

**EDEXCEL
ENTRY LEVEL IN HISTORY**

CORE TASK

Vietnam



Introduction

In 1965 US troops landed in Vietnam to try to save South Vietnam from a communist invasion from North Vietnam. USA forces were involved in the war in Vietnam from 1965 to 1973.

You have three tasks to complete. You should first read the sources. You should also use any textbooks or notes that you have. If you use both the sources and your textbooks you will get more marks.

You should write down what you can find out. Try to keep your work in order. You will get more marks if you do.

Task One

This task is asking you to find out about something.

You must try to find out what the fighting was like in the Vietnam War.

SOURCE A – This is part of a book written by a US soldier about his time in Vietnam.

The rare occasion when the VC chose to fight a set-piece battle provided the only excitement, but beyond adding a few more corpses to the body count, these encounters achieved nothing.

Our mission was not to win terrain, but simply to kill. The pressure on unit commanders to produce enemy corpses was intense. It is not surprising that some men acquired a contempt for human life.

SOURCE B – This is part of a letter written by a soldier in Vietnam.

Christmas came and went, marked only by tragedy. I'm tired of going to sleep and listening to rockets and mortars and artillery. I'm sick of facing every day a new bunch of kids ripped to pieces. They're just kids – 18, 19, their whole lives ahead of them, cut off. I'm sick to death of it.

SOURCE C – A US soldier describes the orders that he received when he arrived in Vietnam in 1967.

We were told that if we saw a 'gook' (slang for Vietnamese), or thought we saw one, no matter how big or small, we should shoot first. No need for permission to fire. Men, women and children all went into the body count. There were search and destroy missions in which we destroyed everything and killed everybody that we found.

Task Two

This task is asking you to find out why something happened.

The US forces in Vietnam were defeated by the Vietcong. You must try to find out why they were defeated.

SOURCE A - This is from a school textbook.

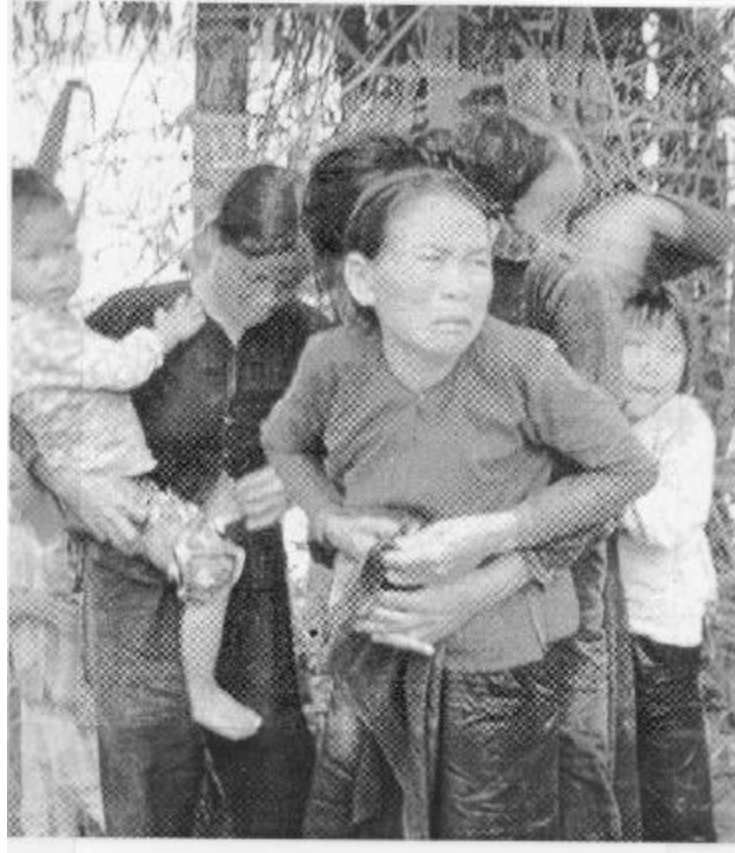
Most of the US soldiers in Vietnam were conscripts. They were drafted into the army for their national service and went off to Vietnam after initial training. They had no experience of jungle fighting.

Altogether about 3,000,000 Americans served in Vietnam. When they returned to the USA, they brought back stories about their experiences

SOURCE B – This is part of a newspaper article about the Vietnam War written in 1972.

What television really wanted was action in which men died cleanly and not too bloodily. When the viewers get a film which shows what a mortar does to a man, really shows the flesh torn and the blood flowing, they get squeamish. They want it to be like the cinema.

SOURCE C – A photograph of the My Lai Massacre



Task Three

This task is asking you to explain what changes have taken place.

You must try to find out what changes there were in Vietnam because of the Vietnam War.

SOURCE A – A list of the effects of the war on Vietnam

2,000,000 men, women and children were killed.
Over 7,000,000 tonnes of bombs were dropped on North Vietnam
2,000,000 people fled from Vietnam to escape famine.
Many mines and other booby traps were left after the war.

SOURCE B – This is part of a school textbook.

During the war the US forces tried to destroy the forest of Vietnam so that they could find their enemies. They dropped chemicals on the trees to destroy the leaves. The chemicals caused lasting damage. Before the war Vietnam exported large amounts of rice. After the war it could not feed its people and there was a major famine.

SOURCE C – A photograph taken in Saigon in April 1975. It shows South Vietnamese trying to leave the city.



MARK SCHEME

Task One - Objective One		
Level 1	Information is collected about the Vietnam War from either the sources OR a text book and is presented in an unstructured manner, i.e. with no attempt to arrange material under different headings, e.g. booby traps, mines etc.	1-5
Level 2	Information is collected about the Vietnam War from BOTH the sources and a textbook and is presented in an unstructured manner.	6-10
Level 3	Information is collected about the Vietnam War from both the sources and a textbook and is presented in a structured manner showing understanding of chronology.	11-15

Task Two - Objective Three		
Level 1	One cause is given for the defeat of the US e.g. the Vietcong used better tactics etc.	1-5
Level 2	Several causes are given for the defeat of the US e.g. Vietcong tactics, inexperience etc.	6-10
Level 3	A sequence of causes is given for the defeat of the US e.g. initial optimism, tactics of the Vietcong, conscripts, Tet Offensive etc.	11-15

Task Three - Objective Four		
Level 1	One change is given, e.g. defoliation etc.	1-5
Level 2	Several changes are given, e.g. destruction of forests, famine, evacuation etc.	6-10
Level 3	A sequence of changes is given, e.g. US tactics led to defoliation and famine, heavy loss of life etc.	11-15

Objective Seven		
Level 1	Students are able to show a general sense of chronology, e.g. in terms of before and after.	1-4
Level 2	Students are able to organise events into an accurate sequence.	5-7
Level 3	Students are able to place events accurately in terms of year and date, e.g. showing understanding of the significance of the passage of time etc.	8-10