STUDENT HANDOUT

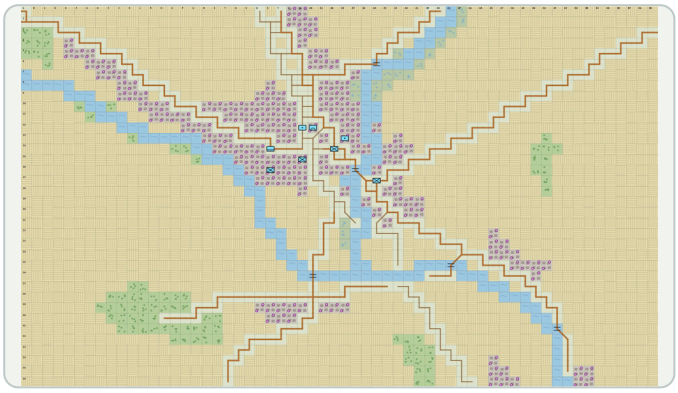
Voznesensk: The Southern Crossing

Voznesensk and Rakove, Mykolaiv Oblast, Ukraine · 2 to 3 March 2022

Information as of October 2026



Scenario illustration · AI generated



Student map · own side only · Simulation situation map · reconstructed terrain and estimated deployments; not verified historical positions.

Learning objectives

- Locate the town, Rakove and the river confluence.
- Distinguish the historical observation accounts from the assumed drone presence.
- Explain why a defeated attacker receives a preserve mission.

Run time and a good result

Default run clock: 4 minutes 0 seconds at 1×, excluding pauses, briefing and discussion. Time controls change elapsed play time.

Objective: Put five Russian formation functions out of action. This limited damage mission represents breaking up the assault.

Voznesensk: The Southern Crossing: Put five Russian formation functions out of action. This limited damage mission represents breaking up the assault. Put at least 5 represented opposing units out of action; decoys do not count. The authored limit is 240 simulation seconds across 2 stages. Compare objective progress, time, losses, drone expenditure and recorded civilian harm with a second run. A strong classroom result also explains the source evidence and reconstruction estimates; it does not verify a historical casualty count.

Atrocity notice

The UN Commission found war crimes by Russian authorities, including killings, torture and sexual violence, and a small number of violations by Ukrainian forces. Its March 2023 findings are context, including for later scenarios.

These reports describe the wider conflict. They do not establish that every crime occurred in this modeled battle.

Studying or commanding a side does not endorse its conduct. Drone Front never lets players target civilians, hospitals, schools or places of worship. Civilian harm from simulated strikes is counted and shown in the debrief, including nonzero harm. Civilian massacres are never playable operations. Designated terrorist forces and Wagner remain computer controlled; Gaza war events remain excluded from play.

▼ Dated reports and findings

- 2023-03-16 · UN Commission of Inquiry: war crimes in Ukraine

Learn more: the laws of war

- ICRC: Geneva Conventions and commentaries
- ICRC: Customary IHL database
- UN: Genocide Convention (9 December 1948)
- UN: Rome Statute (17 July 1998), articles 6–8

Historical source notes

Local defence and regular formations combined to stop the advance. Artillery and infantry both contributed.

Reconnaissance drones were already used in this war. Their local presence here is assumed, while the historical accounts describe human observation.

The defenders retained the town, but residents suffered deaths, damage and displacement.

Civilian harm

The Wall Street Journal documented damaged homes and a clinic. Local officials told its reporter that about ten civilians died during the fighting.

Evidence for learning objectives

Trofimov's 16 March 2022 report describes local volunteers working with regular troops; the model selects only some formation functions.

The WSJ report describes volunteers relaying observations by phone. Local quad and Orlan-10 flights remain simulation assumptions.

Local officials reported about ten civilian deaths during combat and two later mine deaths; neither figure is a verified injury total.

Timings

For 60 minutes, brief for 15, run with pauses for 25 and discuss for 20. For 90 minutes, repeat from the other side. For 180 minutes, compare the sources and trace the geography.

Session	Plan
45 minutes	Brief: 10 min; Run: 15 min; Collect: 5 min; Review: 15 min
60 minutes	Before questions: 5 min; Brief: 10 min; Run: 20 min; Collect: 5 min; Debrief and after questions: 15 min; Discussion: 5 min

Session	Plan
90 minutes	Before questions: 5 min; Brief: 10 min; Run 1: with drones: 20 min; Run 2: without drones: 15 min; Collect: 5 min; Compare and discuss: 25 min; After questions: 10 min
180 minutes	Before questions: 10 min; Brief and staff roles: 15 min; Run 1: with drones: 25 min; Run 2: without drones: 20 min; Break: 10 min; Run 3: syndicates: 30 min; Collect: 10 min; Seminar replay and debrief: 40 min; After questions: 10 min; Close: 10 min

Staff roles

commander
Keep the limited mission in view.

intelligence
Track the dated stages and distinguish reported facts from assumptions.

fires
Record the simulated effects and civilian exposure.

droneOps
Record observation flights and their contribution to the run.

Opposing staff objective

Keep losses below five formation functions. The historical attack failed; your mission is to preserve the represented force.

Decision points

- Opening: which parts of the town and approach area belong to the selected episode?
- Second day: how does the Russian withdrawal change the meaning of preserving forces?
- After the run: how does the result compare with the recorded failure of the assault?

Before and after questions

1. **Which account of the Voznesensk defence is supported by Trofimov's reporting?**

   A. Local volunteers supplied relief but did not join the town's defence.
   B. Regular troops withdrew before local volunteers confronted the attack.
   C. The town was retained by regular troops without local participation.
   D. Local volunteers and regular troops both contributed to the defence.

2. **What does the five-counter threshold mean in the Voznesensk scenario?**

   A. It is an authored damage goal representing disruption of the assault.
   B. It is the verified number of Russian formations lost in the battle.
   C. It is the verified number of Russian vehicles abandoned in Rakove.
   D. It is a territorial goal requiring control of five distinct town districts.

3. **What does the WSJ's Voznesensk observation account establish?**

   A. It verifies every local Orlan-10 flight represented by the model.
   B. Human volunteers observed positions and relayed coordinates by phone, while local drone types remain assumptions
   C. It verifies the number of local quad flights shown in each hand.
   D. It describes both sides relying exclusively on drone observation.

4. **How should a Russian preserve result at Voznesensk be discussed?**

   A. As evidence that the historical Russian assault captured the town.
   B. As evidence that Russian forces stayed in the town after 3 March.
   C. As meeting a limited model goal despite the historical attack's failure.
   D. As reproducing a verified absence of Russian losses during the battle.

5. **Which civilian tally preserves the scope and attribution of the Voznesensk report?**

   A. Twelve verified battle deaths, with the later mine deaths included.
   B. Ten verified injuries during combat, with no reported civilian deaths.
   C. Ten military deaths during combat, attributed to local officials.
   D. About ten civilian combat deaths, plus two later, per local officials.

Discussion

- What did local defenders contribute alongside regular troops?
- Which drone assignments remain assumptions?
- Why are later civilian deaths kept separate from this battle count?

Debrief rubric

Strong
Meets the objective or explains why it was not met; uses the published sources and run evidence, separates known facts from assumptions, compares both sides' losses and cost exchange, and evaluates precautions against civilian harm.

Adequate
Describes the objective and main decisions, identifies at least one source and model limitation, reports losses and harm, and gives a reasoned change for a second run.

Weak
Reports only victory or points, treats teaching settings as real performance, gives unsupported historical claims, or omits uncertainty and civilian harm.

Published readings

1. The Wall Street Journal, Yaroslav Trofimov: A Ukrainian Town Deals Russia One of the War Most Decisive Routs, 16 March 2022, Pulitzer republication
2. BBC Mundo: The small Ukrainian city that stopped the Russian advance, 23 March 2022, 24horas republication
3. Associated Press, Matt OBrien: Ukrainian drone enthusiasts sign up to repel Russian forces, 4 March 2022, KRDO republication

Complete source list

Wikipedia: Battle of Voznesensk, accessed 5 October 2026
The Wall Street Journal, Yaroslav Trofimov: A Ukrainian Town Deals Russia One of the War Most Decisive Routs, 16 March 2022, Pulitzer republication
BBC Mundo: The small Ukrainian city that stopped the Russian advance, 23 March 2022, 24horas republication
Associated Press, Matt OBrien: Ukrainian drone enthusiasts sign up to repel Russian forces, 4 March 2022, KRDO republication
Reuters, Stephen Grey, Maria Zholobova and Maurice Tamman: The global supply trail that leads to Russia drones, 15 December 2022
Radio Svoboda, Mykhailo Shtekel: Voznesensk shelling damage and destroyed bridges (17 March 2022)