

Hitler's team of rocket scientists (including Wernher von Braun, Walter Dornberger and Hermann Oberth) invented early weapons of mass destruction.

The V-2, a tremendously powerful flying bomb (which the three referenced men developed at Peenemunde, Germany's rocket-research station) was built largely by slave laborers during the last seven months of World War II. It was first used in September of 1944.

Slightly more than six thousand V-2 rockets were built. Aside from those used in testing and training, most were fired at Britain and Antwerp.

Although they were notoriously inaccurate, these rockets were devastating when they reached their intended destination. Around 2,724 Brits were killed by them and another 6,000 (or so) sustained serious injuries.

Carrying a one-ton warhead, this liquid-fueled rocket was forty-seven feet (fourteen meters) long and could fly (at supersonic speeds) as high as fifty miles. Once launched, it was difficult to shoot down.

It was important, therefore, for the Allies to capture V-2 launch sites (in Germany and in German-occupied territory).

Credits:

From "Race for Rockets," episode one of Space Race (a BBC documentary/drama produced with cooperation between British, German, Russian and American teams).

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/V2-Rockets-Weapons-of-Mass-Destruction>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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