1943 and the beginning of 1944, after lengthy preparations in the US, airborne divisions gather in England in order to be closer to Normandy for the impending Landing.

12

Using the following words, as well as your knowledge and the previous map, answer the following questions :

(words: beaches, equipment, soldiers, England, distance, Atlantic Wall*).

- The Germans believed the Landing would take place in Calais, why?

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- Why did the Allies finally choose Normandy for the Landing?

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OPERATION TITANIC

13

Find the Operation Titanic display.
What were this mission's objectives?

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The Atlantic Wall :
Coastal fortifications built by the German army, from Norway to Pays-Basque, to counter any ally landing.



"OPERATION NEPTUNE" BUILDING



The 6th june date was chosen according to the tidal and moonlight conditions, in order to facilitate the deployment.
5th and 7th june filled the criterias too. The Landing was supposed to happen on the 5th, but a storm delayed the D-Day by 24H!



«Operation Neptune» is the codename for the Assault phase of the Normandy Landing.



John le radio

Answer this question before boarding the plane.

As soon as you see John le radio on these panels, you'll get more information.

14

American paratroopers had very specific missions.
Why is it important to take over Sainte-Mère-Eglise?
(tick the right boxes)

- To deny the Germans access to the coast (landing zone)
- Many german generals are in Sainte-Mère-Eglise
- Sainte-Mère-Eglise's huge fields were suitable for the gliders' landing
- To take control of the main roads and bridges spanning the rivers in the area.

Answer the following questions in the two rooms after exiting the plane.



SAINTE-MÈRE-ÉGLISE

15

Look at the maps of the airborne divisions' landing zones (in theory and in reality). What can you say? ?

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How does the battles seem to start for the paras, and why?

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16

How is the swamp flooding orchestrated by the Germans a problem for the paras?

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17

Following the previous questions, and according to what you felt in the plane and after, explain what could feel a soldier at the time: :

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.....
.....

18

Many parachutists having landed on the church place were killed by Germans. What's the name of the soldier who was stuck on the bell tower ?

.....



Now continue until the Battle of the Hedgerows section.



The Battle of the Hedgerows

19

The Battle of the Hedgerows must lead to the Cherbourg harbour, north of Manche. Why did the Allies need to reach it as soon as possible ?

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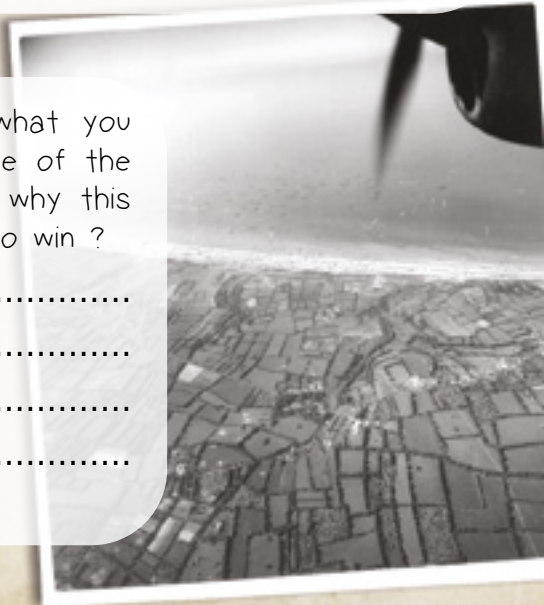
While waiting for the Cherbourg harbour to be liberated, artificial ones were constructed directly on the sea landing zones. Can you name one of them? ?

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20

According to this photo, and what you read and felt crossing the Battle of the Hedgerows section, can you tell why this battle was so long and difficult to win ?

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LES CIVILS

21

Go and take a look at this wedding dress. In your opinion, where does the fabric used comes from? What can you deduce about the conditions of the civilians during the war? ?

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22

How can we say the war was total* on the french side ?

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A total war is when civilians are as much involved as the soldiers in the war.
For example, in the US, civilians contributed to the war effort (tax raise to finance the war, labor in weaponry industries).



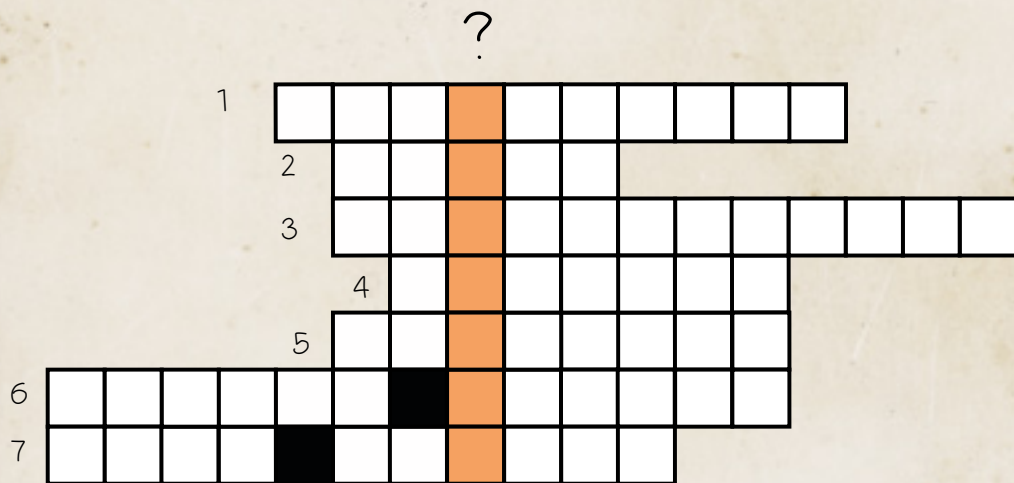
L'ESPACE MÉMOIRE

23

In your opinion, why do we need to remember what happened in 1944? (Elaborate your answer)

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Many soldiers sacrificed their life to win back our
Fill in the boxes using the clues and find the missing word.



- 1 : The country from which the Allies left to land in Normandy.
- 2 : The name of a very difficult battle, between Sainte-Mère-Eglise and Cherbourg, because of the plantations surrounding the fields.
- 3 : The arrival of the ally troops in Normandy..
- 4 : The codename designating the assault phase of the ally troops landing in Normandy. It's also the name of the Airborne Museum's third building.
- 5 : The name of the Museum you're in.
- 6 : The name of a war involving both soldiers and civilians.
- 7 : The name of the soldier who was stuck on the belltower of Sainte-Mère-Eglise's church.

The hidden word is what the Allies gave back to the French people in 1944, that needs to be protected.



Get to the next building to watch the movie !

