

Was the battle of the  
somme a success or  
failure? essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

·650, 000 Germans killed by the end of the Battle of the Somme, 200, 000 more than the British·After first day, learnt a lot of lessons·Tanks were first introduced (16th September)·The British used many new tactics, including bombing the enemy trench, causing it to collapse and tunnel underground and attack the enemy by surprise·They used barbed wire as well·Started placing commanders on first line, so that they could give out commands quickly·French were more successful; had more weapons and faced weaker defences·Managed to survive its purpose·Pozières was captured on the 4th of August, due to the help of the Australians. After two weeks of exhausting fighting and a 12-and-a-half-hour grenade battle, the Germans lost and went on to defend another area. ·Managed to attack the German second position on 14th July by attacking at dawn. This caught the Germans by surprise and this caused the British to gain ground·On the 15th September, the British managed to take over Highwood after all their attempts, however, they had suffered 332 casualties·

·60, 000 British men killed or injured on first day·Many British bombshells failed to explode, leaving some German defence untouched·Shells had churned up the ground, causing it to become more difficult to advance·German defences and trenches were better and more constructed than British defences·Tanks broke down and became useless·In 3 months, only gained 5 miles of land·The main purpose of the war was to relieve pressure at Verdun, however, there were more casualties in the Somme than there were in Verdun·The Somme was a very hilly place, making it difficult to fight·The British themselves only gained 2 miles on land·450, 000 British lives lost by the end·Week long bombardment gave the Germans plenty of

time to prepare. 60% of all officers involved on first day were killed. General Sir Douglas Haig's tactics failed. Many of the British soldiers died because of the barbed wire and they looked like fish caught in nets. The headquarters and General Rawlinson was 20km away from the front line, making it impossible to send commands.

A majority of the soldiers were volunteers and were only half-trained. 'The Big Push' - General Sir Douglas Haig's plan was to use 700,000 men. Before the actual battle itself, the British launched an eight day Artillery attack, using 1,573 guns and continued without breaks. The British sent out 150,000 shells an hour on average. The British assumed that this would destroy the German front line, though this was not the case. At first, the Public Support for the Battle of the Somme was very high. When the public soon learned about the losses, it lowered. The weather was very wet and the rain made the ground muddy, making it difficult to fight. In hindsight and from the British viewpoint, the Battle of the Somme was the wrong battle (effectively like sending cavalry against tanks) in the wrong place (an offensive near the Channel might have worked well) at the wrong time (it happened to be one of the wettest summers on record). The Germans were unaffected by the artillery fires, as they were hidden in thick metal bunkers. When the fires stopped, they advanced on the advancing British troops. |