

<http://www.learningcurve.gov.uk/heroesvillains/>

Activity: Would you target Dresden?

It is January 1945. The war is dragging on, but the Allies are winning. Winston Churchill and the commanders of the British armed forces need to decide whether or not to launch a bombing raid on the city of Dresden. You have to prepare a report to help them make this decision.

Stage 1: Research

Read the sources in the first case study called 'Why target Dresden?' For each source, ask yourself: Does this give us good reasons to bomb Dresden or not? Use the information in these sources to fill in this research table.

Open the table and print it out or save it to your computer.

Research table (Below)

Read the sources in the first case study called 'Why target Dresden?' For each source, ask yourself: Does this give us good reasons to bomb Dresden or not? Use the information in these sources to fill in this research table.

Source	Reasons to target Dresden	Reasons not to target Dresden
1. Photos showing the devastation bombing caused in Britain		
2. Report on Dresden Railway Yard as a target, Feb 1942		
3. Diagram showing the effects of bombing, 1945		
4. Aerial photos of Dresden, 1944		
5. Report on Dresden by Bomber Command, Oct 1944		
6. Poster showing bombing of a power station, 1944		
7. Report on effects of air attacks on German morale, 1944		



Stage 2: Study the Map

- Law courts
- Factories
- Oil depot
- Barracks
- State Museum of Applied Art
- Exhibition buildings
- Railway marshalling yards
- Hospital

Open the map and print it out or save it to your computer.

Stage 3: Prepare your Report

What will you recommend to Churchill and the British commanders? Should they target Dresden? Use your research table and your map to help you answer this question. Use this report outline to get you started.

Report outline

Stage 3: Prepare your report

What will you recommend to Churchill and the British commanders? Should they target Dresden? Use the sources, your research table and your map to help you answer this question. Use this report outline to get you started.

Should Britain target Dresden?

1. What military targets are there in Dresden?
2. Will there be much resistance to an attack? (E.g. are there any anti-aircraft guns in Dresden?)
3. If planning a bombing raid on Dresden, which parts of the city would you target and why?
4. What effect would this attack have on the German war machine?
5. Will an attack on Dresden help the USSR (Russians) invade Germany?
6. What effect would this attack have on the civilians living in Dresden?
7. Dresden is filled with German refugees escaping the USSR army's advance. Will you target them? Or will you try to avoid hitting them and, if so, how?
8. Will German morale be affected by an attack on Dresden? (E.g. will they keep on fighting? Will they believe they can win the war?)
9. Will British morale be affected by an attack on Dresden? (E.g. will they believe they can win the war?)
10. By 1944, British leaders know what the Nazis are doing – killing people in their concentration camps in Eastern Europe. Does that affect your decision about bombing Dresden?
11. What is your final recommendation?