The Vietnam War and Australia

Applicable for use in Australian Curriculum: History –
Year 10 Overview

Written by Ashley Pratt, Gilson College, Victoria.
This Unit has twelve lessons taught over a four-week period.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LESSONS</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCES</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKSHEETS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSESSMENT TASK 1: WEB OF CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSESSMENT TASK 2: THE WAR, LIVE AT 6PM!</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Objectives

Historical Knowledge and Understanding

- The nature of the Cold War and Australia’s involvement in Cold War and post-Cold War conflicts (Korea, Vietnam, The Gulf Wars, Afghanistan), including the rising influence of Asian nations since the end of the Cold War (ACOKFH023).

Historical Skills

- Use historical terms and concepts (ACHHS183)
- Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods (ACHHS186)
- Identify the origin, purpose and context of primary and secondary sources (ACHHS187)
- Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument (ACHHS188)
- Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (ACHHS190)
- Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced (ACHHS192)
- Select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (ACHHS193).
## Lessons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
<th>Curriculum Links</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Lesson objective</td>
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<td>• Students get a glimpse into the controversial nature of the Vietnam War in Australian history and compare responses to the war with more recent conflicts.</td>
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<td>Identify prior knowledge</td>
<td>Conduct the Pre-assessment Task: Think Puzzle Explore.</td>
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<td>Consider new information</td>
<td>Show the ABC news report on the Melbourne moratorium against the Vietnam War.</td>
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<td>Apply knowledge</td>
<td>Show students images from protests around the world against the Iraq War in 2003.</td>
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<td>Review</td>
<td>Have students write down 3 similarities and 3 differences between the protests against the Vietnam War and those against the Iraq War.</td>
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<td>Ask students to comment on why Vietnam might have caused such controversy in Australia.</td>
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<td>Students to complete a Think/Pair/Share (T/P/S) on why war may have been seen as appealing.</td>
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<td>Terminology – Students could play key term bingo, complete a word match activity, establish and maintain a terminology sheet, create key word visual posters or word tree.</td>
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<td>Lesson objective</td>
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<td>• Students gain an understanding of the nature of the post-WWII world and the origins of the Vietnam War.</td>
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<td>Identify prior knowledge</td>
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<td>Consider new information</td>
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<td>Apply knowledge</td>
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<td>Review</td>
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### Curriculum Links
- The nature of the Cold War and Australia’s involvement in Cold War and post-Cold War conflicts (Korea, Vietnam, The Gulf Wars, Afghanistan), including the rising influence of Asian nations since the end of the Cold War (ACOKFH023)
- Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (ACHHS190)

### Assessment
- Pre-assessment Task: Think Puzzle Explore
- Glossary bank: Key terms
- Worksheet 1: Source
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
<th>Curriculum Links</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Learning objective</td>
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<td>• Students gain an understanding of the causes of the Vietnam War.</td>
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<td>Identify prior knowledge</td>
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<td>• Ask students to identify some of the reasons that Americans might have distrusted or feared communists in the 1940s.</td>
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<td>Consider new information</td>
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<td>• Read the extracts on Cold War conflicts and the USA’s involvement in the Vietnam War.</td>
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<td>Week</td>
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<td>• Use the interactive map to find out about the causes of the war: <a href="http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/maps/map_pop_intro.html">http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/maps/map_pop_intro.html</a>.</td>
<td>(ACOKFH023)</td>
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<td><em>Apply knowledge</em></td>
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<td>• Create a flowchart showing the causes of the USA’s involvement in the Vietnam War.</td>
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<td><em>Review</em></td>
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<td>• Referring to their flowcharts, students should explain how Vietnam became a Cold War ‘hotspot’.</td>
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</table>
| 2    | 4      | **Lesson objective**  
- Students gain an understanding of why Australia became involved in the Vietnam War.  
**Identify prior knowledge**  
- Revisit key terms from prior lessons.  
**Consider new information**  
- Find out why Australia was involved in the war: https://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/vietnam/.  
- Watch the speech by American President Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) about Australia joining the war: http://splash.abc.net.au/home#1/media/1245268/fighting-conscription-1966.  
- Watch ‘Public reactions to sending troops to Vietnam’: http://splash.abc.net.au/home#1/media/153694/.  
**Apply knowledge**  
- As a class, construct a ‘Pros and cons’ table of the possible costs and benefits of Australia joining the war, from a 1960s perspective.  
- Then, from a current perspective, discuss the long-term costs and benefits that Australia experienced as a result of being involved in the war.  
**Review**  
- Highlight the best responses listed on the ‘pros and cons’ table and have students copy them down.  
- Discuss what they think now about whether Australia should have got involved. Prompt questions:  

- Use historical terms and concepts (ACHHS183)  
- Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument (ACHHS188)  
- Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (ACHHS190)  

Table: ‘Pros and cons’ of involvement in Vietnam
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
<th>Curriculum Links</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Learning objective</td>
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<td>Students gain an understanding of the experiences of Australian servicemen and women in the Vietnam War.</td>
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<td>Identify prior knowledge</td>
<td>Discuss this question with the class: Why did Australia get involved in Vietnam?</td>
<td>Use historical terms and concepts (ACHHS183)</td>
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<td>Consider new information</td>
<td>Select 10–15 quotes from Australians who served in Vietnam and ask different students to read them aloud.</td>
<td>Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument (ACHHS188)</td>
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<td>Apply knowledge</td>
<td>Ask students to create a poster titled Australian Experiences in Vietnam (encourage them to find a more dramatic/poignant title). The poster should combine key quotes about Australian experiences in Vietnam with photographs of Australians in Vietnam that the students find themselves. A good starting point is <a href="http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/vietnam/">www.awm.gov.au/atwar/vietnam/</a>.</td>
<td>Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (ACHHS190)</td>
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<td>Review</td>
<td>Display posters around the classroom.</td>
<td>The nature of the Cold War and Australia’s involvement in Cold War and post-Cold War conflicts (Korea, Vietnam, The Gulf Wars, Afghanistan), including the rising influence of Asian</td>
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<td>Have students write notes on each other’s posters.</td>
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</table>
| 2    | 6      | **Lesson objective**  
• Students gain an understanding of the significance of the Battle of Long Tan.  
**Identify prior knowledge**  
• Ask different students why Australian servicemen were sent to Vietnam and what some of their experiences were while they were there.  
**Consider new information**  
• Play selected excerpts from the documentary *Battle of Long Tan* (Red Dune Films, narrated by Sam Worthington): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gUSq7pxux4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gUSq7pxux4) (Full duration 1 hour 40 mins.) The film is rated M so if any of your Year 10s are under 15, choose excerpts carefully and/or gain parental permission.  
• Have students research the political implications of the Battle of Long Tan and the effect it had on the local Vietnamese population.  
**Apply knowledge**  
• Run a class debate on the topic ‘The Battle of Long Tan was a tragic turning point in the Vietnam War.’  
**Review**  
• After the debate, students should vote on which team was more convincing. | • Select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies *(ACHHS193)*  
• Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods *(ACHHS186)*  
• Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument *(ACHHS188)*  
• Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced *(ACHHS192)* | • Class debate: ‘The Battle of Long Tan was a tragic turning point in the Vietnam War’ |
<table>
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
<th>Curriculum Links</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Lesson objective</td>
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<td>• Students gain an understanding of how the Vietnam War was reported to the public.</td>
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<td>Identify prior knowledge</td>
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<td>• On the board, brainstorm keywords on coverage of the Vietnam War.</td>
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<td>Consider new information</td>
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<td>• Read about a reporter from the Vietnam War who wrote: ‘Vietnam was the most openly and freely covered war in the history of the United States’: <a href="http://kdhnews.com/fort_hood_herald/vietnam/reporting-the-war-joe-galloway-recounts-coverage/article_7a5087b4-3ad2-11e5-8ec2-9f67eed62d49.html">http://kdhnews.com/fort_hood_herald/vietnam/reporting-the-war-joe-galloway-recounts-coverage/article_7a5087b4-3ad2-11e5-8ec2-9f67eed62d49.html</a>.</td>
<td>The nature of the Cold War and Australia’s involvement in Cold War and post-Cold War conflicts (Korea, Vietnam, The Gulf Wars, Afghanistan), including the rising influence of Asian nations since the end of the Cold War (ACHHS188)</td>
<td>Worksheet 2: ABC Brainstorm</td>
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<td>• Show the famous photograph of the Vietnamese girl running away from a bombed village with napalm burns on her body: <a href="http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/headlines/2012/06/the-historic-napalm-girl-pulitzer-image-marks-its-40th-anniversary/">http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/headlines/2012/06/the-historic-napalm-girl-pulitzer-image-marks-its-40th-anniversary/</a>. Note the unlikely friendship that later developed between the girl and the photographer.</td>
<td>• Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (ACHHS190)</td>
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<td>Apply knowledge</td>
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<td>• Fill in Worksheet 2: ABC Brainstorm (reporting of the war).</td>
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<td>Review</td>
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<td>• Compare and discuss student responses to Worksheet.</td>
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<td><strong>Lesson objective</strong></td>
<td>Students gain an understanding of why the Vietnam War was controversial in Australia and beyond.</td>
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<td><strong>Identify prior knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Ask students how Australians received information about the Vietnam War and how this differed from previous conflicts.</td>
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<td><strong>Consider new information</strong></td>
<td>Play the ABC clip ‘Luck of the draw: The Vietnam birthday ballot’: <a href="http://splash.abc.net.au/home#/1/media/521089/luck-of-the-draw-the-vietnam-birthday-ballot">http://splash.abc.net.au/home#/1/media/521089/luck-of-the-draw-the-vietnam-birthday-ballot</a> -</td>
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<td><strong>Apply knowledge</strong></td>
<td>After watching the clip, students should answer these questions:</td>
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<td>- How many young men were identified for national service in the ballot held before the report?</td>
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<td>- What is the official term for the lottery that is used by the reporter?</td>
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<td><strong>The nature of the Cold War and Australia’s involvement in Cold War and post-Cold War conflicts (Korea, Vietnam, The Gulf Wars, Afghanistan), including the rising influence of Asian nations since the end of the Cold War (ACOKFH023)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Learning objective</strong></td>
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<td>• Students gain an understanding of efforts by protesters and activists to end</td>
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<td>Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam War.</td>
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<td><strong>Identify prior knowledge</strong></td>
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<td>• Recap the contentious aspects of the war, including conscription, civilian</td>
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<td>casualties and military failures against the Viet Cong (communist North Vietnamese)</td>
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<td>• According to the reporter, why did Australia have to conscript men for military</td>
<td>Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (ACHHS190)</td>
<td>Protest poster from 1972</td>
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<td>service?</td>
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<td>• How many national servicemen were required to make up Australia’s military forces?</td>
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<td>• Ask students to develop four questions each about conscription in Australia during</td>
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<td>the war. Put the questions in a hat and have students randomly draw them out, then</td>
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<td>answer the questions. Some suggested questions:</td>
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<td>• What is the process of being conscripted?</td>
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<td>• Were there any ways to avoid conscription?</td>
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<td>• To what extent was conscription imposed fairly across Australian society?</td>
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<td>• Compare debates about conscription in Australia in the Vietnam War and World War</td>
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<td>I. (For example, go to <a href="http://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/search/node/great%20debates">http://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/search/node/great%20debates</a>.)</td>
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**Review**

• Discuss the impact of conscription on Australian society during the Vietnam War.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
<th>Curriculum Links</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Apply knowledge</td>
<td>• Imagining it is the year 1972, create a poster arguing for OR against Australia’s continued involvement in the Vietnam War. Include relevant statistics about the costs or benefits of involvement, and attempt to persuade the viewer through the effective use of colour, images, language (inc. slogans) and emotional appeals.</td>
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</table>
|      | Review | • Discuss each other’s posters. Invite younger students in to the classroom to say which posters they were persuaded by.  
• Anti-Vietnam War protesters were accused of targeting/abusing individual soldiers. Is this still the case, or do today’s anti-war protesters tend to focus on the politicians who get involved in wars? | | |
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<tr>
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</table>
| 4    | 10     | **Lesson objective**  
* Students gain an appreciation of how and why the Vietnam War ended.  
**Identify prior knowledge**  
* Create a timeline of the events and developments studied to this point.  
**Consider new information**  
* You might like to return to the interactive map to review the final years of the war: [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/amex/vietnam/maps/map_pop_intro.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/amex/vietnam/maps/map_pop_intro.html).  
**Apply knowledge**  
* Create an informative and visually appealing flowchart that shows the events that led to the fall of South Vietnam and the end of the Vietnam War. (See examples of different styles at [http://www.rff.com/flowchart_samples.htm](http://www.rff.com/flowchart_samples.htm).)  
**Review**  
* Compare the formats used by different students in presenting the information. |  
* The nature of the Cold War and Australia’s involvement in Cold War and post-Cold War conflicts (Korea, Vietnam, The Gulf Wars, Afghanistan), including the rising influence of Asian nations since the end of the Cold War (ACHHS8023)  
* Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced (ACHHS192) |  
* Flowchart: The end of the Vietnam War |
| 4    | 11     | **Lesson objective**  
* Students appreciate the struggles and achievements of servicemen and women who had to readjust to civilian life in Australia.  
**Identify prior knowledge**  
* Discuss what soldiers would have experienced serving in Vietnam and how this may have affected them. |  
* Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods (ACHHS186)  
* Select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, |  
* Worksheet 3: Veterans |
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
<th>Curriculum Links</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4    | 12 Consequences of the Vietnam War | *Lesson objective*  
  - Students gain an understanding of the short- and long-term consequences of the Vietnam War.  

*Identify prior knowledge*  
- Write down the causes of the Vietnam War that were examined in earlier lessons.  

*Apply knowledge*  
- Complete Assessment Task 1: Web of Causes and Consequences (historical thinking activity).  
- Complete Assessment Task 2: The War, Live at 6pm! (video).  

*Review*  
- View and discuss students’ Assessment Tasks. |  
- Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced (ACHHS192)  
- Select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (ACHHS193) |  
- Assessment Task 1: Web of Causes and Consequences  
- Assessment Task 2: The War, Live at 6l (video) |
# Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | 1 Introduction | - Pre-assessment Task: Think Puzzle Explore.  
- Complete Worksheet 1: Source Analysis on ‘How to spot a communist’. |
| 1    | 3 Causes of the War (part 2) | - Cold War conflicts: [http://alphahistory.com/vietnam/cold-war-conflict/](http://alphahistory.com/vietnam/cold-war-conflict/).  
| 2    | 4 All the Way with LBJ – Australia Gets Involved | - Why Australia was involved in the war: [https://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/vietnam/](https://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/vietnam/).  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6 Key Battle – Long Tan</td>
<td>• Documentary: <em>Battle of Long Tan</em>: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gUSq7pXux4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gUSq7pXux4</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3    | 7 The War – Live at 6pm! | • Reporter from the Vietnam War: [http://khnews.com/fort_hood_herald/vietnam/reporting-the-war-joe-galloway-recounts-coverage/article_7a5087b4-3ad2-11e5-8ec2-9f67eed62d49.html](http://khnews.com/fort_hood_herald/vietnam/reporting-the-war-joe-galloway-recounts-coverage/article_7a5087b4-3ad2-11e5-8ec2-9f67eed62d49.html).  
• Worksheet 2: ABC Brainstorm. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
• Worksheet 3: Veterans.    |
| 4    | 12 Consequences of the Vietnam War | • Assessment Task 1: Web of Causes and Consequences.  
• Assessment Task 2: The War, Live at 6pm |
Worksheets

Pre-Assessment Task

Think / Puzzle / Explore

This activity helps students connect to prior knowledge, stimulates curiosity and lays the groundwork for independent inquiry. Give students a few quiet moments to consider the topic at hand. Then, work as a whole class or in small groups to brainstorm responses to the three questions below. Allow time between each question for students to think.

1. What do you think you know about this topic?

2. What questions or puzzles do you have?

3. How can you explore this topic?

Keep a record of students’ ideas on post-it notes or butchers’ paper. You might find it useful to do the Think and Puzzle questions together first. Or students might do this part of the routine individually before sharing with the group.

Worksheet 1: Source Analysis

Read the source ‘How to spot a communist’ (1947) and write a response to the following questions.

At first glance

1. Who created the source?

__________________________________________________________________________

2. What is the author’s main point of view or perspective?

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3. When was the source created?

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4. What do you think the purpose of the source is?

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5. In what ways, if any, does the source seem credible or reliable?

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6. In what ways, if any, might it lack credibility or reliability?

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Context

7. What was going on at the time that might have influenced the creator of the source?

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8. Is it likely that a similar source would be created today? Explain your answer.

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Close reading

9. What factual claims, if any, does the creator make?

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10. What sources of evidence, if any, does the creator refer to?
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__________________________________________________________________________________
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11. How does the creator attempt to persuade the audience? Give examples.
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12. What relevant information, if any, is missing from the source?
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13. Having examined the source closely, to what extent do you think it is a reliable source of evidence? In your answer, give it a ‘reliability rating’ out of 10.
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End of worksheet
Worksheet 2: ABC Brainstorm

Topic: Reporting of the Vietnam War

Note down as many ideas as you can about how the Vietnam War was reported in Australia and overseas (TV/radio, photography, newspapers). How was the reporting different to what had occurred in previous wars?

Each comment should start with a different letter.
Worksheet 3: Veterans

Examine the sources below about the experiences of Vietnam veterans and complete the tasks that follow.

**Source 1**

In 24 hours we had gone from a war to our families. I was in the same uniform that I thought looked really good in South Vietnam which now was crumpled, soiled and stained at home. My friends had gone their ways without a murmur and I was back in the world of flush toilets and women. God, it was a shock!!


**Source 2**

*I Was Only 19 (A Walk in the Light Green)*

Mum and Dad and Denny saw the passing out parade at Puckapunyal,

(It was long march from cadets).

The Sixth Battalion was the next to tour and it was me who drew the card...

We did Canungra and Shoalwater before we left.

And Townsville lined the footpath as we marched down to the quay;

This clipping from the paper shows us young and strong and clean;

And there’s me in my slouch hat, with my SLR and greens...

God help me, I was only nineteen.

From Vung Tau riding Chinooks to the dust at Nui Dat,
I'd been in and out of choppers now for months.
But we made our tents a home, VB and pin-ups on the lockers,
and an Asian orange sunset through the scrub.

And can you tell me, doctor, why I still can't get to sleep?
And night time's just a jungle dark and a barking M16?
And what's this rash that comes and goes, can you tell me what it means?
God help me, I was only nineteen.

A four week operation, when each step could mean your last one on two legs:
it was a war within yourself.
But you wouldn't let your mates down 'til they had you dusted off,
so you closed your eyes and thought about something else.

Then someone yelled out "Contact", and the bloke behind me swore.
We hooked in there for hours, then a God almighty roar;
Frankie kicked a mine the day that mankind kicked the moon:
God help me, he was going home in June.

I can still see Frankie, drinking tinnies in the Grand Hotel
on a thirty-six hour rec. leave in Vung Tau.
And I can still hear Frankie lying screaming in the jungle.
’Till the morphine came and killed the bloody row.

And the Anzac legends didn’t mention mud and blood and tears,
and stories that my father told me never seemed quite real
I caught some pieces in my back that I didn’t even feel...
God help me, I was only nineteen.

And can you tell me, doctor, why I still can’t get to sleep?
And why the Channel Seven chopper chills me to my feet?
And what’s this rash that comes and goes, can you tell me what it means?
God help me, I was only nineteen.


Source 3

Back home you don’t publicise the fact that you were in Vietnam, as, in discussing the war you could either be praised for keeping the ‘commies’ [communists] at bay or accused of being a baby killer. It’s a lot easier to avoid the subject. The anti-war movement is beginning to gain momentum, the ‘All the Way with LBJ’ sentiment of a few years earlier is turning sour.

David Clifton, A Squadron, 3 Cavalry Regiment (National Serviceman), April 1967, immediately after leaving army.
Source 4

You get to Vietnam. You’re in the middle of a war zone. This absolute rush the whole time. The absolute pinnacle of life. When you come off that peak, everything’s downhill, you’ll never get back there. It’s there, you’ve done it, but for the rest of your life you’re trying to find it again. And I was told that the reason I first went back to Vietnam was that I was going back to try and rediscover what I’d lost there. I believe that. No. I left part of me in Vietnam, I left my youth, I left my innocence.


Tasks

1. Create a Word Cloud about the experiences of Australian veterans. Some of the words should be direct from Sources 1 to 4 and others should be original, based on your impressions of the experience of being a Vietnam veteran. (You may make an online word cloud at https://www.jasondavies.com/wordcloud/#%2F%2Fwww.jasondavies.com%2Fwordcloud%2Fabout%2F.)

2. Discuss with a partner: Were veterans’ experiences all negative? What would have been some of the joys or consolations of the war experience?

3. Find another song about the Vietnam War and copy it out. What are the similarities and differences with ‘I Was Only 19’?

End of worksheet
Assessment Task 1: Web of Causes and Consequences

1. Fill in the Web of Causes and Consequences below.
2. Complete the Analytical Tasks and Extended Response on the following pages.

The Vietnam War

Long-term cause

Short-term cause

Short-term consequence

Short-term cause

Long-term consequence

Short-term consequence
Analytical Tasks

1. Was it easier to find short- OR long-term causes? Explain your answer.

2. Are your causes mainly to do with specific people, events OR social conditions?

3. Are your causes mainly within Vietnam itself OR outside it?

4. Was it easier to find short - OR long-term consequences?

5. Are your consequences mainly to do with specific people, events OR social conditions?

6. Are your consequences mainly within Vietnam itself OR outside it?

7. What primary sources can help you to explain your causes and consequences? List 3.


NB. Make any alterations that you feel are necessary to your cause and consequence web based on this analysis.
Extended Response

Construct an argument about the causes and consequences of the Vietnam War.

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__End of assessment task__
Assessment Task 2: The War, Live at 6pm!

**Task:** Create a 4-minute news report on an aspect of the Vietnam War. It should resemble a news report from the late 1960s or early 1970s in Australia.

You may report on an aspect of the war itself or of the protests against it in Australia.

You need to:
- Use verified facts
- Use primary sources in your research
- Produce a technically high-quality report
- Adopt the appropriate tone, dress and language for the time.

You will be assessed on the following criteria:

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<th>Very Low</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>At Standard</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very High</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical accuracy</strong></td>
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<td>Present information that has been verified by a number of reliable sources.</td>
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<td><strong>Historical empathy</strong></td>
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<td>Demonstrate an understanding of what motivated and influenced people’s actions in the past.</td>
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<td><strong>Use of sources</strong></td>
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<td>Process, analyse and synthesise information from primary sources.</td>
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### Communication
Clearly communicate complex historical information to an audience.

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### Use of ICT
Use ICT tools to organise complex information and deliver it to an audience.

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**Teacher Comments:**

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*End of assessment task*