



# Dunkirk:

## Operation Dynamo

May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1940 the Nazis invaded France. Hundreds of thousands of British troops were in France at the time helping fight the Nazis. The English troops quickly became trapped about 40 miles away from the sea. The German air force, called the Luftwaffe, dropped bombs and leaflets on the British. The English used the leaflets as toilet paper! The leaflets said:

"British soldiers! Look at the map: it gives your true situation! Your troops are entirely surrounded – stop fighting! Put down your arms!"

The British were forced to fight their way to the coast of France and headed for Dunkirk. The troops were surrounded on all sides by the Germans. Their only escape was the ocean

By May 27<sup>th</sup>, the evacuation from Dunkirk had begun. But, there was a problem. The water surrounding Dunkirk was too shallow for the large military ships to get to the shore. Somehow the men had to get to the transport ships. The British government sent out a call for "shallow draft" boats to go to Dunkirk to support the evacuation effort. They became known as *The Little Boats of Dunkirk*. Almost 700 ships

participated in Operation Dynamo. Some of the boats included:

Medway Queen made the most trips (seven) rescuing 7,000 men.

Tamzine was the smallest boat (15 feet long) in the operation.

Royal Daffodil evacuated 7,461 people in five trips. It was the most people evacuated by a passenger ship. On June 2, a German bomb hit the ship, but the vessel reached the shore one last time.

Sundowner was owned by Charles Lightoller, a former officer on the

Titanic. He insisted on taking his ship to Dunkirk with his son, Roger. They saved 130 soldiers and nearly capsized.

In 9 days, more than 300,000 people were rescued. However, lots of military equipment was abandoned. 2,472 guns, 20,000 motorcycles, almost 65,000 other vehicles, and more than 400 tanks were left behind as well as tons of bullets, food and fuel. The English also lost 68,000 soldiers

After the evacuation, Winston Churchill addressed the nation and said:

**We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.**



Use the following Chart to make a picto-graph. Draw boats showing how many men escaped each day of Operation Dynamo. One boat = 10,000 people. Round to the nearest 10,000.

Troops landed in England from Dunkirk, 27 May to 4 June

<b>27 May</b>	7,669
<b>28 May</b>	17,804
<b>29 May</b>	47,310
<b>30 May</b>	53,823
<b>31 May</b>	68,014
<b>1 June</b>	64,429
<b>2 June</b>	26,256
<b>3 June</b>	26,746
<b>4 June</b>	26,175
<b>Totals</b>	338,226

70,000									
60,000									
50,000									
40,000									
30,000									
20,000									
10,000									
	May 27	May 28	May 29	May 30	May 31	June 1	June 2	June 3	June 4