

Logistics Group One: Clothing

Meeting the physical needs for members of the armed forces is a fundamental challenge for all military organizations. Clothing an army on the move requires extensive logistical planning and coordination. Seasonally appropriate clothing has to be secured, transported, sized, and distributed to ensure the well-being of service members.

As a group, discuss the following questions:

What do you think it takes to clothe an army on the move? (Consider amounts, delivery, seasons, etc.)

What systems or supports would need to be in place to provide seasonally appropriate clothing?

What are some specific challenges you could predict for clothing an army on the move?

Predict what consequences could result if an army on the move has inadequate clothing.

Early Finisher Vocabulary Challenge! Write a three or four word definition for the word logistics.

Next Steps: As a group, examine each of the following sources to answer the prompts for each. Remember your assigned role during this activity. When you answer the prompts, cite evidence from the sources.

Logistics Group One: Source A

Review the “Clothing For The ETO Enlisted Man” table from *United States Army in World War II: The Technical Services: The Quartermaster Corps: Operations in the War Against Germany* and answer the following prompts. Note: ETO stands for European Theater of Operations.

CLOTHING FOR THE ETO ENLISTED MAN

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TABLE 18—SUMMARY OF FIRST WINTER CLOTHING PROGRAM, 7 SEPTEMBER 1944

| Item | Basis | Estimated requirements by 1 October | Weight per unit, packed | Total weight, lbs. |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Overcoats or mackinaws..... | 1 per man not equipped on arrival | 750,000 | 9.00 | 6,750,000 |
| Gloves, wool (pair)..... | 1 per man not equipped on arrival | 750,000 | .36 | 270,000 |
| Undershirts, wool..... | 1 per man to Army troops | 750,000 | 1.06 | 795,000 |
| Drawers, wool..... | 1 per man to Army troops | 750,000 | .86 | 645,000 |
| Blankets, wool..... | 1 per man | 1,500,000 | 4.65 | 6,975,000 |
| Cap, wool, knit..... | 1 per man not equipped on arrival | 750,000 | .18 | 135,000 |
| Socks, wool (pair) ^a | 2 per man | 2,600,000 | .38 | 988,000 |
| Laces, shoe (pair) ^a | 1 per 2 men in Armies | 350,000 | .02 | 7,000 |
| Laces, legging (pair) ^a | 1 per 2 men in Armies | 350,000 | .02 | 7,000 |
| Shoes, service (pair) ^a | 1 per man in Armies | 750,000 | 4.83 | 3,622,500 |
| Shirts, wool ^a | 1 per man in Armies | 515,000 | 1.50 | 772,500 |
| Trousers, wool ^a | 1 per man in Armies | 515,000 | 2.20 | 1,133,000 |
| Totals—pounds..... | | | 25.06 | 22,100,000 |
| Totals—long tons..... | | | | 9,866 |

^a Represents estimated necessary replacements to troops now on the Continent. These are not considered as initial issues.

Logistics Group One: Source A

What type of information is provided in the chart?

Who do you think this information was intended for?

What conclusions can you draw about the clothing needs of the troops?

How might soldiers be impacted by inadequate clothing supplies?

What challenges might the army face delivering these supplies?

Logistics Group One: Source B

Poster, *Don't Let This Happen to You - Take Care of Your Shoes*, 1944

Hennepin County Library (MPW00804)



Logistics Group One: Source B

What type of source is this? _____ When was it created? _____

Who created it? _____

What repository is the source housed in? _____

(Where can you find this source?)

| Images | Words |
|---|--|
| List people, places and objects depicted on the poster. | Are there printed words on the poster? If so, what is written? |
| What symbols are depicted on the poster? | What is the message that the words are trying to portray? |
| What do you notice about the colors and design? | Who published the source? When it was published? |

What emotions does the poster generate? Cite evidence to support your position.

What can you infer about clothing an army on the move from this source? Cite evidence to support your position.

Logistics Group One: Source C

“When the rains first came in November with a blast of wintry cold, our troops were ill-prepared for winter-time campaigning. This was traceable in part to the September crisis in supply for, during our race to the Rhine, I had deliberately by-passed shipments of winter clothing in favor of ammunition and gasoline. As a consequence, we now found ourselves caught short, particularly in bad-weather footgear. We had gambled in our choice and now we’re paying for the bad guess.”

General Omar Bradley quoted in *United States Army in World War II: The Technical Services: The Quartermaster Corps: Operations in the War Against Germany*

What type of source is this? _____ Who is credited with this quote? _____

Summarize the excerpt in your own words:

What does the individual’s rank tell you about their influence in decision making related to clothing an army on the move. Cite evidence to support your position.

This quote provides a personal perspective. What can you infer about the choices officers must make when supplying their army? Cite evidence to support your position.

What can you infer about the logistical challenges of clothing an army on the move from this source? Cite evidence to support your position.

Logistics Group One: Group Activity Analysis

Reflect on all three sources and answer the following prompts. As a group discuss how you will share these sources with the class.

What types of sources did you evaluate?

How did the sources relate to each other?

After analyzing all three sources how would you explain the challenges of clothing an army on the move?

Based on your analysis, what logistical planning and systems are required for clothing an army on the move?

Rank the following supply lines from most important to least important for maintaining an army on the move.

| | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| Ammunition _____ | Clothing _____ | Food _____ | Gas _____ | Water _____ |
|------------------|----------------|------------|-----------|-------------|

Explain your reasons for the ranking.
