

A BITTER FATE

Australians in Malaya & Singapore

DECEMBER 1941 - FEBRUARY 1942



EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

*A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya and Singapore,
December 1941 – February 1942: Educational Activities.*

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INTRODUCTION

These educational activities, aligned to the Australian Curriculum: History at the Year 10 level, are designed to encourage students to become engaged with *A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya and Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942* and the rich historical sources it incorporates. The book is part of a series published by the Department of Veterans' Affairs which explores theatres of war and campaigns during the Second World War. Please note that the campaign in Malaya and Singapore lasted from December 1941 to February 1942, when Allied forces surrendered in Singapore. The publication concentrates on Australia's involvement in this campaign, the country's first against the Japanese.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

This classroom resource has been developed with specific reference to the content descriptions for Year 10 students in the Australian Curriculum: History, where a depth study of the Second World War is required. The relevant Historical Knowledge and Understanding and Historical Skills are listed for each investigation. The learning content and activities assist students to develop the following general capabilities: literacy, critical and creative thinking, personal and social capability, and ethical behaviour.

Furthermore, the material can be easily adapted for use with other levels and curriculum areas, particularly English.

Year 10 History Depth study: Second World War	
<p>HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING:</p> <p>1. World War II (1939–45)</p> <p>Students investigate wartime experiences through a study of World War II in depth. This includes a study of the causes, events, outcome and broader impact of the conflict as an episode in world history, and the nature of Australia's involvement.</p> <p>Overview of the causes and course of World War II. (ACDSEH024)</p> <p>Examination of significant events of World War II, including the Holocaust and use of the atomic bomb. (ACDSEH107)</p> <p>Experiences of Australians during World War II (such as prisoners of war (POWs), the Battle of Britain, Kokoda, the Fall of Singapore). (ACDSEH108)</p> <p>The significance of World War II to Australia's international relationships in the twentieth century, with particular reference to the United Nations, Britain, the USA and Asia. (ACDSEH110)</p>	<p>HISTORICAL SKILLS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use chronological sequencing to demonstrate the relationship between events and developments in different periods and places. (ACHHS182)• Use historical terms and concepts. (ACHHS183)• Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods. (ACHHS186)• Identify the origin, purpose and context of primary and secondary sources. (ACHHS187)• Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument. (ACHHS188)• Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of primary and secondary sources. (ACHHS189)• Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past. (ACHHS190)• Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own). (ACHHS191)• Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced. (ACHHS192)• Select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies. (ACHHS193)

USING THE RESOURCE

The publication, *A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942*, is available online, allowing students easy access. Teachers using this learning resource are encouraged to adapt activities to suit their own purposes.

Background information and research guides provide important information to support students completing the activities that follow. These can be found on pages 6–11.

All images and written sources used in these activities are from *A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942*, the Australian War Memorial (AWM), or the website *Australia's War 1939–1945*. When quotations are used the relevant page from the online version of the book is indicated. Further historical information about images from the AWM can be found by performing a collection search on the AWM website and inserting the image number provided.

DISCLAIMER

This resource encourages students to explore and interpret a range of historical sources. The Department of Veterans' Affairs cannot be assumed to agree with or endorse any content or opinions expressed in websites or other publications quoted or referred to in this resource.

This resource is about war, and about the realities of war. In the course of completing these activities, students may use suggested sources which contain explicit information about the fear, brutality, suffering, loss and horror that wars produce. These sources also include details of self-sacrifice, bravery, initiative, teamwork and mateship that can characterise men's and women's behaviour during war.

Teachers are advised to use due care and diligence according to their personal and school philosophies when using this resource. Sources from any collection dealing with the past may include content that could prove stressful to students, or language considered inappropriate today.

OVERVIEW

This educational resource has seven activities, each one focusing on a different theme or aspect of the defence of Malaya and Singapore.

Activity 1: What can primary and secondary sources tell us about the Singapore 'fortress'?

Students analyse primary and secondary sources to assess their reliability and answer the question about the importance of Singapore to Britain and Australia in the years leading up to the Second World War.

Activity 2: What were the roles of the army, navy and air force during the invasion of Malaya?

Students read and summarise an overview of the invasion of Malaya, taking note of the actions of the three defence services. Using primary and secondary sources, they then look at two battles and note the differences.

Activity 3: What were some of the misconceptions held by Australian soldiers and civilians of the Japanese before and during the Second World War?

Students look at the influence of propaganda posters and whether Australian soldiers believed the propaganda that was presented.

Activity 4: What happened in the days leading up to the Fall of Singapore?

Students match dates and images of events leading up to the Fall of Singapore, and place them in chronological order.

Activity 5: What happened to members of the Australian Army Nursing Service who had been serving in Malaya and Singapore?

Students write a diary entry inspired by primary and secondary source material from the text and create a PhotoStory based on a nurse's story of their choosing.

Activity 6: Surrender and prisoners of war – how did Australian troops feel about surrendering to the Japanese on 15 February 1942? What were Australians' experiences of being a prisoner of war?

Students analyse and compare sources which describe how Australian men felt about surrendering to the Japanese. They then create profiles on Australian servicemen who became prisoners of war.

Activity 7: Reading and reflecting on the Fall of Singapore.

Students agree or disagree with a range of statements that relate to the text.

Background Information 1 and 2 and Research Guides 1 and 2 will assist you in completing various activities, as indicated in the resource.

Background Information 1

Timeline of major events in the invasion of Malaya and the Fall of Singapore

Date	Event
7 December 1941	Japanese aircraft bomb Pearl Harbor.
8 December 1941	Japanese forces land in northern Malaya and Thailand.
9 December 1941	HMS <i>Repulse</i> and HMS <i>Prince of Wales</i> are sunk off the east coast of Malaya by enemy aircraft. Lt General Sir Archibald Wavell visits Singapore to discuss defence preparations.
14–15 January 1942	Action at Gemas: hundreds of Japanese soldiers are killed and the Australians withdraw.
15–21 January 1942	Action at Bakri: the Indian Brigade is pushed back; Australian troops withdraw to Parit Sulong; 110 wounded Australians and 40 wounded Indians left behind are massacred by the Japanese, but one man survives.
26–27 January 1942	Australians successfully ambush Japanese forces at Jemaluang, south of Mersing. Air and naval engagements continue; HMS <i>Thanet</i> is sunk.
31 January – 1 February	Indian, British and Australian soldiers cross the causeway over Johore Strait between Malaya and Singapore.
1 February	Singapore Naval Base is destroyed.
1st week February	Troops and civilians prepare for Japanese invasion of Singapore. 8th Division Australian Imperial Force (AIF) rebuilds units and prepares defences. Battalions receive ill-prepared reinforcements.
1st week February	More fighter pilots arrive in Singapore and brave Japanese-controlled skies to intercept enemy bombers, provide air cover for convoy s, escort bombers over southern Malaya, and fly low-level strafing and tactical reconnaissance sorties .
3 February	Civilians suffer from increased raids on all parts of the city of Singapore, including hospitals.
5 February	The troopship <i>Empress of Asia</i> is bombed while carrying British troops of the 18th Division, equipment and weapons. Most troops were rescued by an Australian naval ship, HMAS <i>Yarra</i> , with the assistance of HMA Ships <i>Bendigo</i> and <i>Wollongong</i> .
8 February	At dawn a severe bombardment of Singapore begins. At 10.30 pm the Japanese launch amphibious assaults on the island's north and north-west coast.
8–9 February	Tengah airfield is captured by the Japanese.
10–11 February	Counter-attack at Bukit Timah by Australian forces – 'X' Battalion, Merret Force and the Special Reserve Battalion.

10 February	Six nurses and 300 wounded Australian, British and Indian troops are evacuated on the <i>Wah Sui</i> .
11 February	Major General Bennett, commander of the 8th Division, begins moving all units into an Australian perimeter close to the city of Singapore.
11–12 February	124 nurses and physiotherapists are evacuated on the cargo ships <i>Empire Star</i> and <i>Vyner Brooke</i> .
14 February	Senior Australian officers decide to cease futile counter-attacks against the Japanese, who had captured Singapore's reservoirs and pumping stations.
15 February	Mr Vivian Bowden, Australia's official representative in Singapore, sends his last message to Australia. Shells and bombing cause further chaos in St Andrews Cathedral hospital. Some soldiers are moved into position for final counter-attacks.
Evening of 15 February	General Percival calls a ceasefire. More than 1100 Australian troops are dead or missing in action and 15,000 Australians become prisoners of war.
19 February 1942	Japanese aircraft bomb Darwin in the first enemy attacks on Australia's mainland.

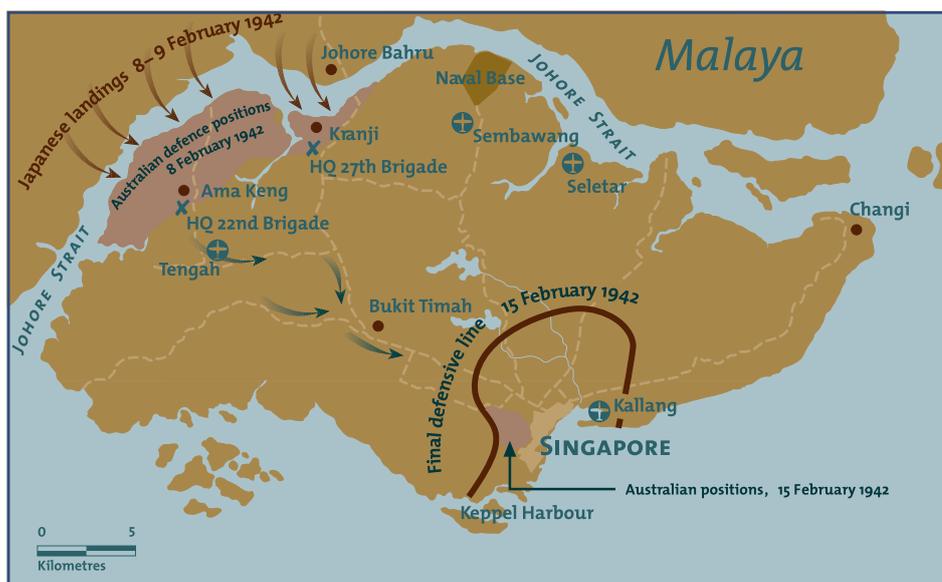
Glossary

convoy	A group of ships or vehicles travelling together, typically one accompanied by armed troops, warships, or other vehicles for protection
strafing	Attacking from the air with machine-gun fire
tactical reconnaissance sortie	Combat aircraft flight to search for useful military information
amphibious assault	A military action of coordinated land, sea, and air forces organised for a seaborne invasion
perimeter	Any boundary around a piece of ground
futile	Having no useful result
reservoir	Large natural or artificial lake used as a source of water supply
shell	A hollow artillery projectile filled with explosive, primed to explode either during flight, on impact, or after penetration

Background Information 2



Malayan campaign, 8 December 1941 – 31 January 1942. *A Bitter Fate*, p. 33



Defence of Singapore, 8–15 February 1942, indicating Australian position and lines of retreat. *A Bitter Fate*, p. 104

Research Guide 1

<p><i>A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942</i> www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au</p>	<p>Go to: Teachers – Resources – Type of Resource – Commemorative Publication and Second World War p. 15, pp. 19–20, p. 21, p. 36, p. 39, p. 99, pp. 111–114, pp. 127–132, p. 145.</p>
<p>National Archives of Australia: www.naa.gov.au</p>	<p>Put name and service number if known in Search box – there may be a nurse’s file that has been digitised which will contain basic enlistment details.</p>
<p>Australian War Memorial – www.awm.gov.au</p>	<p>Put name of a nurse in Search box – all relevant collection items will be retrieved, such as photos, film and transcript of Last Post Closing Ceremony, art works, medals awarded etc.</p>
<p>Australian War Memorial – www.awm.gov.au</p>	<p>Search for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 10th Australian General Hospital. 2. 2/13th Australian General Hospital. Photos of nursing staff and hospitals, as well as other photos will be retrieved. 3. <i>Empire Star</i> and nurses. 4. <i>Vyner Brooke</i> and nurses.
<p>www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/stoloneyears/ww2/japan/nurses/</p>	<p>Details of nurses in captivity.</p>
<p><i>Devotion: Stories of Australia’s wartime nurses</i> – www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au</p>	<p>Go to: Teachers – Resources – Types of Resource – Education Resource and scroll through to find digitised book. Go to pp. 24–27 for the story of Vivian Bullwinkel and Betty Jeffrey.</p>
<p>www.australiansatwarfilmarchive.unsw.edu.au</p>	<p>Scroll through photos at the bottom of the page to find Loris Church, who was evacuated on the <i>Empire Star</i>. She tells her story on film, and there is also a transcript.</p>
<p><i>Australia’s War 1939–1945*</i> – www.ww2australia.gov.au/</p>	<p>Find the link Nurses Recovered at the bottom left-hand side of the page.</p>
<p><i>Australia’s War 1939–1945*</i> – www.ww2australia.gov.au/</p>	<p>On the right-hand side of the page, find the link to the Japanese Advance – Singapore – ‘order to leave’.</p>

*Please note this website is in the process of being upgraded and you may be redirected.

Research Guide 2

Individual	Sources
 <p>Private Robert Towers (centre) AWM P02846.001, <i>A Bitter Fate</i>, p. 141</p>	<p>Robert Towers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942</i>, p. 141. Download from the Anzac Portal at: www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au2. www.naa.gov.au – Go to: Advanced Search, put in the name ‘Robert Towers’ and service no. VX36974.3. www.awm.gov.au4. <i>We’ll meet again – Australian stories of love in wartime</i>, p. 62, download from the Anzac Portal at: www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au <p>Point of interest – what is the story of Robert Tower’s necklace?</p>
 <p>Flying Officer CH ‘Spud’ Spurgeon. AWM P00301.001, <i>A Bitter Fate</i>, p. 140</p>	<p>Clarence Haddon ‘Spud’ Spurgeon</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942</i>, pp. 38, 40. Download from the Anzac Portal at: www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au2. www.naa.gov.au – Go to: Basic Search, put in the name ‘Clarence Haddon Spurgeon’.3. www.awm.gov.au – search for ‘Air-Commodore Clarence Haddon Spurgeon’ – interview with Tim Bowden and Dr Hank Nelson, including POW details. Other collection items available.4. australiansatwarfilmarchive.unsw.edu.au/archive/937-clarence-spurgeon – Interview and transcript.5. <i>Australia’s War 1939–1945*</i> – Go to Japanese Advance – Malaya – RAAF in Malaya www.ww2australia.gov.au <p>*Please note this website is in the process of being upgraded and you may be redirected.</p> <p>Point of interest – what did Clarence Spurgeon do after the Second World War?</p>



Official war artist Vaughan Murray Griffin
AWM P04569.001

Murray Griffin

1. *A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942*. There are several artworks included in the text pp. 72, 74, 75, 107, 108, 119. Download from the Anzac Portal at: www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au
2. www.naa.gov.au – Go to: Basic Search, put in the name ‘Vaughan Murray Griffin’.
3. www.awm.gov.au – search for ‘Murray Griffin’ – interview with Tim Bowden, including POW details. Other collection items available.

Point of interest – how important was it that Murray Griffin recorded the service of Australians before the Fall of Singapore and while they were prisoners of war?



Lieutenant Colonel Charles Anderson VC
AWM ART31764, *A Bitter Fate*, p. 77

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Anderson VC

1. *A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942*, pp. 70–78. Download from the Anzac Portal at: www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au
2. www.naa.gov.au – Go to: Basic Search, put in the name ‘Charles Groves Wright Anderson’.
3. www.awm.gov.au – search for ‘Lieutenant Colonel Charles Groves Wright Anderson’ – there is film footage included in collection items.
4. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*:
adb.anu.edu.au/biography/anderson-charles-groves-wright-12133

Point of interest – what experience had prepared Charles Anderson to fight in the difficult conditions of Malaya?



Colonel FG ‘Black Jack’ Galleghan
AWM ART26547

Major General FG ‘Black Jack’ Galleghan

1. *A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942*, p. 60. Download from the Anzac Portal at: www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au
2. www.awm.gov.au – search for “Major General Frederick Gallagher ‘Black Jack’ Galleghan” – there is film footage and several objects included in collection items.
3. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*:
adb.anu.edu.au/biography/galleghan-sir-frederick-gallagher-10270

**Points of interest – why was he regarded so affectionately by his men?
– why did Jack Galleghan refuse to be called a prisoner of war on his return to Australia?**

Activity 1: What can primary and secondary sources tell us about the Singapore ‘fortress’?

Through research, historians interpret important events and trends in history. In their research they use primary sources and secondary sources.

Definitions

Primary sources are first-hand accounts often created at, or very soon after, the time and events they describe. These accounts are often in written or spoken form (letters, official records, speeches, interviews, newspaper reports, maps, diaries and emails). Primary sources can also include first-hand accounts that were created later, such as autobiographies, memoirs, and oral histories. By using primary source material, you are not reading an historian’s interpretation of past events or conditions – you are interpreting contemporary evidence or personal recollections for yourself.

Secondary sources are second-hand accounts about people, events, topics or places that are based on both primary and other secondary sources. They represent a writer’s interpretation of records and the writing has a particular point of view to offer. They describe, interpret, analyse and draw conclusions from the primary sources. Examples include encyclopaedias, books, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, journal articles, documentaries, museum exhibitions and other materials in which information has been gathered and compiled for you.

A. Analysing primary and secondary sources.

You are provided with seven sources from *A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942* and the Australian War Memorial, with information that will help you understand the historical backdrop of the Fall of Singapore.

1. When using primary and secondary sources, it is important to assess their reliability. Analyse each of the sources listed by considering them in relation to the following questions. You may need to go to the AWM website to look at the original captions for the photos to find out when they were created and who created them.

Consider the following questions when analysing the **written sources** (diaries, letters, newspapers, books, speeches, official records) and **visual sources** (maps, photographs, political cartoons, and paintings):

- Is it a primary or secondary source?
- Who created the source?
- When was it created?
- For what purpose was it created?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the message?
- Do you consider this to be a reliable historical source? Is it accurate? Is it biased? Why?
- Do you consider this to be a useful historical source? Why?

For a **visual source**, consider the following as well:

- What do you first notice about this visual source?
- What people, actions, objects or symbols can you see?
- What is the relationship between these different aspects?

Record your answers in the boxes provided. Source 1 is done for you as an example.

Source 3

British Naval base, Singapore. A British warship being refitted in a floating dock, c. September 1941. (AWM 007748; *A Bitter Fate*, p. 4)



Source 3:

Source 4

Owing to the increased range of aircraft and the development of aerodromes, particularly in Thailand, [which the Japanese could capture,] we can no longer concentrate on the defence of Singapore Island entirely, but must consider the defence of Malaya as a whole, particularly the security of up-country landing grounds. For this reason, and because we cannot spare a fleet for the Far East at present, it is all the more important that we should do what we can to improve our land and air defences in Malaya.

(Lord Caldecote quoted in *A Bitter Fate*, p. 5)

Source 4:

Source 5

In the two decades before World War II, Australian defence policy was dominated by the 'Singapore strategy'. Defence planners readily identified Japan as the 'only potential and probable enemy' in the region. It had the world's third largest navy, after Britain's Royal Navy and the United States Navy, and in the 1930s its army gained operational experience against Chinese and Russian forces. Under the 'Singapore strategy' Australia and New Zealand reaffirmed their commitment to imperial defence and planned, if necessary, to again assist Britain in a time of war by sending forces to Europe or the Middle East; in exchange, Britain vowed to dispatch, if need be, warships from the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea to form a Far East Fleet based at Singapore.

(*A Bitter Fate*, p. 2)

Source 5:

Source 6

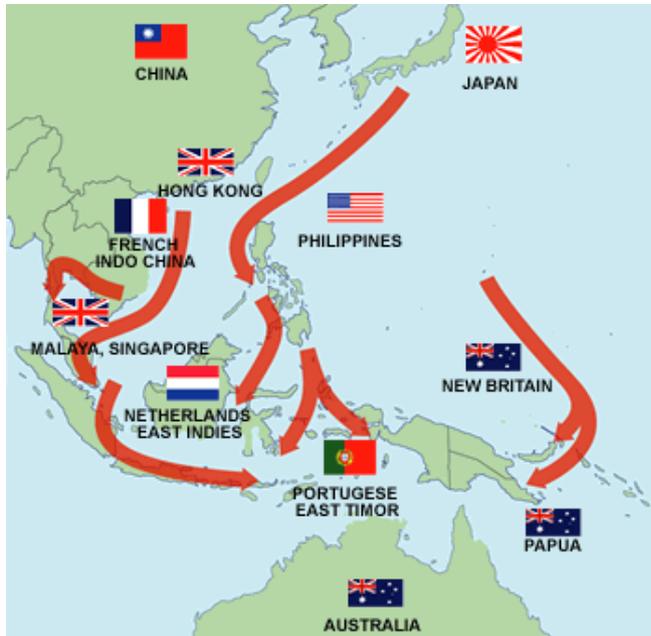
'Stepping Stones?' cartoon by 'Wells', *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 20 February 1941. (*A Bitter Fate*, p. 6)



Source 6:

Source 7

www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/underattack/underattack/
Map showing the Japanese advance



Source 7:

B. Use the sources you have analysed to answer the following questions:

1. Why was Singapore so important to Britain and Australia in the two decades before the Second World War?

2. Why was the Singapore Strategy 'fundamentally flawed'?

Activity 2: What were the roles of the army, navy and air force during the invasion of Malaya?

In 1940, due to concerns over Singapore's security, Prime Minister Robert Menzies committed Australian forces to the defence of Singapore and Malaya. Initially three air force squadrons and the 8th Infantry Brigade were sent to Malaya. Over the course of 1941, the size of Australia's forces in Malaya doubled. (*A Bitter Fate* pp. 5–6)

The invasion of Malaya began on 8 December 1941 with Japanese air attacks on Allied aircraft, air bases and ships. Within days Japanese ground troops were advancing southwards while Allied forces retreated before them. (*Australia's War 1939–1945: Invasion of Malaya*, www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au)

A. Read and summarise an overview on the invasion of Malaya.

1. Read an overview on the invasion of Malaya either individually or in groups:
www.w2australia.gov.au/japadvance/malaya.html

In the table below, summarise the overview, taking note of the actions of the three defence services. Use the accompanying web page map, timeline and map on pp. 6–8 to assist you. You can also read Chapter 3 of *A Bitter Fate: Australians in Malaya & Singapore, December 1941 – February 1942* for further information.

Service	Where were they in action on the Malayan peninsula?	When were they in action?	What happened?
Army			
Navy			
Air Force			

B. Explore two significant Australian engagements during the Japanese invasion of Malaya.

1. Jigsaw activity: once the group is divided in half, work in small groups to analyse one of the actions. You will study a combination of written and visual sources, then complete the relevant sections of the tables below for either the action at Gemas or action at Parit Sulong. Use the timeline and map on pages 6–8 and Chapter 4 of the text to assist you.

Action at Gemas

Source 1

An unnamed gunner at the ambush site, north of Gemas, describes the action:

At about four o'clock . . . the lookout announced: 'Large party of cyclists crossing the bridge'. We froze and my heart stepped into 'high' as on the roadway 15 feet [5 metres] below passed the first of the enemy. Oblivious of the fate in store for them, they cycled easily under our gaze, laughing and chattering while Aussie fingers tightened around triggers and Mills bomb pins. After some hundreds had crossed the river and entered the cutting the Captain gave the order. With a roar like the crack of doom, the bridge and the Japanese on it soared skywards on a dense column of smoke and fragments.

This was the signal for hellfire to break out. From each side of the road for a length of half a mile [800 metres] the Aussies poured into the congested, panic-stricken ranks of the Japanese cyclists a devastating fire with machine guns, sub-machine guns and rifles, while our men leisurely removed pins from Mills grenades and rolled them over the lip of the defile to further rend the enemy ranks with their ear-splitting bursts.

(Unnamed gunner quoted in *A Bitter Fate*, p. 63)

Source 2

The ambush at the bridge over the Gemencheh River, beyond Gemas, 14th January 1942, by Murray Griffin, 1946.
(AWM ART24500; *A Bitter Fate*, p. 64)



Source 3

Major General Bennett (seated) briefs Australian and British war correspondents on the successful ambush north of Gemas. At this stage, he was still confident of turning the tide of the campaign. (AWM 011303/04; *A Bitter Fate*, p. 65)



Action at Parit Sulong

Source 4

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Anderson – read the biography on pp. 77–78 of *A Bitter Fate*.

Source 5

Action at Parit Sulong, January 1942, by Murray Griffin, 1943. (AWM ART24477; A Bitter Fate, p. 74)



Source 6

Following the withdrawal from Parit Sulong, men suffered different fates:

Some men were cut off for longer periods, particularly those who had headed west for the coast, and reached Singapore in dribs and drabs. One group of six men traipsed through jungle and swamps for 11 days before finding a rowboat which they rowed south along the coast, finally being picked up by a British patrol boat. At least two groups bypassed Singapore and landed in Sumatra. A handful of men linked up with Chinese Communist guerrillas in the mountains, and some remained with them until the end of the war. Over 100 men were captured some distance from the battle area and were transported north to Pudu Gaol, at Kuala Lumpur, but other less fortunate were captured and executed. Some men simply died of wounds or of exhaustion deep in the jungle.

(A Bitter Fate, p. 79)

Action at Gemas – document source			
Primary or secondary source? (circle)	Who is the author and what is the tone?	What is the message and who is the audience?	Can you identify any issues with authenticity, accuracy, or bias?
Source no. 1 P S			
Visual source			
Primary or secondary source? (Circle)	What people, actions, objects or symbols can you see? What is the relationship between these aspects?	What is the message and who is the audience?	What is the historical context of the source?
Source no. 2 P S			
Source no. 3 P S			

Action at Parit Sulong – document source			
Primary or secondary source? (circle)	Who is the author and what is the tone?	What is the message and who is the audience?	Can you identify any issues with authenticity, accuracy, or bias?
Source no. 4 P S			
Source no. 6 P S			
Visual Source			
Primary or secondary source? (circle)	What people, actions, objects or symbols can you see? What is the relationship between these aspects?	What is the message and who is the audience?	What is the historical context of the source?
Source no. 5 P S			

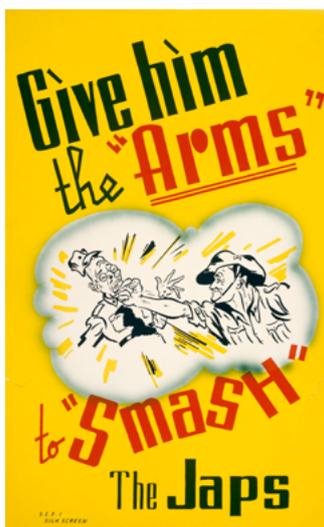
Share your findings with other groups. Complete both tables.

ACTIVITY 3: What were some of the misconceptions held by Australian soldiers and civilians of the Japanese before and during the Second World War?

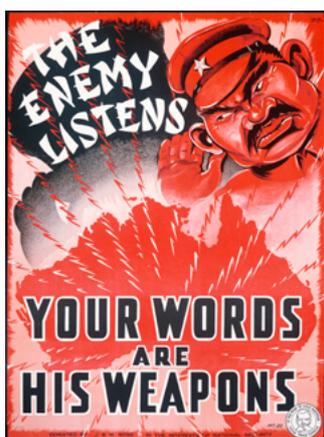
A. Analysing images.

1. Look at the images below, produced during the Second World War in Australia. Record your thoughts about the images and how they might have influenced Australian attitudes towards the Japanese. You will need to go to the AWM website and enter the collection number to find further details.

Images	Identify any people, actions, objects, symbols or colours – what do they represent? What is the image portraying? What do you think of this image?	Who is the intended audience? How might aspects of this image have influenced Australian attitudes towards the Japanese in the Second World War?
 <p>AWM ARTV09225</p>		
 <p>AWM ARTV00053</p>		



AWM ARTV00156



AWM ARTV00045

These images, used to persuade Australians to both fear and mock the Japanese, were a form of propaganda. Propaganda attempts to influence attitudes by deliberately spreading information and ideas to support a cause.

2. Reflect on the images you have analysed and what you have learned. What was the purpose of these propaganda images?

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3. Read the two following written sources and answer the questions.

- a) An officer of the 2/26th Battalion recalled that the Japanese invariably were described as: ... *fanatical and tough but not very bright. They were armed with small calibre rifles, were not good shots because of defective eye-sight, and rarely hit their targets. If by any chance you were shot, the bullet only made a small hole which healed quickly, making it unnecessary for the wounded man to leave his Unit ... The general opinion of his audience was that it was a load of rubbish ...*

(Ron Magarry, quoted in *A Bitter Fate*, p. 55)

- b) We were fed a bit of hooey about the withdrawals, to the effect that a stand would be made on such and such a line. 'They will never cross the Perak river', 'We'll hold'em at the Bottle Neck at Taiping', 'A firm stand at the Slim River.' [But] we knew – we carted all sorts about – they all seemed to have the same obsession – to get to Singapore and be safe.

(William B Webb, quoted in *A Bitter Fate*, p. 57)

Judging from evidence in the written sources provided, what do you think Australian soldiers thought about the Japanese?

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Do you think they would have believed the propaganda presented in the images?

Why or why not? In addition to evidence provided in the written sources, give other reasons for your answer.
(Read *A Bitter Fate* pp. 48–50)

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4. Australia has a good relationship with Japan today. Attitudes towards the Japanese, however, were slow to change following the Second World War. Explain possible reasons for this. You may like to further add to your answer after completing the rest of the activities.

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ACTIVITY 4: What happened in the days leading up to the Fall of Singapore?

By 31 January 1942, all British Empire forces had withdrawn from the Malayan peninsula onto the island of Singapore. On 8 February, the Japanese landed in the north-west of the island and within six days they were on the outskirts of Singapore city, which was also now under constant air attack.

(*Australia's War 1939–1945: Fall of Singapore*, overview. www.anzacportal.dva.gov.au)

A. Chronological sequencing.

- Match the following dates and sources and then place the events in chronological order from the earliest to the latest, ending with the Fall of Singapore. To assist you, read the relevant pages of Chapter 5 of *A Bitter Fate*, the photo and painting captions accessible on the AWM website, and the overview of the Fall of Singapore at: www.w2australia.gov.au/japadvance/singapore.html

You can also look at the timeline and map on pages 6–8 to assist you.

You may like to print out the dates, cut them out, and match them to the sources on the following pages.

Dates			
1 February 1942	14 February	3 February	11 February
12 February	Night of 10–11 February	5 February	Late January – 1 February 1942
1st week in February	End January 1942	8–9 February	12–15 February
15 February	15 February	1 February 1942	8–9 February
8 February			

Sources

Counter-attack forward of Bukit Timah

It was like a macabre dance straight from hell with the struggling figures silhouetted against the leaping flames from the oil dump. The crashing explosions of mortar bombs, and grenades and the rattle of small arms fire providing a sickening orchestration to add to the screams and the cries of the wounded and dying.

Hint: p. 110, *A Bitter Fate*.

Intensity of initial bombardment of Singapore

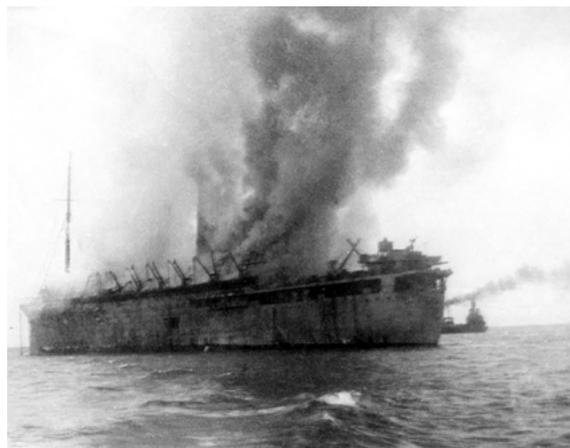
Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Varley remarked about the intensity of the initial bombardment of Singapore, including over his command area in the centre of Johore Strait: 'During my four years of service [in] 1914–1918 I never experienced such concentrated shell fire over such a period'. Hint: p. 103

59 nursing staff left Singapore on 11 February on the SS *Empire Star*



Members of the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS), all staff of 2/10th Australian General Hospital, after their evacuation from Singapore in the cargo vessel *Empire Star*. Hint: pp. 112–113 & pp. 127–128. (AWM P03315.005)

Empress of Asia bombed



View of the extensively damaged British transport ship *Empress of Asia* and naval rescue vessels. The transport was set on fire during a Japanese air raid. It was one of the four ships bringing the remainder of the 18th Division, some other troops, and transport vehicles to the island. Most of the troops were rescued by the navy, but nearly all their weapons and equipment were lost. Hint: p. 101. (AWM P01604.001)

Causeway blown between Malaya and Singapore



The British rear guard in Malaya withdrew to Singapore Island and blew a gap in the causeway. This image shows the 21-metre gap in the causeway below the Johore administration building. Hint: p. 91. (AWM 012467)

65 nurses evacuated on the *Vyner Brooke*



Left to right: Sister Gardam, Sister Hannah and Matron Drummond of the 2/4 Casualty Clearing Station, 8th Australian Division. They were amongst sixty-five nurses evacuated on the *Vyner Brooke*. Hint: p. 21, 113–114 & www.ww2australia.gov.au/japadvance/leave.html (AWM 120519)

Injured civilians, city street



First aid helpers attending injured civilians in a city street after a Japanese air raid. Hint: p. 100. (AWM 011529/10)

British Forces surrender to the Japanese in the city area, Singapore



Hint: p. 123. (AWM 127902)

Reinforcements joining their units

... the lot of the reinforcements was a very hard one. They were largely inadequately trained ... were not in good condition after a sea voyage ... did not know the country ... had not been taught the need for dispersion and concealment from the air [and] they had not, many of them, even seen some modern weapons ... I asked to see General Bennett and told him that ... in my view the unit was not a fighting force at all.

Lieutenant Colonel Samuel Pond, the new commander of the 2/29th Battalion, deeply concerned about the state of his unit. Hint: pp. 94–95.

Singapore naval base is destroyed



Smoke from fires at the naval base in Singapore. The base was destroyed. Hint: pp. 92–93. (AWM 012468)

Amphibious landings across Johore Strait by Japanese



Hint: p. 105. (AWM 129751)

Australian units of 22nd Brigade defend dispersed front on Singapore Island



Captain John Vernon, a lieutenant of the 2/18th Battalion, worked hard to ensure his platoon was able to withdraw with its wounded. Hint: p. 107. (AWM ART 24496)

The suffering of Singapore's civilians

... there was devastation everywhere. There were holes in the road, churned-up rubble lying in great clods all round ... A group of Chinese, Malays, Europeans and Australian soldiers were already at work shovelling the debris away. Soon there emerged from the shelter a Chinese boy, scratched and bleeding, who immediately turned to help in the rescue work. He said 'My sister is under there'. The rescuers dug furiously among the fallen masonry ... At last the top of the shelter was uncovered. Beneath was a crushed mass of old men, women, young and old and young children, some still living – the rest dead.

Hint: pp. 117–118.

Defending the Johore Causeway



Gunners with a two-pounder anti-tank gun overlooking the Johore Causeway. Hint: p. 98. (AWM 012449)

Ceasefire called, surrender signed



The signing of the surrender documents at the Ford Factory, Bukit Timah, Singapore. Lieutenant General Percival, British commander, is second from the left in the foreground, opposite General Yamashita.

Hint: pp. 120–121. (AWM 135867)

St Andrews Cathedral converted to hospital



On 12 February, a few days before the Fall of Singapore, St Andrew's Cathedral was cleared of its seats and taken over by the 2/9th and 2/10th Field Ambulances. The cathedral buildings and grounds were used as a hospital, accommodating a constant intake of sick and wounded, both troops and civilians. Hint: p. 119. (AWM ART26531)



Defence preparations for Singapore

Lieutenant General Sir Archibald Wavell, Commander in Chief, and Lieutenant General Sir Henry Pownell, Commander in Chief of British Forces in the Far East, in Singapore. Lt Gen Wavell was in Singapore to discuss defence preparations. Hint: p. 97. (AWM 011303/37)

B. Going further.

1. Select one of these events, research the details and write a short newspaper article about it. You can include the relevant image or create a drawing to include with your article.

Activity 5: What happened to members of the Australian Army Nursing Service who had been serving in Malaya and Singapore?

Nurses of the 2/10th and 2/13th General Hospitals were evacuated in the days leading up to the Fall of Singapore. Explore what happened to them. (www.awm.gov.au/unit/U57200/)

A. Creative response

1. Read the following sources. Then imagine you are one of the nurses, sitting at the docks at Keppel Harbour in Singapore, waiting to be evacuated, surrounded by chaos and other evacuees. You decide to write a detailed diary entry.

Consider the following in writing your diary entry:

- How you would feel to be leaving, having experienced such difficulty in nursing patients – would you be heartbroken or relieved to be leaving your patients and Singapore?
- Were you able to say a special goodbye to the patients, doctors and medical staff you had to leave?
- Describe the details of the scenes you witnessed on your way to the docks, and at the docks – what is the state of buildings, evacuees, civilians?
- How are people's needs being attended to – how much food and water is available, is there relief from heat, shelter from the sun?
- Describe the emotions of individuals in the crowd – the elderly, children, mothers, other nurses, who are all waiting to get off the island.

Source 1

A taste of plain Hell this [morning] when our Hospital received a barrage of shells from the enemy ... I had just gone upstairs from the tents and had finished a patient when a terrific crash like a lightning strike burst near us. I went for my helmet and just got back in time to help a few patients downstairs and settle them under furniture – beds & tables – a few rugs down on the floor and they were put everywhere. Then having cleared the way to the theatre, I put on the sterilisers and got gloves on ... Horrible casualties – thank God I'm used to the sight of blood. Then a cup of tea and more or less return to normal ...

(Howgate, diary entry, 7 February 1942, AWM PR91/045; *A Bitter Fate*, p. 99)

Source 2

That was a bolt from the blue. It was common knowledge that no real ships were available, certainly not any suitable for hospital ships, and the suggestion that we pull out and abandon our patients sent up our blood pressure. When the call was made for volunteers from among the nurses to stay behind, we all volunteered.

(Simons, quoted in *A Bitter Fate*, p. 113)

Source 3

We all flatly refused to go. There was so much to be done. Wounded were arriving constantly; no hospital ships were in Singapore to relieve the congestion ... But our refusal was useless. We were ordered to leave and had to walk out on those superb fellows. All needed attention; not one complained – doctors, too, who needed our help so badly. I had never felt worse about anything. This was the work we had gone overseas to do. We sat in the car quite dazed by the suddenness of it all.

(Jeffrey, quoted in *A Bitter Fate*, p. 113)

Source 4

Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton watched them leave: 'Smiling wistfully, they fluttered tiny handkerchiefs to us from the open doors of the ambulances, as orderlies and doctors lined the drive to cheer them on their way'.

(*A Bitter Fate*, p. 130)

Source 5

Ambulances carried the women to Keppel Harbour, though they had to walk the last portion of the journey 'through indescribable ruin, blazing buildings, acrid smoke and abandoned or wrecked cars'.

(*A Bitter Fate*, p. 114)

B. Research and Creating a PhotoStory

There were 130 nurses of the 10th and 2/13th Australian General Hospitals who were evacuated after the Japanese invasion of Singapore in February 1942. Six nurses accompanied the 300 wounded Australian, British and Indian troops on a small merchant ship, the *Wah Sui*, on 10 February. On 11 February, fifty-nine nurses were evacuated on the *Empire Star* and on 12 February the remaining sixty-five nurses were evacuated on the *Vyner Brooke*. Those who sailed on the *Wah Sui* and *Empire Star* arrived safely back in Australia but those on the *Vyner Brooke* suffered very different fates. (*A Bitter Fate*, pp. 111–113 and www.ww2australia.gov.au/japadvance/leave.html)

1. In groups, find out what happened to one of the following nurses. Use Research Guide 1 to help you find information. Present your findings by creating a PhotoStory. With each image, include 2–3 sentences. You can add narration, effects and background music to enhance your presentation.

Your presentation should include the following information: when and where they were born, their family background, where they trained as a nurse, when and why they joined up. Also, did they have a best friend amongst the other nurses? What hobbies did they have? What were their experiences during the war? If they survived, what did they do after the war? Did they marry, have children, continue nursing? What makes the story of these nurses so special?

You can also include some background about the Second World War, Australia's government of the day, film, fashion and music of the era. Be as curious and creative as you can!

The nurses you may like to research are:

Margaret Anderson – who was awarded the George Medal for her bravery on the trip back to Australia on the *Empire Star* – what did she do to earn the medal?

Mona Wilton – who handed a scribbled note to one of the men leaving on the *Wah Sui* on 10 February. The note was to be passed on to her parents. It read:

*In a terrific hurry to get the boys on a ship – to home & safety. Goodness knows when we will follow.
Don't worry – will you? We can dodge bombs with the best of them.*

Wilton, note to parents, AWM PR89/92 (*A Bitter Fate*, p. 111)

Did her parents have good reason to worry? – did Mona make it back to Australia?

Olive Paschke – their much loved principal matron. Her biography is on pp. 19–20 of the text.

Irene Drummond – matron – what did she say to her nurses on the beach at Banka Island?

Vivian Bullwinkel – learn about Vivian's remarkable life.

Loris Church – evacuated on the *Empire Star*. Watch her tell her story – a link is provided in Research Guide 1.

Activity 6: Surrender and prisoners of war – how did Australian troops feel about surrendering to the Japanese on 15 February 1942? What were Australians’ experiences of being a prisoner of war?

After the Fall of Singapore, more than 15,000 Australians became prisoners of the Japanese. (*A Bitter Fate*, p. 126)

A. Analysing sources.

Examine the following sources which illustrate the experience of Australian troops as they surrendered. Then answer the following questions.

Source 1

1130 hours we have that Pommies have ceased fire [but we] don't know why and that the Indians have laid down arms [so it] looks as [if] the AIF are going to fight it out on their own. At 1530 hours we get cease fire orders [and] believe that peace negotiations are going on. Just after dark we are moving, we are told, into a smaller perimeter near Tanglin Barracks. A lot of ammo is left behind. Along the road we hear lots of rumours that the Japs have retired and we are going forward. The CO's driver told me the peace terms have been signed between Britain & Japan. But soon we learn the truth. We have to line all the guns & trucks up at the gardens. All called together by our TC [Troop Commander] and were told we were prisoners of war.

(Houlahan, diary entry, 15 February 1942; *A Bitter Fate*, p. 121)

1. How do you think Gunner Houlahan was feeling when he wrote this?

Source 2

How did ordinary Australians react? The men in Cathedral Hospital heard whispers of a capitulation and noticed that ‘the din of war began to die away. As evening came on a unique silence settled in the city’. Men were shocked, angry, disappointed, exhausted, disillusioned, anxious, relieved. Staff Sergeant Hodgson felt ‘utter disgust and shame’ because, like many other rear area troops, he had ‘never [seen] a Jap, never fired a shot’. Private John McGrory, 2/18th Battalion, who had been in the thick of action, remembered a ‘terrible feeling of depression, of down. I guess maybe there was some relief ... And anger, very much anger’. But after days of desperate fighting and of being shelled, bombed, strafed, machine-gunned, sniped at, and engaging in hand-to-hand fighting, the men were also plain weary, hungry, tired and sore. Gunner Houlahan made a simple yet practical statement in his diary: ‘Anyway we could go to sleep without worry from shells’.

(*A Bitter Fate*, p. 123)

2. Circle the adjectives used to describe how the men are feeling in the above text.

Source 3



Prisoners of war sit at an assembly point waiting for instructions from the Japanese. (AWM P01443.052; *A Bitter Fate*, p. 139)

3. Describe what you can see in the above image. What do their body language and facial expressions tell you about how they may be feeling?

Source 4:

They grouped together about the chief,
And each one looked at his mate,
Ashamed to think that Australia men
Should meet such a bitter fate!
And black was the wrath in each hot heart,
And savage oaths they swore,
As they thought of how they had all been ditched
By 'impregnable' Singapore.

The first verse of the poem 'Singapore' by Mary Gilmore, 1942

(Reprinted by kind permission of ETT imprint from *Selected Poems of Mary Gilmore*, Sydney, 2002; *A Bitter Fate*, p. iv)

4. Describe the tone and meaning of this verse.

5. Do you think this verse of the poem captures all of the emotions that the Australians felt at having to surrender, as described in Sources 1, 2 and 3? Why or why not?

B. Prisoner of War research.

While some service men and women and civilians were evacuated or managed to escape, more than 15,000 Australians became prisoners of war following the Fall of Singapore.

1. In groups or individually, research one of the individuals listed in Research Guide 2 on pp. 10–11 who became a prisoner of war, all of whom played a part in the defence of Malaya or Singapore, or both, and complete the following table. Individuals are referred to directly in the publication, except in the case of Murray Griffin, whose artworks are included in the publication.

After completing the table below, present your findings to the rest of the class. Some questions may not be relevant to your chosen individual. Include any other interesting points in the 'Other points of interest' box. Remember it is the details which make an individual's story particularly interesting.

Profile details	
Name	
When and where were they born?	
What did they do before serving in Malaya and Singapore?	
Rank	
What were they doing in Malaya and or Singapore?	
How and when were they captured?	
What was their life like as a POW? What camp were they in?	
<p>You could include the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Physical conditions • Work • Did they have a close friend? • Hobbies, social activities 	
Did they die during captivity? Describe any details of illness, or of how they died.	
How did their death affect their loved ones? If there is no information, imagine how it would have affected their girlfriends, boyfriends, husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, children and siblings.	
What did they do after the war? How do you think their POW experience shaped their life after the war?	
Other points of interest.	

Activity 7: Reading and reflecting on the Fall of Singapore.

A. Interpreting and responding to the text.

1. Read the relevant pages from the text and then respond to the following statements included in the table. For some statements there are no specific pages to read; it is a matter of forming an opinion based on what you have learned. Tick (✓) if you agree, or cross (x) if you disagree. Share your responses with another student.

Statement	Agree	Disagree
1. General Percival remarked that, 'The performance of Japanese aircraft of all types, and the accuracy of their bombing, came as an unpleasant surprise'. Read p. 41, paragraph 2.		
2. In northern Malaya, most battles ended with British and Indian forces defeating the Japanese. Read p. 48, paragraph 1.		
3. Even when they withdrew from battle, Australian forces couldn't rest due to being bombed and machine-gunned by Japanese planes. Read p. 83, paragraphs 4–5.		
4. When they arrived in Malaya, Australian forces were 'jungle minded'. Read p. 16, paragraphs 1–3.		
5. On 12 February, Major General Bennett moved all Australian troops of the 8th Division into an Australian perimeter around Tanglin Barracks. Read p. 113, paragraph 3.		

If you disagree with any of the following statements, state your reasons:

Statement	Agree	Disagree
6. After the surrender came into effect, Sergeant Walter Brown's aim was to escape, rather than be killed by the Japanese or be taken prisoner. Read pp. 115–116 and 138–140.		
7. Mr Vivian Bowden felt he should have been treated differently from other prisoners due to his diplomatic status. Read pp. 132–134.		
8. The British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was not worried about being left 'weak and naked' as there were Australian ships in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Read p. 47, paragraphs 1–2.		
9. General Percival deployed the Australian forces to the north-west of Singapore Island, where it was thought the Japanese were most likely to land. Read p. 97, paragraph 2.		
10. Nurses were keen to leave Singapore, despite having to leave their patients. Read p. 113, paragraphs 1–2.		
11. Men who had been told that they wouldn't become prisoners of the Japanese would have felt deceived when they learnt the truth. Read p. 117, paragraph 2.		

Agree or disagree with the following statements, then make a comment:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Comment
12. In the years following Major General Gordon Bennett's escape from Singapore, he may have regretted his decision and wished he had stayed with his men. Read p. 138.			
13. The inadequate defences of Malaya, in terms of the navy, air force and army, played a part in the Fall of Singapore. Read pp. 29–30.			
14. The Allied forces completely underestimated the strength of the Japanese forces and the fact that Singapore was ineffective as a fortress.			
15. The Allied forces should all have been evacuated from Singapore before it was too late.			
16. As a soldier, being a prisoner of the Japanese for 3.5 years would have been just as difficult as facing the Japanese on the battlefield.			
17. It is remarkable given what service men and women endured as prisoners of the Japanese during the Second World War, that they were able to survive and lead productive lives after the war.			