ROYAL CANADIAN AIR CADETS

PROFICIENCY LEVEL TWO

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 2

EO M230.02 – DISCUSS SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN 20TH CENTURY CANADIAN MILITARY HISTORY

Total Time: 30 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-802/PG-001, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the Instructional Guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and become familiar with the material prior to delivering the lesson.

Create presentation slides or handouts of all the figures located at Annex A.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

N/A.

APPROACH

An interactive lecture was chosen for this lesson to present background material to the cadets and promote an interest in aircraft flown during significant events in history.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

N/A.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall be expected to discuss Armistice Day (Remembrance Day) and D-Day and the planes flown during D-Day.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for cadets to know about the aircraft flown during significant events in history like D-Day so that they can better understand Canada's role during this conflict. It is also important for the cadets to understand the meaning of Armistice Day and the parades used to commemorate the fallen men and women who gave their lives during wartime.

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Teaching point 1 **Discuss the Importance of Armistice Day (Remembrance Day)**

Time: 10 min Method: Interactive Lecture

ANNUAL DAY OF COMMEMORATION

- "At the eleventh hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month of the year 1918, after more than four years of continuous fighting, hostilities on the main battlefront of the greatest war in history came to an end" (Brigadier C. N. Barclay, 1968).
- An annual day of commemoration for Canada's war dead began after WWI.
- With some 60 000 Canadians killed, the war produced a profound sense of loss in a country whose greatest military tragedy to date had been 267 dead in the South African War of 1899-1902.
- The huge cost of the so-called "Great War" was startling for Canada, as it was for all combatant nations.
- As early as April 1919, Isaac Pedlow, Member of Parliament (MP) for South Renfrew, Ontario, introduced a motion in the House of Commons to institute an annual "Armistice Day" to be held on the second Monday of November.
- Members agreed that there should be a special day to mark the Armistice, but were split over the day on which it should be held.
- Responding to the views of the veterans' community, many argued that it should occur on the actual anniversary of the Armistice–November 11.
- Those who had come through the war felt that a solemn occasion marking the deaths of 60 000 comrades was important enough to merit this distinction.
- A special appeal sent out by King George V to the Empire on November 6, urging the year-old Armistice be marked by the suspension of all ordinary activities and the observance of two minutes of silence at precisely 11:00 a.m. on November 11, settled the issue.
- This was how Canada marked its first Armistice Day.

WHAT DOES ARMISTICE DAY MEAN?

- The term "armistice" denotes the cessation of hostilities in a conflict and it was used universally for the final silencing of the guns that ended the WWI at 11:00 a.m. on November 11, 1918.

NAME CHANGE

- On March 18, 1931, A.W. Neil, MP for Comox-Alberni in British Columbia, introduced a motion in the House of Commons to have Armistice Day observed on November 11 and "on no other date."
- Concerns about the holiday's impact on business, he claimed, were "irrelevant."
- At the same time, another MP, C.W. Dickie of Nanaimo, also speaking on behalf of veterans, introduced a motion changing the name from Armistice to Remembrance Day.
- This term, he felt, better "implies that we wish to remember and perpetuate."
- As historian Denise Thompson has suggested, "the term 'Remembrance Day' placed the emphasis squarely upon memory – and by extension upon the soldiers whose deaths were being remembered – rather than upon the Armistice, a political achievement in which rank-and-file soldiers were not directly involved."
- Parliament quickly adopted these resolutions and Canada held its first Remembrance Day on November 11, 1931.

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- Remembrance Day has remained the official title for the annual commemoration ever since, although the term Armistice Day is sometimes used interchangeably, but unofficially.
- Remembrance Day, a more flexible and inclusive term, readily accommodates the remembrance of war dead from WWI, WWII, the Korean War, other conflicts and peacekeeping.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS

Q1. When did the annual day of commemoration begin?

Q2. How did Canada mark its first Armistice Day?

Q3. When did Canada hold its first Remembrance Day?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. An annual day of commemoration for Canada's war dead began after World War I.

A2. A special appeal sent out by King George V to the Empire on November 6, urging the year-old Armistice be marked by the suspension of all ordinary activities and the observance of two minutes of silence at precisely 11:00 a.m. on November 11 settled the issue.

A3. Canada held its first Remembrance Day on November 11, 1931.

Teaching point 2 **Discuss How Canadians Commemorate Remembrance Day by Organizing Yearly Ceremonies**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture

COMMEMORATING REMEMBRANCE DAY

- Every year, ceremonies are held at cenotaphs in cities and towns across the country, involving prayer, recitations and playing the traditional military bugle calls of "Last Post" followed by "Reveille."
- The largest, carried live by national television networks, is held at the National War Memorial in Ottawa and attended by the Prime Minister, the Governor General and the "Silver Cross Mother," a mother who has actually lost a child or children in action.
- Remembrance Day ceremonies offer veterans the opportunity to remember and salute fallen comrades and all Canadians an occasion to reflect on the sacrifices made and the tragedies endured in their name.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS

Q1. What happens every year at cenotaphs?

Q2. Who attends the country's largest Remembrance Day ceremony?

Q3. What do Remembrance Day ceremonies offer?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Every year ceremonies are held at cenotaphs in cities and towns across the country, involving prayer, recitations and playing the traditional military bugle calls of "Last Post" followed by "Reveille."

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A2. The largest, carried live by national television networks, is held at the National War Memorial in Ottawa and attended by the Prime Minister, the Governor General and the “Silver Cross Mother,” a mother who has actually lost a child or children in action.

A3. Remembrance Day ceremonies offer veterans the opportunity to remember and salute fallen comrades and all Canadians an occasion to reflect on the sacrifices made and the tragedies endured in their name.

Teaching point 3 **Discuss the Importance of D-Day**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture

CONFLICT BETWEEN THE ALLIED FORCES AND GERMANY

- On June 6, 1944, the “Second Front” became a reality.
- In the weeks before that, the Allied Air Forces had attacked the transportation network used to move German troops and equipment.
- On D-Day itself, delayed one day by bad weather in the English Channel, powerful air and naval support, as well as ground-breaking specialized armoured vehicles, such as tanks capable of “swimming”, helped the infantry to get ashore on five beaches—two each for the Americans and British and one for the Canadians.
- Anglo-American-Canadian forces landed on the open beaches of Normandy, north and west of the city of Caen, France.

CANADIAN SOLDIERS LANDING AT JUNO BEACH, FRANCE

- Canadian airmen and sailors were among the first into action.
- The Royal Canadian Air Force had already been involved for several months in bombing key enemy targets in the invasion area; roads, bridges, railways, airfields and command and communications centres.
- Now they flew as part of the 171 Allied squadrons that attacked on D-Day.
- As H-Hour approached, RCAF Lancasters of No. 6 Bomber Group dropped thousands of tons of explosives on German coastal defences.
- While it was still dark in the early hours of June 6, Allied paratroopers, including 450 Canadians, jumped from aircraft or landed in gliders behind German coastal defences.
- 3rd Canadian Infantry Division and 2nd Canadian Armoured Brigade formed the Canadian assault force on D-Day, while 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion jumped as part of the great airborne force protecting the flanks of the landing.
- Canadian destroyers, corvettes, minesweepers, landing ships and landing craft supported the landings, as did the many RCAF squadrons overhead.
- Separated by gusty winds, outnumbered and only lightly armed, they nevertheless captured a German headquarters, destroyed a key bridge and seized an important crossroad, all the while sowing confusion and disorder within enemy ranks.
- 340 Canadian soldiers died, 547 were wounded and 47 were taken prisoner.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

QUESTIONS

Q1. What is the date of D-Day?

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Q2. Between whom was the conflict?

Q3. How many Canadian soldiers died on D-Day?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. June 6, 1944.

A2. The Allied Forces and Germany.

A3. 340 Canadian soldiers died on D-Day.

Teaching point 4 **Discuss Aircraft Flown During D-Day**

Time: 5 min Method: Interactive Lecture

AIRCRAFT FLOWN DURING D-DAY

Black and White Striped MK IXB

- The black and white striped MK IXB was a Spitfire.
- The day before D-Day at the RAF Station Tangmere near Chichester in the south of England ground crew painted black and white “invasion stripes” on their Spit IXs.
- In the dangerous skies over France, these markings would indicate to friendly fighters to not shoot.
- Aircraft without stripes were fair game.



Present slide or distribute handouts of Figure A-1 to the cadets.

Halifax LW170

- The Halifax LW170 had an unusual combat history in the RCAF.
- From May to August 1944 this aircraft participated in 28 missions to Germany and France during the critical days preceding and during D-Day.
- The Halifax LW 170 participated in the bombing and destruction of the German heavy guns, which threatened the entire Allied invasion fleet on the historic morning of June 6, 1944.
- Finally, due for major maintenance in August 1944, LW170 was replaced by other Halifaxes and consigned to repairs, or at worst, the scrap yard.
- Fate intervened and this Halifax was repaired and was to be handed over to a weather patrol squadron where it soldiered on until just after the end of the war in 1945.



Present slide or distribute handouts of Figure A-2 to the cadets.

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RCAF Lancaster

- The four-engine Avro “Lancaster”, a direct development of the unsuccessful twin-engine Manchester became the ‘mighty pulveriser’ of the RAF’s Bomber Command, able to carry the great 990 kg “Ten-Ton Tessie”, also known as the “Grand Slam”, the heaviest bomb-load lifted by any bomber of WWII.
- Its most notable exploits were the breaching of the Mohne and Eder dams in the Ruhr, Germany in May 1943 and also the sinking of the German battleship Tirpitz in November 1944.
- A total of 420 Lancaster Xs were built in Canada in Malton, Ontario and Canadian units in the Commonwealth Tiger Force would have flown Lancaster Xs in the Pacific had the war lasted into 1946.
- After service with the twelve squadrons of the RCAF’s No. 6 Group in Bomber Command during the war, the Lancaster was used by the RCAF in varied post-war roles, including photo reconnaissance, air/sea rescue and maritime reconnaissance.
- The Lancaster was finally retired from the RCAF on April 1, 1964, after being used in service for more than twenty years.



Present slide or distribute handouts of Figure A-3 to the cadets.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 4

QUESTIONS

Q1. What did the black and white stripes indicate to friendly fighters?

Q2. How many missions did the Halifax LW170 participate in during the critical days preceding and during D-Day?

Q3. What was the Lancaster’s most notable exploits?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. In the dangerous skies over France these markings would indicate to friendly fighters to not shoot.

A2. From May to August 1944 this aircraft participated in 28 missions to Germany and France during the critical days preceding and during D-Day.

A3. Its most notable exploits were the breaching of the Mohne and Eder dams in the Ruhr, Germany in May, 1943, and the sinking of the German battleship Tirpitz in November 1944.

END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

QUESTIONS

Q1. What does the term “armistice” mean and what is Armistice Day?

Q2. Why did Armistice Day change to Remembrance Day?

Q3. Who were among the first into action at Juno Beach?

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ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. The term “armistice” denotes the cessation of hostilities in a conflict and it was used universally for the final silencing of the guns that ended the WWI at 11:00 a.m. on November 11, 1918.

A2. Remembrance Day, a more flexible and inclusive term, readily accommodates the remembrance of war dead from WWI, WWII, the Korean War, other conflicts, and peacekeeping.

A3. Canadian airmen and sailors were among the first into action.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK/READING/PRACTICE

N/A.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

N/A.

CLOSING STATEMENT

It is important for cadets to know about the aircraft flown during significant events like D-Day so that they can better understand Canada’s role during this conflict. It is also important for the cadets to understand the meaning of Armistice Day and the parades used to commemorate the fallen men and women who gave their lives during wartime.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES/REMARKS

This class should be taught before the Remembrance Day parade so cadets may gain an appreciation and full understanding of the significance behind this event.

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AIRCRAFT FLOWN DURING D-DAY



Above: It's the day before D-Day and at RAF Station Tangmere near Chicester in the south of England groundcrew of 411 Squadron are hastily painting white and black "invasion stripes" on one of their Spit Ix's. In the crazy skies over France the next day these markings would tell friendly flak and fighters not to shoot. Aircraft without stripes would be fair game. In the second photo at left, the simple effectiveness of their stripes is evident on a Spit. (DND PI30827, RE20421-1)

L. Milberry and H. Halliday, The Royal Canadian Air Force at War 1939-1945, CANAV Books (p. 171)

Figure A-1 Black and White Painted Spitfire IX

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Figure A-2 Halifax Bomber

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Figure A-3 The Avro 683 Lancaster

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