

# Teaching Resource: Rampant Dragons

## New Zealanders in Armour in World War II

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Publisher: John Douglas Publishing Ltd

Curriculum Level: Years 11–13 (NCEA Levels 1–3)

### ***Social Sciences***

#### **History:**

**Level 6:** Understand how people's perspectives on past events are shaped by the context of the time.

**Level 7:** Understand how historical forces and movements have influenced the causes and consequences of events of significance to New Zealanders.

**Level 8:** Understand how competing interpretations of the past shape people's perspectives.

#### **English:**

**Levels 6–8:** Close reading of non-fiction texts; analysing author's purpose and perspective.

### ***Overview***

Rampant Dragons provides a detailed account of the 4th New Zealand Armoured Brigade during World War II, from its formation in response to inadequate British armoured support to its final campaigns in Italy in 1945. The book combines operational history with personal narratives, offering insights into the experiences of New Zealand tank crews.

### ***Key Themes***

Evolution and role of armoured warfare in WWII

New Zealand's military contributions in the European theatre

Personal experiences of soldiers in armoured units

Leadership and decision-making in military contexts

Technological advancements in warfare

## ***Learning Objectives***

### **Students will:**

Analyse the strategic importance of the 4th New Zealand Armoured Brigade in WWII.

Evaluate personal accounts to understand the human experience of war.

Assess the impact of technological developments on military tactics and outcomes.

Develop critical thinking by comparing differing perspectives on historical events.

## ***Suggested Learning Activities***

### **1. Source Analysis:**

Examine excerpts from the book to identify primary and secondary sources.

Discuss the reliability and perspective of different accounts.

### **2. Mapping Campaigns:**

Create maps tracing the movements of the 4th Armoured Brigade in Italy.

Analyse the geographical challenges faced during campaigns.

### **3. Role-Play and Debates:**

Simulate military planning sessions to understand decision-making processes.

Debate the effectiveness of armoured units in various battles.

### **4. Research Projects:**

Investigate the development of armoured vehicles used by New Zealand forces.

Present findings on how these technologies influenced battle outcomes.