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# Britons to Arms!

**A**MONG the various THREATS used by the TYRANNICAL and INSIDIOUS ENEMY, who is attempting our DESTRUCTION and OVERTHROW,

## The Plunder of our Country!

Is held out as the REWARD to the ARMIES which are to INVADE us, and the MURDER of the INHABITANTS!

to gratify the REVENGE of the CORSICAN USURPER, whose diabolical and restless Spirit cannot endure to see us in the Enjoyment of the Fruity of our honest Industry, and the LIBERTIES of our happy CONSTITUTION.

*That this is the avowed Intention of the Invasion of BONAPARTE,*

he has told us in a Hundred different Ways—he has moreover insultingly called us a Nation of Shopkeepers, Tradesmen, Mechanics, and Manufacturers—too fond of our Ease to engage in the Hardships of a Soldier's Life; and that as we depend on our Safety upon our Fleet, he will attempt various LANDINGS BOTH HERE AND IN IRELAND, at the same Time, relying on the Success of one of them to carry his Point—such are his PLANS. Be it ours to turn them into DEFEAT and DISGRACE.

It is no wonder he should Wish to escape the Vigilance of our BRAVE TABS who have so often made FRANCE feel the Power of their Thunder, and will again whenever they meet them. But, BROTHER COUNTRYMEN!! the present Moment calls to us who inhabit this happy Island, TO PERFORM OUR DUTY ON SHORE, while our Fleets are employed on the Ocean. It is probable, that, from the various Points that FRANCE can make her Attacks, she will succeed in effecting a Landing somewhere.—Let us then be prepared, not only to meet it with Vigilance, but repel it with Success. Let us shew FRANCE, AND ALL THE WORLD,

That there are BRITONS ON SHORE, spread over every Part of the UNITED KINGDOM, ready to meet them at the Point of the Bayonet, and resolved not to allow one to return to FRANCE to tell the Tale of their Overthrow. Let every Man among us, who is capable of bearing Arms, repair to the Spot nearest to his Home, and give up a Portion of his Time to learn the Use of them, and how best to annoy the Enemy with Success, who shall have dared to set his Foot on BRITISH GROUND. This is the Moment to give a bright Example to the World, as we have often done in Times past, by uniting as one Man for the Defence of our Families, and every Thing that is dear to us. Never was the Appeal so strong to BRITONS as at present. But strong as it is, never will our National Character shine forth with greater Strength and Energy. We will shew the World what they have never before seen—

## One Million of Free-Men in Arms!

resolved to defend their Country to the last drop of their Blood—In such a Cause, SUCCESS WILL ATTEND OUR EXERTIONS—And those who survive the Conflict, will be rewarded by a happy and joyful Old Age, and teach their Children, and their Children's Children, that all the Sacrifices they made of Time, Exertion, or Fatigue, are nothing compared to the Comforts they have thereby transmitted down to them, in having saved their Country, and all that was dear to them, from a cruel and bloody Tyrant. Bold and determined in our Conduct, let it be our unremitting Care to be Vigilant and Active at the present Moment, and shew FRANCE that justly as we Value our Navy, for its Vigilance and its Power, THE INHABITANTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM ARE ONE AND ALL at their Posts ready, not only to meet them on BRITISH GROUND, but to avenge the Insult of any Army, however numerous it may be, that dares to land.

## Fellow Countrymen! Do not be deceived!!

It is only by being thus prepared to repel by Force of Arms every ATTACK that can be made upon us, that we are to look for a SECURE and HONOURABLE PEACE—Let the World see this, and she will be your Friends and Allies—Let FRANCE know this is your internal State, and she will compel BONAPARTE to seek for PEACE with you—You know the MAN against whom you have to contend—He has written his own perfidious and blasphemous Character in LETTERS OF BLOOD, in every Country where the deluded People have listened to his Promises—To compromise the Question between him and us, would be to SURRENDER OUR INDEPENDENCE and even our EXISTENCE AS A NATION—And shall this happen in our Days? Shall we give up what our Ancestors purchased with their Blood, and what has raised this Country to the highest Pitch of Greatness and Prosperity?—BANISH THE IDEA FROM OUR HEARTS—We will, by our UNWEARIED EXERTIONS, at this present important Moment, give the Lie to all the Labels which BONAPARTE published, even during the short Period we were at Peace with him, and which, in Fact, were all hatched from this one impudent and insulting Menace, that "WE DARED NOT CONTEND AGAINST FRANCE SINGLE HANDED."

*Away with such FRENCH Bombast! --- We not only dare to CONTEND,*

## But we Dare to Conquer!

London: Printed for J. HATCHARD, No. 190, PICCADILLY.—Price 6d. per Dozen. [J. BRETTILL, Printer.

## BRITONS TO ARMS POSTER, ABOUT 1803

REFERENCE: | SUGGESTED AGE GROUPS: KS2, KS3, KS4, KS5, LIFELONG LEARNERS | MILITARY HISTORY, ANGLO-FRENCH WARS, FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY WARS, PROPAGANDA

### NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

Napoleon Bonaparte (Napoleon I) was a French military general who became the first Emperor of France in 1804 as a result of the French Revolution.

### THE TREATY OF AMIENS (1802)

In 1802 Britain and France signed the Treaty of Amiens. This brought to an end the French Revolutionary Wars (1792-1802), a series of conflicts across Europe that France fought against Britain and other European states. Peace was short-lived.

### NAPOLEONIC WARS (1803-1815)

The Napoleonic Wars were a series of major global conflicts pitting the Napoleonic French Empire and its allies against an array of European states formed into various coalitions. The conflicts were a consequence of unresolved disputes resulting from the French Revolution and French Revolutionary Wars.



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The Napoleonic Wars are often categorised into five periods: the Third Coalition (1805), the Fourth Coalition (1806-07), the Fifth Coalition (1809), the Sixth Coalition (1813-14), and the Seventh Coalition (1815).

The Wars conclude with the Battle of Waterloo and Napoleon's second abdication on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1815.

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## CONFLICT BETWEEN BRITAIN AND FRANCE

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In 1803 Britain declared war on France. Napoleon responded by assembling an invasion fleet against Britain. This poster is a call to arms and a declaration for British men to defend their country against the French. The poster shows us how fearful Britain was of a French invasion, and their will to fight back by claiming that one million men were ready to take up arms. The population of Britain in 1801 was 10.5 million people.

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## PROPAGANDA

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The poster references two alleged insults against the British made by Napoleon – that Britain was a nation of shopkeepers and that the British were 'too fond of our Ease to engage in the Hardship's of a Soldier's Life...'. The reference to shopkeepers suggested that Britain was a commercial nation rather than a military one. Britain's military power at this time lay with the Royal Navy. During the periods of the French Revolutionary Wars (1793-1802) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) the power of the Royal Navy was at its height and exceeded that of other European nations.

The poster refers to Napoleon as the Corsican usurper – Napoleon was born in Corsica in 1769. This is an attack upon Napoleon personally rather than the French as a nation.

The production of posters and handbills was an important method of circulating information in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Newspapers were expensive and taxed by the government. Posters, public notes, and handbills could be produced and circulated cheaply and were therefore an effective form of communication.



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## GLOSSARY

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Tar – the term Tar or Jack Tar was used to describe a sailor. The term is thought to derive from the fact that tar was used by sailors to pitch or waterproof the ship.

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## OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

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### NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

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Britannica page on Napoleon Bonaparte: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Napoleon-I>

BBC History page on Napoleon Bonaparte: [https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/bonaparte\\_napoleon.shtml?basic=1](https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/bonaparte_napoleon.shtml?basic=1)

History page on Napoleon Bonaparte: <https://www.history.com/topics/france/napoleon>

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### NAPOLEONIC WARS

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Britannica page on the Napoleonic Wars: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Napoleonic-Wars>

History of War article on the Napoleonic Wars: [http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/wars\\_napoleonic.html](http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/wars_napoleonic.html)

National Army Museum page on the Napoleonic Wars: <https://www.nam.ac.uk/subjects/napoleonic-wars>

National Archives research guide on the Napoleonic Wars: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/napoleonic-wars/>

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### TREATY OF AMIENS

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Text of the Treaty of Amiens: [https://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/diplomatic/c\\_amiens.html](https://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/diplomatic/c_amiens.html)



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Learning and Educational Archive Resources from Northumberland

Overview of the Treaty of Amiens: <https://www.thenapoleonicwars.net/peace-of-amiens-overview>

History Today article on the Treaty of Amiens: <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/months-past/treaty-amiens>

Britannica page on the Treaty of Amiens: <https://www.britannica.com/event/Napoleonic-Wars/The-Treaty-of-Amiens>



# LEARNING ACTIVITIES: BRITONS TO ARMS POSTER, ABOUT 1803

**TOPIC:** MILITARY HISTORY, ANGLO-FRENCH WARS, FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY WARS, PROPAGANDA

**SUBJECT AREAS:** HISTORY, LITERACY, ART, GEOGRAPHY



| Background   | Activity  | Resources   |
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| <p>In 1802 Britain and France signed the Treaty of Amiens. This brought to an end the French Revolutionary Wars (1792-1802), a series of conflicts across Europe that France fought against Britain and other European states.</p> <p>The Napoleonic Wars were a series of major global conflicts pitting the Napoleonic French Empire and its allies against an array of European states formed into various coalitions. The conflicts were a</p> | <p><b>See:</b> What was the Treaty of Amiens?</p> <p><b>See:</b> Which conflict ended as a result of the Treaty of Amiens?</p> <p><b>See:</b> Who was Napoleon Bonaparte?</p> <p><b>See:</b> What were the Napoleonic Wars?</p> <p><b>See:</b> Which countries were involved in the Napoleonic Wars?</p> <p><b>See:</b> Which periods are the Napoleonic Wars broken into?</p> <p><b>See:</b> When did the Napoleonic Wars end?</p> <hr/> <p><b>Think:</b> How did Napoleon become Emperor of France?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> What was the social, political and economic state of France in 1803?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> What was the social, political and economic state of Britain in 1803?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> Why did Britain fear a French invasion?</p> | <p><a href="https://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/diplomatic/c_amiens.html">https://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/diplomatic/c_amiens.html</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.thenapoleonicwars.net/peace-of-amiens-overview">https://www.thenapoleonicwars.net/peace-of-amiens-overview</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/wars_napoleonic.html">http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/wars_napoleonic.html</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.sparknotes.com/biography/napoleon/key-people/">https://www.sparknotes.com/biography/napoleon/key-people/</a></p> |



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| <p>consequence of unresolved disputes resulting from the French Revolution and French Revolutionary Wars.</p> <p>Napoleon Bonaparte (Napoleon I) was a French military general who became the first Emperor of France in 1804 as a result of the French Revolution.</p> <p>The Wars conclude with the Battle of Waterloo and Napoleon's second abdication on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1815.</p> | <p><b>Think:</b> Did France invade Britain?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> Who won the Napoleonic Wars?</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Discuss how was the political structure in France in 1801 was different to the political structure in France before the French Revolution?</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Discuss how the French Revolution was a cause of the Napoleonic Wars.</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Create a timeline showing the events that led up to Britain declaring war on France in 1803.</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Create a table showing the outcomes and impacts the Treaty of Amiens had for both Britain and France.</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Add to your table to show how the Treaty of Amiens either benefitted or disadvantaged France and Britain.</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Debate whether it was right or wrong for Britain to declare war on France so soon after the Treaty of Amiens.</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Create a timeline of the key events of the Napoleonic Wars. Make note of the different coalitions over time.</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Create a map showing which countries fought on which sides of the Napoleonic Wars.</p> <p><b>Do:</b> Create a profile showing the key leaders from each country involved in the Napoleonic Wars.</p> |  |
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|   | <p><b>Do:</b> Compare Europe in 1803 to Europe in at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. What were the consequences of the war for different European nations?</p>   |  |
| <p>In 1803 Britain declared war on France. Napoleon responded by assembling an invasion fleet against Britain. This poster is a call to arms and a declaration for British men to defend their country against the French. The poster shows us how fearful Britain was of a French invasion, and their will to fight back by claiming that one million men were ready to take up arms. The population of Britain in 1801 was 10.5 million people.</p> <p>The poster references two alleged insults against the British made by Napoleon – that Britain was a nation of shopkeepers and that the British were ‘too fond of our Ease to</p> | <p><b>See:</b> What is this document?</p> <p><b>See:</b> When was this document created?</p> <p><b>See:</b> What is the purpose of this document?</p> <p><b>See:</b> Who is the poster an attack against?</p> <p><b>See:</b> Which two alleged insults against the British does the poster reference?</p> <hr/> <p><b>Think:</b> What is propaganda?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> Why is propaganda used?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> When is propaganda used?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> Is this document an example of propaganda?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> Who is the target audience of this document?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> Is propaganda factual?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> Is propaganda a reliable source?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> Is propaganda today different to propaganda in 1803?</p> <p><b>Think:</b> How is propaganda spread today?</p> <hr/> <p><b>Do:</b> Read through the poster. Highlight and annotate the linguistic choices and literary devices used in the text.</p> | <p><a href="https://www.thenapoleonicwars.net/return-of-war-1803-overview">https://www.thenapoleonicwars.net/return-of-war-1803-overview</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/napoleon/art-and-design/propaganda.html">https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/napoleon/art-and-design/propaganda.html</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2018/02/26/napoleons-chamber-pot-propaganda-fake-news/">https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2018/02/26/napoleons-chamber-pot-propaganda-fake-news/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.napoleon.org/en/magazine/publications/bonaparte-and-the-british-prints-and-propaganda-in-the-age-of-napoleon/">https://www.napoleon.org/en/magazine/publications/bonaparte-and-the-british-prints-and-propaganda-in-the-age-of-napoleon/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/napoleon-won-the-propaganda.html?chrome=1">https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/napoleon-won-the-propaganda.html?chrome=1</a></p> |



engage in the Hardship's of a Soldier's Life...'. The reference to shopkeepers suggested that Britain was a commercial nation rather than a military one. Britain's military power at this time lay with the Royal Navy. During the periods of the French Revolutionary Wars (1793-1802) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815) the power of the Royal Navy was at its height and exceeded that of other European nations.

The poster refers to Napoleon as the Corsican usurper – Napoleon was born in Corsica in 1769. This is an attack upon Napoleon personally rather than the French as a nation.

The production of posters and handbills was an important method of circulating information in the 18<sup>th</sup>

**Do:** Analyse and discuss the impact that the linguistic choices and literary devices have on the audience.

**Do:** Think about the key message of the poster. In one sentence write down what the poster is trying to tell the audience.

**Do:** Research and fact check the statements made in the poster.

**Do:** Highlight the sections of the poster that express a fact.

**Do:** Highlight the sections of the poster that express an opinion.

**Do:** Discuss what we can learn about Britain's attitude toward France at this time from the poster.

**Do:** Discuss what we can learn about France's attitude toward Britain at this time from the poster.

**Do:** Find other examples of anti-Napoleon propaganda.

**Do:** Find examples of pro-Napoleon propaganda used within the French Empire.

**Do:** Discuss how Napoleon used the arts as a form of propaganda.

**Do:** Find examples of anti-British propaganda used by France and Napoleon.

**Do:** In groups, debate which side of the Napoleonic Wars had the most successful use of propaganda.

**Do:** Create your own propaganda poster.

**Do:** Compare propaganda from both sides of the Napoleonic Wars. Are they similar or different? What can be learned from them?





and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Newspapers were expensive and taxed by the government. Posters, public notes, and handbills could be produced and circulated cheaply and were therefore an effective form of communication.

**Do:** Think about current world events. Make a note of any propaganda you might have seen recently.

**Do:** Find an example of present-day propaganda. Compare it to propaganda from the Napoleonic Wars. What is similar and what is different?

**Do:** Imagine you were going to create propaganda today. Plan how you would present and circulate it. Is this different from how propaganda was circulated in 1803?

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