RADLEY

Entrance Scholarships

HISTORY

March 2014

Time allowed: 45 minutes

This question is about the use of tanks on the Western Front during the First World War.

You do not need any prior knowledge of this topic but we suggest that you look at the 'Useful Definitions' before reading the sources.

Answer the following questions.

1. **Study Source A.**

   What can you learn from Source A about the use of tanks on the Western Front in 1918?

   3 marks

2. **Study Sources B and C.**

   Does Source B support the evidence of Source C about the use of tanks on the Western Front in 1918? Explain your answer.

   7 marks

3. **Study Sources A, B, C and D.**

   'The main cause of the defeat of Germany in 1918 was the use of tanks.'

   Use the sources to explain whether you agree with this view.

   15 marks

   TOTAL: 25 marks

Useful definitions:

The Western Front:	The term used to describe the line of trenches running from northern France south to the Swiss border. For most of the First World War, neither the British nor the Germans advanced more than a few miles along this line.
Cambrai:	A major battle in 1917 between British and German forces; the first major battle of the War in which tanks were used.
Morale:	Refers to how the British and German soldiers thought about and viewed the War. If they felt positive about the War then we would say that their morale 'was high'. If the War was not going well and if the troops felt negatively, then we would say that their morale 'was low'.
Ludendorff:	Erich Ludendorff - Chief of staff (Commander) of the German armed forces.
Blockade:	Refers to the blockade of German ports by the British Navy. British ships prevented goods and essential supplies from entering German ports – thus ensuring that there were serious shortages of food and essential supplies in Germany.
Allies:	British, French and American troops.
Foch:	Ferdinand Foch - Commander of the Allied forces on the Western Front in 1918.

Source A: A British painting showing tanks being used during an Allied offensive, August 1918.



Source B: From *A Company of Tanks* written in 1920 by a British tank commander. He is describing the use of tanks during August 1918.

We had repeated the success of Cambrai, breaking through the German trenches and taking a great number of German prisoners. The thick mist at dawn had protected the tanks, but it had not been dense enough to seriously handicap the drivers. The advance, spearheaded by the tanks, had been rapid, and only in one or two villages had the enemy shown any strong defence.

Source C: From an account written by a British commander in 1947. He is describing the Western Front in 1918.

Tanks only really affected the morale of the British soldiers. From what I saw, it was clear that the troops were pleased to see them. Tanks were some use for crushing enemy machine gun posts and artillery. They were less effective in moving across enemy territory where there were huge craters and damaged trenches.

Source D: From a textbook about the First World War, published in 1993.

By mid-1918, the Germans had several weaknesses. Their soldiers were exhausted after Ludendorff's failed offensives of March–June. The German war effort had been seriously disrupted by the British naval blockade. On the other hand, the Allies had several advantages. Their armies were being constantly reinforced by the arrival of fresh American troops. The unified command under General Foch enabled the Allies to coordinate their attacks.