

Name: _____

Lost Battalion Study Guide

**This is a true story of about 500 soldiers who were ordered to advance into the Argonne Forest against heavy German resistance and hold their position at whatever cost.

- 1) In what country does the film take place?
France
- 2) In what year does the film take place?
1918
- 3) What division (number) is going to attack the Argonne Forest sector?
77th
*** Major Whittlesey's troops will have to take Carlevaux Mill and hold it.
- 4) What did Major Whittlesey feel the mission was?
Suicide
- 5) What was Major Whittlesey's occupation before the war?
Lawyer
- 6) Where was Major Whittlesey from?
New York
- 7) What was the name (number) of the battalion?
308th
- 8) Why did Lt. Leak think his assignment was a mistake?
He was from Texas and his unit was from New York
- 9) What U.S. city did most of the soldiers in the battalion come from?
New York
- 10) Why were the soldiers blinded?
Gas
- 11) What are the 2 kinds of stuff?
Stuff going out (ours), stuff coming in (theirs)
- 12) What is the weapon you do have to worry about?
Bayonets
- 13) What does Whittlesey tell the troops before they leave the trench?
Fix the bayonets
- 14) What was the signal to leave the trench?
Whistle
- 15) According the German officers, why were the Americans a tough opponent?
They were unpredictable
- 16) What were the French units doing?
Retreating
- 17) What did they do with the pigeons?
Use them to send messages
- 18) Whittlesey's division was the only one to do what?
Achieve their mission
- 19) What were they afraid of the Germans doing?
Attacking from behind
- 20) Why did Whittlesey want to start fires and burn the coffee?
To make the Germans think they were having a hot breakfast and not ready
- 21) Why did Whittlesey order any soldier who went for water to be shot?
There was a German sniper
- 22) With the French flank a no-show, what happened to the Americans?
They were on their own
- 23) What did Whittlesey decide to do?
Hold their position

- 24) Why are they known as the "lost battalion"?
They were cut off from virtually all communication
- 25) Why is Whittlesey adamant about holding his area?
He believes this can help end the war
- 26) What happens after the bombing begins?
Americans are accidentally bombed by friendly fire
- 27) How did Whittlesey get the bombing to end?
Sends the pigeon with their location
- 28) What did the German officer (Major Prinz) want to discuss with Lt. Leek?
American surrender
- 29) What caused the men to get excited?
Seeing the French plane
- 30) How were the Allies able to find the battalion's position?
The pilot drew their location on a map
- 31) What did the note ask of Whittlesey?
To surrender
- 32) What was his response?
The throws the white flag of surrender (he will not surrender)
- 33) What weapon do the Germans use against the Americans?
Flamethrowers
- 34) How did the German officer describe the Americans after the attack?
Great soldiers
- 35) What did Whittlesey give to General Alexander?
Dog tags of the dead
- 36) What was the name of the wounded carrier pigeon who helped save the battalion?
Cher Ami
- 37) Of the 500 men who served with Whittlesey, how many survived?
About 200
- 38) How many days did the siege last?
5 days
- 39) Why were they called the "lost battalion"?
They were cut off from communication with headquarters

Setting: October, 1918 (toward the end of WWI)

**Major Whittlesey enters the Argonne Forest on October 2, 1918
Argonne Forest in France (German-held territory)

Main Characters:

- 1) 308th Battalion (part of the 77th Division of the U.S. Army)
- 2) Major Charles Whittlesey (commander of the 308th)
- 3) General Robert Alexander (commander of the 77th Division)
- 4) Pvt. Yoder = Montana
- 5) Lt. Leek = Texas
- 6) Pvt. LaPasti (runner) = New York
- 7) Pvt. Cepalia/Pvt. Rosen = New York
- 8) Pvt. Krotoshinsky = Poland
- 9) Major Prinz = German officer