



Operation Iraqi Freedom

The military strategy for **Operation Iraqi Freedom** was different from the strategy for the Persian Gulf War. Instead of a long bombing campaign before the invasion, the air attack and invasion were planned for the same time. The Americans also used a much smaller military force for this war. Some military experts even felt that the invasion force was too small to win such a war. These experts knew that although the Iraqi army had grown weaker over the years, it still numbered about 400,000 men.



After the bombing attack that was meant to kill Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi army began firing surface-to-surface missiles at coalition bases in Kuwait and setting fire to oil wells in southern Iraq.

On the night of March 21, 2003, coalition forces streamed into southern Iraq and a massive aerial assault was launched against the capital city of Baghdad, destroying many important military targets. These air attacks were referred to as a "shock and awe" campaign. This alone, though, did not topple Hussein's government.



Why do you think the American military thought they could win this war with fewer soldiers than they had used in the Persian Gulf War?

The coalition forces quickly captured two airfields in western Iraq to prevent them from launching Scud missile attacks against Israel – as they had in the Persian Gulf War in 1991.

The strategy of the coalition commanders was to bypass most of the major cities in the south and focus on taking Baghdad, the capital city, and the center of Saddam Hussein's authority in the country. Coalition armies would first be met by cheering crowds, but also quickly came to face massive civil disorder and chaos.



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1. With a straight line, connect each word on the left with its meaning on the right.

A	campaign
B	expert
C	earnest
D	awe
E	topple
F	prevent
G	expect
H	commander
I	advance
J	oppress

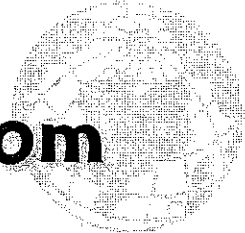
to stop	1
to put down or suppress.	2
chief officer or leader	3
to move or bring forward	4
a military operation	5
a person with a special skill	6
sincere	7
feeling of admiration or fear	8
to conquer or defeat	9
to look forward to	10

2. The coalition's military invasion of Iraq was given the name Operation Iraqi Freedom. Do you feel this is a suitable name? Defend your answer.

3. The coalition forces felt that the Iraqi people would welcome them as liberators. Do you feel there was a good chance of this happening? Why or why not?



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1. Fill in each blank with the correct word from the reading.

- a) A lengthy _____ campaign before the invasion of Iraq was not planned by the coalition leaders this time.
- b) The military planners of Operation Iraqi Freedom planned the land invasion and the _____ attack for the same time.
- c) The Americans also had a much _____ force compared to that in the 1991 Persian Gulf War.
- d) It was thought that the Iraqi army numbered about _____ men.
- e) The first coalition bombing attack was an attempt to kill _____.
- f) The war began on _____, 2003.

2. **Circle** the correct answers.

- a) The air attack on Baghdad was called:

steel rain shock and awe punishment alley freedom fighters

- b) The coalition forces were afraid the Iraqis would fire these into Israel:

Scud missiles Patriot missiles stealth bombs hand grenades

- c) Coalition strategy was to bypass the smaller cities and concentrate on:

Damascus Karbala Dahuk Baghdad

NAME: _____

After You Read 



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3. Answer each question with complete sentences.

a) Why do you think the Iraqis set fire to their own oil wells?

b) Why do you think the Americans were so concerned about Israel staying out of the war?

c) Why do you think coalition leaders expected the conflict to end quickly and without much effort? Why didn't it?

Research

The Prime Minister of Great Britain at this time was **Tony Blair**. It was Prime Minister Blair who provided much in the way of military assistance and moral support to the Americans in this war. He was Prime Minister from 1997 to 2007. Blair is the British Labor Party's longest-serving Prime Minister and the only person to have led the Labor Party to three consecutive general election victories.

Write a brief report (about one-half page) about Prime Minister Blair's life and accomplishments.