



Teacher Resource

Kokoda Veteran

Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. How old was Reg when he joined the army and went to fight in the Kokoda Campaign?
2. During which war was the Kokoda Campaign?
3. Why did Australia send troops to Papua New Guinea?
4. Describe the conditions for soldiers on the Kokoda Track.
5. What questions would like to ask Reg about the Kokoda Campaign?

Activity: Personal Response

Respond to the BTN Kokoda Veteran story as a class. Students will complete one or more of the following incomplete sentences:

- What was the first thought or feeling you had when the BTN Kokoda Veteran story ended?
- How did you feel learning about the Kokoda campaign?
- Which three words would you use to describe Kokoda veteran Reginald Chard?
- Why is it important to learn about the Kokoda campaign?

Activity: Class Discussion

Hold a class discussion after watching the BTN story using the following questions as a guide. Record the main points of the discussion on a mind map with KOKODA CAMPAIGN at the centre.

- During which war was the Kokoda campaign?
- When did the Kokoda campaign begin and end?
- Who was involved?
- Why were Australian soldiers sent to New Guinea?
- What were conditions like on the track?
- What images or words come to mind when you think of the Kokoda campaign?



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KEY LEARNING

Students will explore in more detail Australia's involvement in the Kokoda campaign.

CURRICULUM

HASS – Years 5 & 6

Develop questions to investigate people, events, developments, places and systems.

History – Year 7

Develop historical questions about the past to inform historical inquiry.

Locate and identify primary and secondary sources to use in historical inquiry.

Activity: Kokoda Research

Students will investigate in more depth some questions they have about the Kokoda Campaign and Australia's involvement in the campaign. Students will use the following as a guide or students can write their own question to research.

- Write a summary on the Kokoda Campaign, which answers the 5 W's – Who, What, Where, When and Why?
- Create a timeline highlighting key events in the Kokoda Campaign. Include a title, date, and description for each event.
- What is the topography of the Kokoda Track? Investigate the geographical features of the Kokoda Track, including climate, the terrain, the conditions of the track, and the distance of the track. Draw a map which highlights your findings.
- How were Papuans impacted by the Kokoda Campaign?

Interview

Imagine you could sit down and talk to Reginald Chard. What questions would you ask about his involvement in the Kokoda campaign and life when he returned to Australia?

Activity: Conditions on the Track

Students will learn more about the conditions on the Kokoda Track through the words of Sir Kingsley Norris, a senior medical officer for the Australian 7th Division, who walked the Kokoda Track. Students will read the following description and then respond to the questions below.

"Imagine an area of approximately one hundred miles long. Crumple and fold this into a series of ridges, each rising higher and higher until seven thousand feet is reached, then declining in ridges to three thousand feet. Cover this thickly with jungle, short trees and tall trees, tangled with great, entwining savage vines. Through an oppression of this density, cut a little native track, two or three feet wide, up the ridges, over the spurs, round gorges and down across swiftly flowing, happy mountain streams. Where the track clambers up the mountain sides, cut steps - big steps, little steps, steep steps - or clear the soil from the tree roots."

- How did you feel reading Sir Kingsley Norris' description of the track?
- Why do you think he uses the words *crumple and fold* to describe the land? What image does that create in your mind?
- What words does he use to describe the vegetation on the track?
- What do you understand more clearly about the environment of the Kokoda Track after reading his description?
- Imagine climbing and descending the track carrying a weapon and supplies while fighting a better trained enemy. Discuss your thoughts with other students.



[Source of image](#)

Activity: Letter or Journal Writing

Students will develop a deeper understanding of what it was like for those involved in the Kokoda campaign. Their task is to write a journal entry or letter including a description of what a typical day is like. Students can choose whose perspective they are writing from. Here are some examples:

- A young, inexperienced Australian Militia soldier writing a letter home to his family in Australia.
- A local Papuan villager helping the Allied forces.
- An Australian Army nurse stationed at a base hospital in Port Moresby.

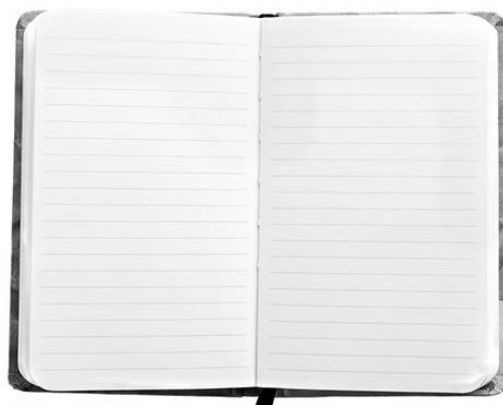
Here are some ideas of things to include in their letter or journal writing:

The Environment

- The Mud and Mountains: Describe climbing steep, slippery tracks.
- The Weather: Tropical rain and cold nights.
- Sickness: Include the struggle with mosquitoes, malaria, or feeling unwell.

Daily Struggles

- Food and Supplies: Explain what you are eating (like hard biscuits) and how heavy your gear is.
- How are you feeling? Tired, scared, or missing your family.
- Friendship: Describe how teamwork and mateship help you get through the day.



Useful Websites

- [Kokoda Track](#) – BTN
- [Kokoda 80th Anniversary](#) – BTN
- [Kokoda - In their own words](#) – Anzac Portal
- [Conditions for soldiers at Kokoda](#) – Anzac Portal
- [Veterans' Oral Histories Collection](#) - Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway
- [Kokoda Trail](#) – National Museum of Australia