

Logistics Group Three: Ammunition

Ensuring that troops have enough ammunition is critical for successful missions. Transportation and delivery of ammunition to the front lines requires extensive logistical planning and coordination.

As a group, discuss the following questions:

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

What systems or supports would need to be in place to provide ammunition?

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

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

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 Three: Source A

"Meanwhile, our artillery and all the supporting weapons, which meant practically everything we had and could commandeer, were thundering away in that tremendous 45-minute preparation. It started at 2:45 a.m. The effect was a thick, continuous curtain of fire close to the river bank of the far shore. A total of 8400 rounds of field artillery ammunition was expended. The 557th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion fired a total of 272,736 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition, wearing out 125 barrels. The crews of the 771st Tank Battalion supported the crossing and the follow-up for about 15 hours, firing so much ammunition that they often became sick from the fumes in the tanks and had to get out to relieve their nausea. A total of 120,000 rounds were fired by 24 multiple-mount 50 caliber machine guns, and 4000 rounds were sent off by 24 60 mm. mortars in 15 minutes. T/Sgt. George H. Hale, Company C, said the barrage 'was so heavy that as we approached the water to man the boats, we were nearly shocked ourselves.'"

Excerpt from Lieutenant Theodore Draper, *The 84th Infantry Division In The Battle Of Germany, November 1944-May 1945*

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

Who created it? _____

Summarize the excerpt in your own words:

Logistics Group Three: Source A

What was Drapper's biggest concern? (Cite evidence from the document to support your position.)

This quote provides a personal perspective. What can you infer about the importance of ammunition to the individual soldier? Cite evidence to support your position.

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

Logistics Group Three: Source B

Poster, *Pass the Ammunition - the Army Needs More Lumber*, 1943

Hennepin County Library (MPW00187)



Logistics Group Three: 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 arming an army on the move from this source? Cite evidence to support your position.

Logistics Group Three: Source C

“IMPORTANCE OF AMMUNITION SUPPLY. Adequate and timely supply of ammunition to combat troops is indispensable to the successful prosecution of any military operation. No other single item of supply is SO vital to combat.

b. Cardinal principles of supply. The cardinal principles of any supply system are —

(1) Simplicity. Simplicity, properly applied, reduces the likelihood of mistakes and increases the speed and efficiency of supply. Every administrative and operational detail should serve some essential or useful purpose, and should be as simple as possible without impairing efficiency and control.

(2) Mobility. The ammunition supply system must provide sufficient mobility to deliver ammunition to the using units at the time and in the amounts needed to accomplish the tactical mission. Ammunition in storage is only a potential asset. It does not become a real asset until it is in the hands of combat troops.

(3) Flexibility. The ammunition supply system must be flexible in order to adjust itself to the requirements of a changing tactical and strategic situation. It must be capable of expansion or adjustment to meet the widely varying demands of rapidly moving warfare and frequently changing missions.

(4) Continuity. An uninterrupted supply of ammunition to combat troops is essential.

(5) Security. The ammunition supply system must provide for the safeguarding of ammunition supplies against loss from any cause, including enemy action.

(6) Forward, movement. The impetus of supply must be from rear to front. It is the duty of each higher echelon of command to push supplies forward within reach of subordinate units. However, there is a concurrent duty of each subordinate commander to make the requirements of his unit known to the higher echelon, and to follow through diligently to see that such requirements are filled.”

Excerpt from the 1944 War Department Field Manual FM 9-6 Ordnance Department, Ammunition Supply

Logistics Group Three: Source C

Summarize the excerpt in your own words:

What are the cardinal principles of ammunition supply?

This excerpt from a manual provides a technical perspective. What can you infer about the importance of logistics in ammunition supply? Cite evidence to support your position.

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

Logistics Group Three: 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 providing ammunition to an army on the move?

Based on your analysis, what logistical planning and systems are required for providing ammunition to 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 _____
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Explain your reasons for the ranking.
