The landing at Gallipoli was a planned attempt by British strategists to gain control of the Dardanelles in Turkey. This would allow allied forces to regain contact with Russian troops, and free up shipping and resources locked in the Black Sea.

On 25 April 1915, Australian and New Zealand Army Corps troops were landed ashore on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Unfortunately, where they landed was not the planned site; instead, they faced the wildest, steepest and most inhospitable terrain on the entire peninsula.

They faced devastating fire from the Turks as well. At the end of the first day, they were ordered to dig in and hold the land they had taken—about 5.5 square kilometres—for which they had paid with over 2,000 lives.

As the weeks progressed, conditions became more and more appalling for the troops. Sanitary conditions were virtually nonexistent, the food was inadequate and water supplies were in extremely short supply. Temperatures soared and the men were tormented by swarming flies and other vermin, attracted by the thousands of unburied bodies in 'no-man's land'. And with the Turks holding the high ground, the Anzacs were vulnerable to artillery and machine guns, while snipers took their toll of anyone caught in the open.

The battle descended into a virtual stalemate, where huge losses were incurred for little or no advantage. The Anzacs could not advance any further, and the Turks could not drive them into the sea. By October, British commanders were holding discussions concerning a withdrawal of troops from Gallipoli. The problem was to convince the Turkish forces the Anzacs were still in place, while in fact they were withdrawn over several weeks. The withdrawal was so successful that evacuation was completed on 20 December with scarcely any loss of life.

By the end, there were over 26,000 Australian casualties; more than 8,000 of those were killed. About 2,500 New Zealand troops were killed; India lost 1,700 troops; the French approximately 10,000; and the British about 25,000. The official figure for Turkish losses is 87,000, but there is speculation that the actual figure was much higher.

The Gallipoli campaign was, by any military standards, a failure. But it led to recognition of what was to become known as 'The Spirit of Anzac'. This was a spirit of courage, self-sacrifice and enduring 'mateship' and loyalty. It was a spirit that poked fun at itself as well as at adversity. It was a spirit that was to define the way the brand new nation of Australia was to see itself for decades to come.
Read the text and answer the questions.

1. Explain why the landing at Gallipoli took place.

2. What was wrong with the site where the Anzacs landed?

3. What do you think the word 'stalemate' means?

4. Match each country or nationality with the correct fact.
   - Turks
     - lost approximately 1,700 troops
   - British
     - planned the landing at Gallipoli
   - Australians/New Zealanders
     - lost approximately 10,000 troops
   - France
     - ordered to hold the land they had taken at the end of the first day of battle
   - India
     - held the high ground in Gallipoli

5. Imagine you are an Anzac who survived the landing. You have now been in Gallipoli for two weeks. Describe your feelings about the situation in a short letter to your family.

6. Write two synonyms for each of the words the author uses to describe 'The Spirit of Anzac'. You can use a dictionary to help you.
   (a) courage
   (b) self-sacrifice
   (c) mateship
   (d) loyalty