Worksheet 3.1
The Battle of Verdun

Group research activity

The battle of Verdun was one of the bloodiest engagements in history. One of the challenges for leaders, both military and political, during times of war is to make sacrificing lives seem justified for a higher cause or result.

Click here and explore an excellent collection of primary sources relating to the battle. Take two or three of these sources, and look at the way they use language to describe the battle.

• Ask yourself: What view of the battle is the writer attempting to impress upon the reader?

• Of the sources you look at, which would you consider to be the most reliable account of the battle of Verdun? Give reasons for your answer.

• Why, do you think, is it important to consider the value and limitations of primary sources that give accounts of battles (or, events in wartime)? What kind of problems might you encounter when looking for accurate accounts?