

Dunkirk

- 1 In May 1940, things were not going well for the allied British and French forces in northern France. The German army had been cunning, and had managed to separate the allies into two smaller groups.
- 4 One group of nearly 400,000 allied soldiers had to retreat from the advancing German army until they reached the French coast near the town of Dunkirk. The soldiers could not retreat any further because the sea was behind them, so they worked out the best way to defend the beach and settled down, hoping for rescue. But Dunkirk harbour had been bombed, so the great warships that could transport men back to England had to stay offshore because they couldn't reach the troops on the beaches. The German army was poised to attack.
- 12 It looked like all was lost for these soldiers.
- 13 The British commanders lost no time. They requested that the owners and crew of every boat along the south-east coast of England should go and help rescue the troops. Overnight, a great flotilla of small boats – rowing boats, fishing boats, pleasure boats, yachts, even lifeboats – set out to cross the 75 km of English Channel to ferry the men from the beach at Dunkirk to the warships. As they approached France, the little boats were attacked with bombs, mines and even torpedoes, but they didn't give up.
- 20 In the end, nearly 340,000 British and French troops were evacuated from Dunkirk over the space of nine days. They left behind them guns, vehicles, ammunition and food – but the lives of most of the soldiers were saved.



Name:	Class:	Date:
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- 1 In the first paragraph, the German army is described as “*cunning*”.
Why does the author use the word “*cunning*” instead of *clever*?

Tick **one**.

The word “*cunning*” makes us think of foxes, and the German army were like foxes.

We admire clever people, and the writer doesn’t want us to admire the German army.

There is no good reason. The words mean exactly the same thing.

The German army were lucky in the decisions they made.

2g

1 mark

- 2 Look at the paragraph beginning “*One group of ...*”.
Find and copy one word that means the same as *withdraw*.

2a

1 mark

- 3 Look at the paragraph beginning “*One group of ...*”.
Find and copy one word that shows that the warships were huge and powerful.

2g

1 mark

- 4 According to the text, what did the soldiers do while they hoped for rescue?

2b

1 mark

- 5 “*It looked like all was lost for these soldiers.*”
Give **two** reasons for this statement.
Explain your reasons.

2d

2 marks

- 6 “*It looked like all was lost for these soldiers.*”
Why is this paragraph so short?

2f

1 mark

- 7 Why do you think the British commanders “*lost no time*”?

2d

1 mark

- 8 How do you think the German army felt when they discovered so many of the allied soldiers were being rescued?
Explain your answer using ideas from the text.

2e

2 marks

- 9 What do you think the main lesson we can learn from this event is?

Tick **one**.

When to sail a small boat across the channel.

You should defend yourself while you hope for rescue.

You should not give up, even when something seems hopeless.

You should always obey a request from the army.

2c

1 mark