

# The Battle of Long Tan – Sample History Unit

## Introduction

This sample History unit focuses on the Battle of Long Tan, which was a key battle in the Vietnam War.

From 1962 to 1973 almost 60,000 Australians served in Vietnam during the Second Indochina War, commonly known as the Vietnam War. By the time the last soldiers withdrew from their posting in Saigon, the then capital of South Vietnam, 521 Australians had died and more than 3000 others had been evacuated because of wounds or illness. In 1975 the war ended when the North Vietnamese forces captured Saigon.

On 18th August 1966, Australian forces engaged enemy Viet Cong guerrilla fighters, who were fighting for the North Vietnamese side, in what was the largest battle of the war to that point. 18 Australians were killed in the Battle of Long Tan, and a far greater number on the opposing side were killed. The Battle was a significant event, because of the demonstrated fighting ability of Australian soldiers, and the heavy defeat they inflicted on the Viet Cong guerilla fighters. In 1987 the then Prime Minister Bob Hawke announced at the Welcome Home march that the Battle date, 18 August, would be designated as Vietnam Veterans' Day in Australia. Since 1988 this day has been recognised annually.

## What students will learn

Students will learn about:

- the Battle of Long Tan: the logistics, and tactical operations
- the conditions in which soldiers were living and fighting
- who the battle protagonists were
- what the protagonists believed and were fighting for
- why they were protagonists
- the ideologies, beliefs and actions which led to Australian military involvement in the Vietnam War, and the involvement of the various protagonists

- the results of the Battle
- the changing domestic social and political Australian responses to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War
- how the Vietnam War and the Battle were represented at the time and since
- how and why the Battle is commemorated, and the reasons for and significance of commemorative activity.

## Unit structure

This sample unit contains six areas:

1. The Battle of Long Tan – what happened, when, where, with whom and with what results?
2. The Battle of Long Tan – what lead to Australian soldiers fighting in a Battle in a rubber plantation in South Vietnam?
3. The Battle of Long Tan – how was the Battle recognised and commemorated?
4. The Battle of Long Tan – how was the Battle represented at the time and since? How was the Vietnam War represented?
5. Australian attitudes to involvement in the Vietnam War – how did they change, why and with what results?
6. What are the impacts of war?

Each area includes:

- the relevant content descriptions from the Victorian Curriculum F-10: History
- an overview of the content
- suggested learning activities and assessment tasks for students
- a listing of the teacher and student materials relevant to the content.

## Teacher decisions

Teachers will determine the duration of the unit, the degree of depth with which they treat content, the pedagogical methods they use and the resources they use in teaching this unit.

### **Duration**

- There is no prescribed time for the unit. Teachers determine the duration through the time devoted to specific areas and activities within the area.

### **Content**

- Teachers will determine what content they teach and which content areas might be studied in greater focus than other content areas. As with all decisions about content choices, it is important to consider the impacts content choices have on student understandings and interpretations about historical issues or events. Omitting some content might unintentionally leave students with a partial and misleading view of the event or period.

### **Pedagogy**

- The unit content provides suggested teaching and learning activities, assessment tasks and resources to use, but teachers will make pedagogical choices about how students can best be engaged in the content learning. These pedagogical choices will be about individual or group or paired work, research and the use student-generated or teacher-derived research questions, use of resources, guided reading, scaffolded enquiry using questions, teacher-directed learning, the degree of teacher control over content and assessment tasks compared to the degree of student choice, and use of extension learning activities for interested students and those needing further challenges.

### **Resources**

- Teachers will decide which resources from the attached listing they use, and may also use resources not listed here. There is a vast and growing collection of Vietnam War resources. The resources listed here are predominantly web-based. This derives from the intent of this sample unit. It is not a kit or a package of pre-digested resources. The links to publicly available websites afford teachers and students with many opportunities to access and use information and multiple perspectives about the Battle of Long Tan and the Vietnam War.

## Victorian Curriculum F–10 History Levels 9–10

This sample unit has been designed to cover the following content descriptions and enable student to demonstrate their learning as described in the achievement standard.

| Content descriptions  | Achievement Standard  |
|---|---|
| <b>Strand: Historical Concepts and Skills</b>   | <p>By the end of Level 10, students refer to significant events, the actions of individuals and groups, and beliefs and values to identify and evaluate the patterns of change and continuity over time. They analyse the causes and effects of events and developments and explain their significance. They explain the context for people’s actions in the past. Students evaluate the significance of events and analyse the developments from a range of perspectives. They evaluate the different interpretations of the past and recognise the evidence used to support these interpretations.</p> <p>Students sequence events and developments within a chronological framework, and identify relationships between events across different places and periods of time. They locate and select historical sources and identify their origin, purpose and content features. Students explain the context of these sources to identify motivations, values and attitudes. They compare and contrast historical sources and evaluate their accuracy, usefulness and reliability. Students analyse the different perspectives of</p> |
| <b>Substrand: Chronology</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sequence significant events in chronological order to support analysis of the causes and effects of these events and identify the changes they brought about (<a href="#">VCHHC121</a>)</li> <li>Analyse and evaluate the broad patterns of change over the period 1750–present (<a href="#">VCHHC122</a>)</li> </ul>  |   |
| <b>Substrand: Historical sources as evidence</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse and corroborate sources and evaluate their accuracy, usefulness and reliability (<a href="#">VCHHC123</a>)</li> <li>Analyse the different perspectives of people in the past and evaluate how these perspectives are influenced by significant events, ideas, location, beliefs and values (<a href="#">VCHHC124</a>)</li> <li>Evaluate different historical interpretations and contested debates (<a href="#">VCHHC125</a>)</li> </ul> |   |
| <b>Substrand: Continuity and change</b>   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and evaluate patterns of continuity and change in the development of the modern world and Australia (<a href="#">VCHHC126</a>)</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>Substrand: Cause and effect</b>  |   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse the long term causes, short term triggers and the intended and unintended effects of significant events and developments (<a href="#">VCHHC127</a>)</li> </ul>  | <p>people in the past and evaluate how these perspectives are influenced by the significant events, ideas, location, beliefs and values. They evaluate different historical interpretations and contested debates. Students construct and communicate an argument about the past using a range of reliable sources of evidence. In developing these texts and organising and presenting their arguments, they use historical terms and concepts, evidence identified in sources, and they use consistent referencing of these sources.</p> |
| <p><b>Substrand: Historical significance</b></p>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate the historical significance of an event, idea, individual or place (<a href="#">VCHHC128</a>)</li> </ul>   |  |
| <p><b>Strand: Historical Knowledge</b></p>   |  |
| <p><b>Substrand: The globalising world – Context: Political crisis</b></p>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effects of significant post-World War II world events and developments on one major global influence that shaped change in Australian society (<a href="#">VCHHK157</a>)</li> <li>Causes and developments of the major global influences on Australia (<a href="#">VCHHK158</a>)</li> <li>Changing social, cultural, historical, economic, environmental, political and technological conditions on a major global influence in Australia (<a href="#">VCHHK159</a>)</li> <li>The perspectives of people and different historical interpretations and debates from the period (<a href="#">VCHHK160</a>)</li> </ul> |  |

## **Area 1: The Battle of Long Tan – What happened, when, where, with whom and with what results?**

### **Objective**

This area enables students to understand what occurred in the Battle of Long Tan.

### *Key questions*

- What was the immediate lead-up to the Battle?
- When did the Battle occur?
- Where did the Battle occur?
- Who was fighting?
- What were the logistics, fighting and military tactics involved?
- What were the terrain and weather conditions?
- What was the sequence of actions in the Battle?
- What military equipment and vehicles were used, and what impact did they have?
- What was the injury and death toll?
- Were the injury and death toll statistics agreed or contestable? Why? By whom is it contested?
- What does contestable information tell us about the issues involved in establishing historical 'fact'.
- What were the results of the Battle?

### **Victorian Curriculum F–10 History content descriptions**

#### **Substrand:** Chronology

Sequence significant events in chronological order to support analysis of the causes and effects of these events and identify the changes they brought about (VCHHC121)

#### **Substrand:** Cause and Effect

Analyse the long term causes, short term triggers and the intended and unintended effects of significant events and development (VCHHC127)

| Suggested Learning Activities  | Suggested Assessment Tasks  |
|--|---|
| <p>Students are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research the Battle of Long Tan, using the reference material located through the Teacher /Student material links, to elicit information in response to the questions listed in the Objective section above. (Estimated time: 120 minutes)</li> </ul> <p><b>Extension learning activity</b></p> <p>Students are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>compare and contrast different accounts of the Battle, in order to identify similarities and differences in the facts presented. Ask the students to reflect on and explain what the differences are, why the differences might occur, and what this tells us about the challenges of discerning historical truth and accuracy in the description and portrayal of historical events. (Estimated time: 120 minutes)</li> <li>read, listen to and review the various artefacts they have produced (see assessment task column) and discuss how the portrayals and representations differ and why, and why they might differ. (Estimated time: 60 minutes)</li> <li>verbally summarise what they have learnt and what questions they have which they have not yet answered about the Battle (these questions can inform further teaching and learning activity). (Estimated time: 20 minutes)</li> </ul> | <p>Assessment for this content area will measure students demonstrated skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sequencing events of the Battle in the order in which they occurred</li> <li>describing or analysing the causes and consequences of actions taken in the Battle</li> <li>identifying individuals and groups involved in the Battle</li> <li>explaining the context in which the Battle occurred</li> </ul> <p>Students complete <b>one or more</b> of the following assessment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a short test or quiz in which students are asked to identify key facts about the Battle of Long Tan Produce and record a radio report from Vietnam for Australian listeners that describes the Battle and provides listeners with information</li> <li>Write a newspaper article for publication in a newspaper that outlines the Battle and provides Australian readers with information about the areas referred to in the key questions Write a diary entry by an Australian soldier who participated in the Battle which records the actions and circumstances of the Battle, and which reflects on the experience</li> <li>Write a letter by an Australian soldier that they send to a family member about the Battle in which they have fought Develop a computer presentation about the Battle that a war memorial or the Returned Services League (RSL) or Vietnam Veterans League might choose to use as a record and account of the Battle</li> <li>Construct a diorama of the Battle scene with labelling that indicates features of the Battle. Make a verbal presentation to the class explaining the diorama, and its representation of the Battle and what aspects have been represented and why. You are the head of the Australian Army and you are asked by the Minister for Defence to give her a detailed explanation of what happened in the Battle. Prepare a verbal presentation to make to the Minister in which you outline the actions, circumstances and results of the Battle.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Teacher/Student Materials</b></p>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Battle of Long Tan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/combat/battle-of-long-tan.php">http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/combat/battle-of-long-tan.php</a></li> <li><a href="http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/combat/battle-of-long-tan_battle.php">http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/combat/battle-of-long-tan_battle.php</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>'The Battle of Long Tan': <a href="https://anzacday.org.au/longtan">https://anzacday.org.au/longtan</a> – A description of the lead up to and conduct of the Battle, compiled primarily from information in Diggers, from 6 June</p>  |   |

1944 to 1994, by George Odgers

- The Battle of Long Tan, <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm> (a description of the 6th Royal Australian Regiment's role in the Battle)
- The Battle of Long Tan <https://anzacday.org.au/longtan>



## **Area 2: The Battle of Long Tan – What led to Australian soldiers fighting in a Battle in a rubber plantation in South Vietnam?**

### **Objective**

This content area enables students to move from understanding the Battle itself to exploring and understanding the broader context for the Battle in the Vietnam War: who the Battle protagonists were, why Australian, American and New Zealand forces were involved, the historic beliefs and ideologies (the Cold War, the fear of Communism, the belief in a domino theory of states falling into hostile communist hands, the US-Australian security alliance and relationship) that lead to involvement) and the political decisions to become involved in the War, and the subsequent establishment of conscription.

### *Key questions:*

- What were the reasons for Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War?
- How did Australia actually become involved in the War? Was the request from the South Vietnamese Government the real reason for involvement, or was there another trigger for Australian involvement?
- Are the reasons presented at the time strong and persuasive now? If not, why not?
- Which external governments and agencies sought Australia's involvement in the war and why?
- What influence did Cold War thinking have on Australia's Vietnam involvement?
- Was Australia involved in war to support freedom and anti-Communism or a civil war or a combination of both? what is the evidence for this?
- How did Australia's alliance with the USA influence the decision to become involved in the Vietnam War?

### **Victorian Curriculum F–10 History content descriptions**

#### **Substrand:** Cause and Effect

Analyse the long term causes, short term triggers and the intended and unintended effects of significant events and development (VCHHC127)

| Suggested Learning Activities  | Suggested Assessment Tasks   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students compile a list of the reasons why Australia became involved in the Vietnam War, and then order the list in priority order – identifying and explaining which of the reasons were most important and significant and which of the reasons were least important and significant. (Estimated time: 600 minutes)</li> <li>• Students research which governments were most influential and powerful in influencing Australia’s involvement in the war – the South Vietnamese government or the American Government? (Estimated time: 600 minutes)</li> <li>• Students use materials to research the National Service Scheme, to understand who instituted the Scheme, why it was instituted, how it was explained and justified, the scale and operation of the Scheme, the intended benefits and results of the Scheme, and public attitudes and responses to the Scheme. (Estimated time: 90 minutes)</li> <li>• Students research historical beliefs and attitudes and how those beliefs and attitudes are influenced and formed – looking at the general Cold War environment, the beliefs about the rise and role of Communism, the ‘domino’ theory about the allegedly inevitable downward thrust of Communism, the nature of the divisions between South and North Vietnam, beliefs about whether the conflict was a civil war between South and North Vietnam or a war between Communism and the free world, and the justifications used by the media and government to support Australian involvement in the conflict. (Estimated time: 120 minutes)</li> <li>• Student analyse the value and significance of Australia’s alliance and relationship with the United States of America, commenting on the benefits and costs of the relationship. (Estimated time: 90 minutes)</li> </ul> | <p>Assessment for this content area will measure students demonstrated skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identifying and analysing the short-term triggers and long term causes of the Battle and Australian involvement in the Vietnam War</li> <li>• explaining the significance of the beliefs and ideologies which led to Australian involvement in the Vietnam War</li> </ul> <p>Students complete <b>one or more</b> of the following assessment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and make a presentation that tells a story about how and why Australia became involved. The presentation should refer to the sequence of events that triggered initial and then escalating involvement, the reasons for the involvement and how important and significant they were, the influence of Cold War thinking and beliefs on public opinion and political /government decisions</li> <li>• Assume the role of a Government spokesperson explaining to the media why the National Service Scheme was established by the Liberal-Country Party Government and how the scheme operates Reflect on Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam War from an American reporter’s perspective – the role of the Australian-US alliance, the American expectations of Australia’s role, and what actions the Americans took to secure and maintain Australian involvement in the conflict.</li> <li>• Reflect on Australian involvement in the war from a South Vietnamese Government point of view. Write or make a verbal presentation outlining how the South Vietnamese Government viewed Australian involvement and what results were sought from Australia’s involvement.</li> </ul> |

### Teacher/Student Materials

- Vietnam, 1962-1975: <https://www.awm.gov.au/conflict/CN28/>
- Overview of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War: <https://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/vietnam/> (Australian War Memorial)
- Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War: <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/battle-of-long-tan>
- Australia and the US alliance: <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/all-the-way-with-lbj/index.php>
- The National Service Scheme (Conscription): <https://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/conscription/vietnam/>

### **Area 3: The Battle of Long Tan – How was the Battle recognised and commemorated?**

#### **Objective**

This area enables students to explore and understand how the Battle of Long Tan and other aspects of the Vietnam War have been recognised and commemorated, at the time and in the years since it occurred through:

- congratulatory messages received about participation in the Battle of Long Tan
- the award to Delta Company of the United States Presidential Unit Citation for “Extraordinary heroism in military Operations Against an Armed Enemy”
- the Australian awards system that operated at the time of the Battle of Long Tan
- who received awards, who didn’t receive awards, and why
- why an independent review of the Battle of Long Tan bravery awards was instituted
- the 15th August 2008 announcement of the Australian Government of changes to military awards in response to the independent review of Battle of Long Tan recognition
- the establishment of Vietnam Veterans Day, commemorated each year on the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan
- the 1987 Welcome Home Parade organized by the Vietnam Veteran’s Association of Australia
- the 1992 Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial (re-dedicated in 2002)
- the 1996 Vietnam pilgrimage
- the 2006 40th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan
- the 2016 announcement by the Veteran’s Affairs Minister of new bravery awards for selected veterans of the Battle of Long Tan, after approaches by Lieutenant Colonel Harry Smith to the Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal.

#### *Key questions:*

- How has the Battle been recognized and commemorated?
- Why was this Battle in particular commemorated?
- Who has been involved in activities to commemorate the Battle?

- Why have they been involved?
- What is the purpose and value of commemorative activity?
- Who values the commemorative activity and why?
- How has Australia's participation in other wars been commemorated, and why? (eg Anzac Day)
- Has commemorative activity changed over the years?

*Extension questions:*

- What is the public value of commemorative activity?
- If something significant occurred and it was not, for whatever reason, not commemorated, what would that signify and what impact might the lack of commemoration have on those involved?
- What values, behaviours and characteristics are praised and highlighted through commemorative activity?
- Does the praise or highlighting tell us anything about how Australians would like to see their 'best selves'? What would that 'best self' be?
- Why should our knowledge of events extend beyond our lifetimes into the past of our forebears and predecessors? How do commemorative artefacts and activities contribute to that knowledge of historical events?
- Who creates historical knowledge?
- What responsibilities or obligations do creators of historical knowledge have in creating such knowledge? To whom is that responsibility and obligation owed?
- What is the value of historical knowledge?
- What are the different ways in which historical knowledge is captured, documented, displayed, recorded and represented?
- Who uses such historical knowledge and why?
- Is historical knowledge the same thing as truth?
- If it isn't, what care or caution should be taken in relying on historical accounts or interpretations? (Estimated time: 20 minutes)

## Victorian Curriculum F–10 History content descriptions

### Substrand: Historical Significance

Evaluate the historical significance of an event, idea, individual or place (VCHHC128)

| Suggested Learning Activities   | Suggested Assessment Tasks   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students identify and list the different ways in which communities commemorate various activities and events. For each type of commemoration that is identified and listed, students are asked to state a reason for the commemoration that clearly identifies what is being commemorated, when it is commemorated, how and why and the likely impacts of the commemorative activity or form. (Estimated time: 60 minutes)</li> <li>• Using this general list, students focus on commemoration of significant war battles and significant days. What are commonly known and commemorated war battles and significant days related to war? (Estimated time: 40 minutes)</li> <li>• Students use the resource materials to compile a listing of the ways in which the Battle of Long Tan has been commemorated, and how the Vietnam War has been commemorated. (Estimated time: 90 minutes)</li> <li>• Ask students to compile a poster which displays the commemorative activities related to the Battle of Long Tan and the Vietnam War, identifies who instigated the commemorative activity, who maintains or auspices the activity, who and what the commemoration celebrates, remembers or honors, and which comments on the value and significance of the commemoration. (Estimated time: 120 minutes)</li> </ul> | <p>Assessment for this area will measure students demonstrated skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluating the historical significance of the Battle of Long Tan</li> <li>• evaluating, describing and analysing the ways in which the Battle and the Vietnam War have been commemorated</li> <li>• describing and analysing the general purposes and role of commemorative activity.</li> </ul> <p>Students complete <b>one or more</b> of the following assessment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce an annotated map of Australia showing the location and nature of memorials to the Vietnam War, including to the Battle of Long Tan Write a reflective account of the understanding they have developed about the nature and value and significance of the various commemorative methods by which Australian's role in the Vietnam War, and specifically in the Battle of Long Tan, have been commemorated.</li> <li>• Assume the persona of an Australian veteran of the Battle of Long Tan. Write or present an account of what the commemoration of the Battle means to you, explaining how you now understand the meaning and results of the Battle.</li> <li>• It is Vietnam Veterans Day. Write a series of blogs, contributed to by various individuals, in which there is expression of views about the meaning of the Day, the ways in which it is commemorated, and the meanings it has for the various individuals.</li> </ul> |

### Teacher/Student Materials

- Commemoration: <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/commemoration/index.php>
- Roll of Honour Image Gallery: <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/honour-roll/index.php>
- The Battle of Long Tan, <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm> (see KIA or DOW 1966-67 South Vietnam)
- Story from the daughter of the only listed female casualty: <http://www.3aw.com.au/news/daughter-of-vietnam-war-nurse-barbara-black-joins-justin-smith-on-3aw-20160424-qoe23d.html>
- The United States of America Presidential Unit Citation for Gallantry <http://6rarassociation.com/images/Presidential%20Unit%20Citation.jpg>
- Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation: <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm>
- See Tribute Songs by Australian Artists at: <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm>
- The Battle of Long Tan Cross: <http://longtancross.com/>
- War Graves: <http://www.dva.gov.au/commemorations-memorials-and-war-graves/office-australian-war-graves>
- Vietnam War dead: <http://www.dva.gov.au/commemorations-memorials-and-war-graves/remembering-our-war-dead/our-vietnam-war-dead>
- Nominal roll of Vietnam Veterans: <http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/>
- Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Fund: <http://www.vvmf.org/education-center>
- Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial: <http://monumentaustralia.org.au/display/90161-australian-vietnam-forces-national-memorial>
- 1987 Welcome Home March <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/commemoration/>
- 40th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan Speech by the Australian Governor-General: <https://www.awm.gov.au/talks-speeches/40th-anniversary-battle-Long-Tan/>
- Parliamentary recognition: [House of Representatives Hansard, 17 August 2006, pp 61](#)
- Commemorating Long Tan: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/features/longtan/ceremony.htm>
- Story of Graham Vibert: <http://www.latrobevalleyexpress.com.au/story/4000161/vietnam-veterans-legacy-will-live-on/>

## **Area 4: The Battle of Long Tan – How was the Battle represented at the time and since? How was the Vietnam War represented?**

### **Objective**

This area will enable students to learn about how the Battle of Long Tan has been represented by different people for different purposes.

It encompasses the idea of the Vietnam War being the first ‘television war’, the official descriptions and accounts, the range of ways that the behaviours and actions of the soldiers engaged in the Battle are represented, the values that the representations are reflecting, commending or highlighting, and any historical connections and continuities with the ANZAC legend, notions of service and duty (including ‘intergenerational service’) and the mateship ethos.

Students are taught about the concept of representation in the sense in which it is used in this content area – that is, how an historical event or situation is portrayed, depicted, described, documented and presented for others in a range of forms. This encompasses the idea that historical events are represented both contemporaneously and subsequently, and that the representations differ according to the motivations, purposes, interests, vantage points, perceptions and methodologies of those representing the events.

### *Key questions:*

- What is the concept of representation?
- What was the reaction of authorities to the Battle?
- Why was the Battle seen as significant?
- How were the soldiers who fought in the Battle described and represented? Why? In what forms were they and are they represented?
- Whose views and responses are represented? Are there any gaps in whose views and responses are represented? Why?
- What is being represented?
- By whom is it being represented?
- What is the role of the person representing the event or action?
- What is the opposing North Vietnamese side’s representation of the Battle and the War?
- How might the role of the persons making the representation influence what they present and how they present it? What evidence can you find for this?



- What form are they using for the representation? ( eg artwork, film, TV, DVD, diary, letter, historical account, statue or monument, song, poetry, biography, auto-biography, or other)
- Are there differences between ‘official’ representations and ‘unofficial’ representations? If so, what are they? What do the differences indicate to you?
- What values and behaviours or characteristics are being emphasized, highlighted, praised or held up as exemplary in the representation? Why?
- Conversely, what values, behaviours or characteristics are being directly or indirectly criticized or disapproved in the representation? Why?
- Do any of the representations link to earlier representations or characterisations (eg. the Anzac legend, mateship, duty, sacrifice, service for and loyalty to country, Empire, a set of ideals, an ethos about service, inter-generational service) ?

### **Victorian Curriculum F–10 History content descriptions**

**Strand:** Historical sources as evidence:

Analyse the different perspectives of people in the past and evaluate how these perspectives are influenced by significant events, ideas, location, beliefs and values (VCHHC124)

**Strand:** Historical Significance

Evaluate the historical significance of an event, idea, individual or place (VCHHC128)

**Strand:** Cause and Effect

Analyse the long term causes, short term triggers and the intended and unintended effects of significant events and development (VCHHC127)

| Suggested Learning Activities   | Suggested Assessment Tasks   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students identify the various ways and forms historical events or <i>actions</i> can be represented, in order to establish the concept of representation involving multi-form representation. (Estimated time: 30 minutes)</li> <li>• Students research and consider how wars in which Australians participated might have been represented prior to the introduction of television in Australia in 1956. (Pre 1956 wars; the Second World War, the Korean War, The First World War, the Boer War) and how the community might have acquired information and knowledge about those wars. (Estimated time: 90 minutes)</li> <li>• Students view footage of television coverage of the Vietnam War and consider how this coverage might have influenced Australian viewers in terms of the knowledge they acquire about the nature of the war, the events of the war, the impacts of the war, and whether the coverage might have acted over time to change public attitudes to Australian participation in the war. (Estimated time: 50 minutes)</li> <li>• Students are invited to consider and comment on the power of television to form and change opinions, compared with other ways of representing an historical event or period – for instance the use of newsreels shown at cinemas in World War Two, the poems written by soldier-poets in World War One, the erection of statues of significant and decorated military personnel in World War One, the portrayals by official war artists and war reporters (eg C. W Bean, Norman Lindsay, Keith Murdoch). (Estimated time: 90 minutes)</li> </ul> | <p>Assessment for this area will measure students demonstrated skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describing and analysing the different perspectives of individuals and groups about Australian participation in the Vietnam War</li> <li>• describing and analysing the influence on the perspectives of a range of representations of the Vietnam War</li> </ul> <p>Students complete <b>one or more</b> of the following assessment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students develop and present a personal representation of the Battle of Long Tan, in which they represent, highlight and explain or interpret those things that are of significance to them about the Battle. The presentation should make clear the underlying thinking about why the things they see as significant are significant to them. Students write an analysis of or develop a presentation about the power and impact of television in shaping public knowledge about the war and its impacts. Student may, as an extension activity, compare this with earlier conflicts in which a war or wars was represented in different ways, but not through nightly television (eg. the First World War – newspapers, official war reporters, newsreels at local cinemas, radio, letters home from soldiers and nurses...)</li> <li>• Students write or make a presentation about the Vietnam War, from the separate vantage points of a supporter of Australian involvement in the war and from the vantage point of an opponent of Australian involvement in the war. The presentation should comment on and analyse the nature of the points of difference.</li> </ul> |

### Teacher/Student Materials

- Account of Harry Smith: [http://diggerhistory.info/pages-battles/long\\_tan.htm](http://diggerhistory.info/pages-battles/long_tan.htm)
- For official reaction to the Battle refer to the congratulatory messages found at: <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm>
- US President's citation: <http://6rarassociation.com/images/Presidential%20Unit%20Citation.jpg>
- The Story of the Battle of Long Tan: <http://battleoflongtan.com/>
- Vietnam War Myths: <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/vietnam-war-myths/index.php>
- Images of Long Tan: <http://www.bing.com/images/search?adlt=strict&q=long+tan&qpvt=long+tan&qpvt=long+tan&qpvt=long+tan&FORM=IGRE>
- Song 'I Was Only Nineteen':
  - <http://www.schumann.com.au/john/lyrics.html>
  - <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-06-28/australian-war-memorial-receives-john-schumann-guitar/7550566>
- TV Movie: [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0846672/plotsummary?ref\\_=tt\\_ov\\_pl](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0846672/plotsummary?ref_=tt_ov_pl)
- See sections on Music; Television, film, video and installation; Posters, photographs and visual arts; Books: <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/battle-of-long-tan>

## **Area 5: Australian attitudes to involvement in the Vietnam War – How did they change, why and with what results?**

### **Objective**

This content area will develop students' knowledge about the changing attitudes to Australia's participation in the Vietnam War – from initial support to majority opposition some years later.

To examine the reasons for the changes in attitude by exploring the domestic political debate about Australia's involvement between the two major political parties at the time, the mounting opposition to conscription, the Moratorium movement, the Save our Sons movement, and the influence of the media representations of the war on changing public attitudes.

### *Key questions:*

- How did attitudes to Australian participation in the Vietnam War change over the duration of the war?
- What are the sources of evidence or indicators of changed attitudes?
- What were the changes?
- What influenced the changes?
- Were Australian responses to the war influenced by anti-war activities in the USA? If so, how?
- What group and individuals were critical influencers of changed attitudes?

### **Victorian Curriculum F–10 History content descriptions**

#### **Substrand: Historical sources as evidence**

Analyse the different perspectives of people in the past and evaluate how these perspectives are influenced by significant events, ideas, location, beliefs and values (VCHHC124)

#### **Substrand: Historical Significance**

Evaluate the historical significance of an event, idea, individual or place (VCHHC128)

#### **Substrand: Cause and Effect**

Analyse the long term causes, short term triggers and the intended and unintended effects of significant events and development (VCHHC127)

| Suggested Learning Activities  | Suggested Assessment Tasks   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students develop an annotated time chart or timeline that shows what movement/events occurred over the duration of the Vietnam War which influenced public attitudes to the war. (Estimated time: 920 minutes)</li> <li>• Student research one or more of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Moratorium movement</li> <li>– Save our Sons movement</li> <li>– the National Service Scheme (known as conscription)</li> <li>– the political debate between the Australian Labor opposition and the Liberal Country Party Government about Australian involvement in the war, conscription and the Australia's relationship to the United States of America. (Estimated time: 90 minutes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Students present a summary of the key arguments and ideas that were advanced by the respective 'actors', the methods used by the actors to mobilise and influence public opinion, the reactions to those methods, the effectiveness of those methods, the role played by key actors and leaders in the movements and debates, and the evidence that shows that attitudes changed over time. (Estimated time: 90 minutes)</li> </ul> | <p>Assessment for this content area will measure students demonstrated skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describing and analysing the perspectives of proponents and opponents (the 'actors') of Australian involvement in the Vietnam War, including the shifts in public opinion about that involvement</li> <li>• describing and analysing the factors which influenced the perspectives of these 'actors'</li> <li>• analysing the causes and effects of shifts in Australian public opinion about Australian involvement in the Vietnam War.</li> </ul> <p>Students complete <b>one or more</b> of the following assessment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annotated time chart or timeline showing key developments/stages in shifting public opinion about Australian involvement in the Vietnam War Analysis and description of key movements/debates that influenced public attitudes to the Vietnam War which outlines the key arguments and opinions of different historical 'actors'</li> <li>• Annotated display/poster in which the changing attitudes to Australian involvement in the Vietnam War are presented Preparation of a mock interview between a television reporter and an opponent of Australian involvement in the Vietnam War, and a mock interview between a television reporter and a proponent of Australian involvement in the Vietnam War. The interviews with the respective parties should outline the arguments and evidence used in support of different perspectives</li> <li>• You are a Moratorium march organiser. Write an article for publication in a daily newspaper explaining why you are involved with the Moratorium, the reasons for your views, and the changes you are seeking through the direct action of the Moratorium.</li> <li>• You are a supporter of Australian involvement in the Vietnam war and disagree with the Moratorium movement. Write an article for publication in a daily newspaper outlining the reasons for your opposition and why you support continued Australian involvement in the Vietnam War.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Teacher/Student materials</b></p>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conscription: <a href="http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/conscription/">http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/conscription/</a></li> <li>• Conscription – Birthday Ballot: <a href="http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/conscription/birthday-ballot.php">http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/conscription/birthday-ballot.php</a></li> <li>• Moratoriums: <a href="http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/conscription/moratoriums-and-opposition.php">http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/conscription/moratoriums-and-opposition.php</a></li> <li>• Public Opinion: <a href="http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/public-opinion/index.php">http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/public-opinion/index.php</a></li> <li>• Save our Sons: <a href="http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/conscription/save-our-sons.php">http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/conscription/save-our-sons.php</a></li> </ul>  |  |

## **Area 6: What are the impacts of war?**

### **Objective:**

This content area enables students to explore and understand the multiple impacts of war: the effects on soldiers (death and injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, interactions with the South Vietnamese people, including the reception they received on their return to Australia and their return to civilian life), the impacts on nurses and on the people in whose country the war is being fought (chemicals, defoliation, death, casualties, destruction of property, involvement of the military in infrastructure and development projects in fighting zones...), the impacts on the Australians and Americans who witness the war as readers of newspapers and television watchers

### *Key questions:*

- What impacts does fighting in a war have on soldiers at the time and later?
- What impacts does war have on the people whose country the war is being fought?
- What are the short and longer term impacts?
- How does war impact on people in the countries from which the soldiers come, as they read about the war in newspapers and watch on TV the progress and events of the war?
- How does this impact on and influence domestic support or opposition to the war?

### **Victorian Curriculum F–10 History content description**

#### **Substrand:** Cause and Effect

Analyse the long term causes, short term triggers and the intended and unintended effects of significant events and development (VCHHC127)

| Suggested Learning Activities   | Suggested Assessment Tasks  |
|---|---|
| <p>Learning activities for students can be formed using the following framing questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did front-line soldiers experience both during and after combat? (Look at short and longer term impacts.)</li> <li>• What did other Australian participants in the war (nurses, non-front line personnel) experience and how did it impact on them?</li> <li>• How did some aspects of their lives change as a result of their involvement in the war? What were the aspects of their lives that changed?</li> <li>• How were Australian soldiers and personnel who fought in and assisted the war effort treated or viewed/represented at the time and subsequently?</li> <li>• What were their feelings about their treatment?</li> <li>• Was their participation in the war a bonding experience for the soldiers and for nurses and other Australian personnel? What was the nature of the bonds that were forged? Why were those bonds forged? How have the bonds been maintained?</li> <li>• What is your view about the treatment of soldiers and those who have actively participated in the Vietnam War? Why do you hold this view?</li> <li>• What were the impacts of the war on the country in which the war occurred? (Consider the effects on the people, families, their villages, their farms and land and vegetation, their water supply, their property and social infrastructure, the existence of unexploded mines.)</li> <li>• What were the impacts on witnesses to the Vietnam War (the general public) resulting from various media representations of the war? Did it politicise the public or sections of the public or make them more conscious about war impacts or change their views? Did it lead them to take action? Why?</li> <li>• Was the action taken primarily direct social action or action through political channels or a combination of both?</li> <li>• Did the general public make a distinction between their increasing opposition to Australian involvement (in the latter stages of the War) and their respect for the effort and sacrifice of the soldiers involved? How was that distinction shown? How is the respect for the soldiers shown? (Estimated time: 20 minutes)</li> </ul> | <p>Assessment for this content area will measure students demonstrated skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• describing and analysing the diverse impacts on war of those involved (soldiers, nurses, support personnel, South Vietnamese ...) including the intended and unintended effects</li> <li>• identify and categorise which were the short term impacts and which were the longer term impacts</li> </ul> <p>Students complete <b>one or more</b> of the following assessment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is now half a century since the Battle of Long Tan. Write a diary account from the vantage point of a soldier who fought in the Vietnam War, indicating the impact that their participation has had on them in the short and long term You are a nurse serving at a field hospital in South Vietnam at the time of the Battle of Long Tan. Write an imaginary letter to a family member back in Australia, providing a description of what you have observed in your work at the hospital and in South Vietnam of the impacts of war.</li> <li>• Imagine that you are a Member of Parliament. You are asked to make a speech to a group of returned Vietnam veterans in which you recognise their role and also acknowledge the impact of their war experience on them. Write the speech.</li> <li>• You are a reporter for an Australian television station or a newspaper. To mark the 20th anniversary of the war's end in 1995, you are preparing an account (script for TV or article(s) for the newspaper) of the impacts of the war on the soldiers, and on South Vietnam (the people, villages, land and vegetation, social infrastructure, the result of the war).</li> </ul> |

**Teacher/Student Materials**

- Australian Women in the Vietnam War (1962–1973): [http://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-attachments/DVA\\_Women\\_in\\_War\\_part5\\_0.pdf](http://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-attachments/DVA_Women_in_War_part5_0.pdf)
- In Our Words: Stories from Victorian Veterans: <http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/index.php/veterans/victorian-veterans-virtual-museum/digital-stories-in-our-words>
- Australian Women in the Vietnam War: <https://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/nurses/cold/>
- Australian nurses in the Vietnam War:
  - <https://radio.abc.net.au/programitem/pglx7L4RK7?play=true>
  - <http://www.nurseuncut.com.au/australian-nurses-in-the-vietnam-war/>
  - <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/women-in-action>



## The Battle of Long Tan: Teacher Resources

### Films and documentaries

- *Australians at War* Episode 7, Trying not to remember (ABC)
- *Battle of Long Tan* – Peter Harvey 60 minutes – Vietnam War Forgotten Heroes (Available online – Contains a return to Long Tan with veteran interviews in 2006)
- Conscription in the Twentieth Century, ABC Splash, Chapters 7–9
- Fighting conscription 1966, ABC Splash
- Melbourne Moratorium against the Vietnam War 1970, ABC Splash
- *The Battle of Long Tan*, documentary narrated by Sam Worthington (Very extended account of the battle from with interviews from veterans and some documentary footage.)
- *The Battle of Long Tan*, Red Dune Films ( Available online)
- The pros and cons of National Service, 1964, ABC Splash
- *The Odd Angry Shot*, 1979, Australian film focusing on Special Air Service soldiers in Vietnam
- The 1970 Moratorium: Power to the people, ABC Splash
- Public reactions to sending troops to Vietnam, 1965, ABC Splash

### Online resources

The following web links were checked and successfully accessed on 4 August 2016. If any web links have subsequently become inactive, please advise the Victorian Curriculum F-10 Unit via email: [vcaa.f10.curriculum@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:vcaa.f10.curriculum@edumail.vic.gov.au)

There is a range of online sources available on the Vietnam War. Key resources used in this unit are:

- Australia and the Vietnam War: <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/>
- Australian War Memorial: <https://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/vietnam/>
- Sixth Battalion Royal Australian Regiment Association: <http://www.6rarassociation.com/>

The following resources are both useful as background for teachers, but also accessible for students and may be incorporated into activities.

- Vietnam, 1962-1975: <https://www.awm.gov.au/conflict/CN28/>
- Australia and the Vietnam War:
  - <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/combat/battle-of-long-tan.php>
  - [http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/combat/battle-of-long-tan\\_battle.php](http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/combat/battle-of-long-tan_battle.php)
- ‘Fifty years after the Battle of Long Tan, the truth is still elusive’: <http://www.smh.com.au/world/head-20160414-go6i49.html>
- The Battle of Long Tan: <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm>
- The Battle of Long Tan and the Vietnam War: <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/battle-of-long-tan>
- The Story of the Battle of Long Tan: <http://battleoflongtan.com>
- Radio National, Late Night Live, Our Nurses in Vietnam: <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/our-nurses-in-vietnam/7404602>
- The Battle of Long Tan: <https://anzacday.org.au/longtan>
- Commemoration: <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/commemoration/index.php>
- Roll of Honour Image Gallery: <http://vietnam-war.commemoration.gov.au/honour-roll/index.php>
- The Battle of Long Tan: <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm> See KIA or DOW 1966-67 South Vietnam
- Story from the daughter of the only listed female casualty: <http://www.3aw.com.au/news/daughter-of-vietnam-war-nurse-barbara-black-joins-justin-smith-on-3aw-20160424-goe23d.html>
- The United States of America Presidential unit Citation for Gallantry: <http://6rarassociation.com/images/Presidential%20Unit%20Citation.jpg>
- Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation accessible via: <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm>
- See Tribute Songs by Australian Artists accessible via: <http://6rarassociation.com/battlelongtan.htm>
- The Battle of Long Tan Cross: <http://longtancross.com/>
- War Graves: <http://www.dva.gov.au/commemorations-memorials-and-war-graves/office-australian-war-graves>

- Vietnam War dead: <http://www.dva.gov.au/commemorations-memorials-and-war-graves/remembering-our-war-dead/our-vietnam-war-dead>
- Nominal roll of Vietnam Veterans: <http://www.vietnamroll.gov.au/>
- Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Fund: <http://www.vvmf.org/education-center>
- 40th anniversary speech by the Australian Governor-General: <https://www.awm.gov.au/talks-speeches/40th-anniversary-battle-Long-Tan/>
- Commemorating Long Tan: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/features/longtan/ceremony.htm>
- Story of Graham Vibert: <http://www.latrobevalleyexpress.com.au/story/4000161/vietnam-veterans-legacy-will-live-on/>

### Useful links on Australian Government websites

- Battle of Long Tan: <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/battle-of-long-tan>
- ABC Radio National, 40 Years On – Long Tan: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/features/longtan/ceremony.htm>
- ANZAC Day – The Battle of Long Tan: <https://anzacday.org.au/longtan>
- Australian Embassy Vietnam, Long Tan Cross Update: <http://vietnam.embassy.gov.au/hnoi/consular07.html>
- Australian Women in the Vietnam War (1962-1973): [http://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-attachments/DVA\\_Women\\_in\\_War\\_part5\\_0.pdf](http://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-attachments/DVA_Women_in_War_part5_0.pdf)
- Defence conflicts – Boer War to Vietnam: <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/explore/defence/conflicts.aspx>
- 'I Was Only 19 (A Walk in the Light Green)' lyrics: [http://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/r/redqum/i\\_was\\_only\\_19.html](http://www.lyricsmode.com/lyrics/r/redqum/i_was_only_19.html)
- National Service Scheme: <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs164.aspx>
- National Vietnam Veterans Museum: <https://www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org/>
- Naval Operations in Vietnam – Royal Australian Navy: <http://www.navy.gov.au/history/feature-histories/naval-operations-vietnam>
- Vietnam Stories – Australians at War: [http://www.australiansatwar.gov.au/stories/list\\_stories\\_war=VI.html](http://www.australiansatwar.gov.au/stories/list_stories_war=VI.html)

### References

Ham, Paul 2007, *The Australian War*, Harper Collins, Australia

Edwards, Peter 2014, *Australia and the Vietnam War*, UNSW Press, Australia