



Student Activity

Napoleon at Waterloo: The Battle for Europe

Vocabulary:

Allied army, divide and conquer, veterans, cavalry, artillery, salvo, bayonets, infantry

Pre-Viewing Discussion:

Who was Napoleon? Why is he so famous?

Can anyone describe Napoleon's stature and appearance? Why was the size of the "little Emperor" of little concern to the soldiers who served under him? How was he viewed by his troops?

Where did Napoleon die? Why was he sent into exile? Why was he disgraced?

What were Napoleon's original plans for France and the French army?

Post-Viewing Discussion:

How did Napoleon's exile in Elba or his failing health affect his military tactics at the Battle of Waterloo? What military tactic, in particular, had made him so successful in the past?

How did Napoleon's characteristic military tactics contrast with those of the Duke of Wellington?

What decision did Napoleon make that resulted in victory over the Prussian army?

How was he ultimately defeated at the Battle of Waterloo? What act most revealed that Napoleon had lost his conquering spirit?

How did the outcome of the Battle of Waterloo affect 19th Century European history?

Further Activities:

Further investigate Napoleon's battle successes and the reasons for his popularity as a military leader.

Find out how the Duke of Wellington gained his military expertise.

Further investigate the life of Count Gebhard von Blücher to determine how he was able to provide skilled leadership to the Prussian troops.

Compare French and British government leadership at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century.

Research whether the program's narration: "Britain, Austria, Russia declared war not on a state, not on France . . . they declared war on an individual: Napoleon," is literally true. Can you find other instances where the main cause seems to be a leader's actions? If wars are started primarily because of a leader's actions, what problems can this create for all sides?