

## Key Stages 1 & 2 Assemblies

### Remembrance for older pupils - What do we remember?

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#### **In preparation:**

- The Royal British Legion CD Rom and DVD.
- Screen.

#### **Start**

In the History section of the DVD show one of the following: World War One film; Armistice Day in 1920; any of the films about anniversaries.

#### **Script**

Can any of you tell me what that footage was of?

It was men and women remembering a time in the past when Britain was at war and the people who were killed in that war. That war happened a long time ago and lots of people died, but people still wanted to remember what had happened – why do you think that was?

- Because they knew people.
- Because their own lives were affected by war.

Do you think you need to know someone in a war or to have been in one to know about and think about wars? Wars are terrible things and many people die in them. Do you think that is something we should all think about?

This week is a time for us to remember. On Wednesday it will be an important anniversary of a war that is now used for us all to remember the horrors of conflict.

This week we will learn about the importance of Remembrance. We will hear about how we remember those affected by wars and we will think about why this week is so important many years after the events being remembered in the film took place.

*Show a picture of a poppy.*

Do you recognise this flower? This week we will learn about the importance of this flower and why many of us are wearing one.

#### **Moment of reflection**

Wars happen all over the world and they kill and injure many people. Even if we do not feel affected by them directly we should remember those that are and hope that in the future there are less wars.

## Poem or prayer:

### Remember

**Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)**

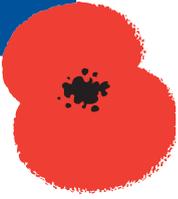
Remember me when I am gone away,  
Gone far away into the silent land;  
When you can no more hold me by the hand,  
Nor I half turn to go, yet turning stay.  
Remember me when no more day by day  
You tell me of our future that you plann'd:  
Only remember me; you understand  
It will be late to counsel then or pray.  
Yet if you should forget me for a while  
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:  
For if the darkness and corruption leave  
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,  
Better by far you should forget and smile  
Than that you should remember and be sad

Or:

### Night in al-hamra

**Saadi Youssef (translated from the Arabic by Khaled Mattawa)**

A candle on the long road  
A candle in the slumbering houses  
A candle for the terrified stores  
A candle for the bakeries  
A candle for the journalist shuddering in an empty office  
A candle for the fighter  
A candle for the doctor at the sick bed  
A candle for the wounded  
A candle for honest talk  
A candle for staircases  
A candle for the hotel crowded with refugees  
A candle for the singer  
A candle for the broadcasters in a shelter  
A candle for a bottle of water  
A candle for the air  
A candle for two lovers in a stripped apartment  
A candle for the sky that has folded  
A candle for the beginning  
A candle for the end  
A candle for the final decision  
A candle for conscience  
A candle in my hand



## Key Stages 1 & 2 Assemblies

### Remembrance for older pupils - The poppy

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#### **In preparation:**

- The Royal British Legion CD Rom, for pictures and poetry to project.
- Screen.

#### **Start**

Show one of the pictures of a poppy from the CD Rom.

#### **Script:**

What is this a picture of? We saw this symbol yesterday, do you remember why?

It is a symbol of Remembrance – that is it helps us to remember something.

Do you wear a poppy?

The poppy is a very special symbol that reminds of something specific – it is the symbol of Remembrance Day. Remembrance Day is the day for us to remember all the people who have fought, been killed, have been injured or had their lives affected by war.

Do you know why the poppy was chosen? Let me read you a poem:

#### **In Flanders Fields**

**John McCrae**

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw the sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

That poem was written after World War One. In the fields where the war was fought the only thing that would grow was the poppy. The poppy as a flower reminded people of the importance of life, it became a symbol of hope on the battlefield.

The poem was written by a Canadian doctor, John McCrae, who was in World War One and saw the poppies growing. He worked in an Army field hospital and tried to save the lives of those who were injured. But he also saw a lot of soldiers die. He wrote the poem to tell people not to forget those that had been killed. The poppy inspired people who believed that those who had fought should not be forgotten and they started to wear a poppy at the time of the anniversary of when the fighting in the war had stopped.

The poppy became people's way of saying that they remembered the terrible suffering of war and that it shouldn't be forgotten.

Now we wear the poppy every year to remember all the people who have fought and been affected by war. The Royal British Legion was created to help the veterans who returned from World War One and their families. The Legion still uses the poppy as a symbol of Remembrance and the sale of poppies is still used to raise funds for ex-Service men and women and their families.

*Option: show some footage from the DVD of people wearing poppies or being at a Remembrance event.*

### **Moment of reflection**

The poppy is a symbol that we can all wear, that can help us all to remember the horrors of war. To think about and hope for those people who fight in them and those people who are affected by them. The poppy can help us to remember how important peace is.

### **Prayer or poem:**

#### **Why Wear a Poppy**

**Don Crawford**

"Please wear a poppy," the lady said,  
And held one forth, but I shook my head,  
Then I stopped and watched as she offered them there,  
And her face was old and lined with care;

But beneath the scars the years had made  
There remained a smile that refused to fade.  
A boy came whistling down the street,  
Bouncing along on care-free feet.

His smile was full of joy and fun,  
"Lady," said he, "may I have one?"  
When she'd pinned it on, he turned to say;  
"Why do we wear a poppy today?"

The lady smiled in her wistful way  
And answered; "This is Remembrance Day.  
And the poppy there is a symbol for  
The gallant men who died in war.

And because they did, you and I are free -  
That's why we wear a poppy, you see.  
I had a boy about your size,  
With golden hair and big blue eyes.

He loved to play and jump and shout,  
Free as a bird, he would race about.  
As the years went by, he learned and grew,  
And became a man - as you will, too.

He was fine and strong, with a boyish smile,  
But he'd seemed with us such a little while  
When war broke out and he went away.  
I still remember his face that day.

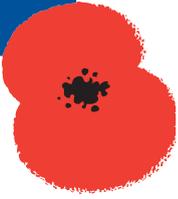
When he smiled at me and said, 'Goodbye,  
I'll be back soon, Mum, please don't cry.'  
But the war went on and he had to stay,  
And all I could do was wait and pray.

His letters told of the awful fight  
(I can see it still in my dreams at night),  
With the tanks and guns and cruel barbed wire,  
And the mines and bullets, the bombs and fire.

Till at last, at last, the war was won -  
And that's why we wear a poppy, son."  
The small boy turned as if to go,  
Then said: "Thanks, lady, I'm glad to know.

I slunk away in a sort of shame,  
And if you were me, you'd have done the same:  
For our thanks, in giving, if oft delayed,  
Though our freedom was bought - and thousands paid!

And so, when we see a poppy worn,  
Let us reflect on the burden borne  
By those who gave their very all  
When asked to answer their country's call  
That we at home in peace might live.  
Then wear a poppy, Remember - and Give.



## Key Stages 1 & 2 Assemblies

### Remembrance for older pupils - Memorials

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#### In preparation:

- The Royal British Legion CD Rom – picture of the Cenotaph in the History of The Royal British Legion section.
- Get a picture of a war memorial local to your school (if not possible there is a picture of a village memorial in The Royal British Legion in pictures and a picture of the women's war memorial).
- Screen.

#### Start

Show a picture of the Cenotaph.

#### Script

Do you recognise this structure? This is the Cenotaph in London. It was built in 1919 for the first anniversary of the end of World War One – Armistice Day.

The Cenotaph was designed and built by Edwin Lutyens at the request of the Prime Minister, Lloyd George. It was not intended to be a permanent structure, but the public response to it as a site for leaving wreaths to the dead and missing encouraged the authorities to make it permanent.

Why do you think it became important for people to lay wreaths?

During World War One and Two the people that were killed in the battles such as soldiers, doctors, ambulance drivers and nurses were buried near to where they were killed. That meant that their relatives at home could not go and visit the graves or put flowers on them.

Memorials such as the Cenotaph became the place that people could go to.

Show another war memorial – ideally one in your own area.

Do you recognise this memorial?

This is to the people who were killed in World War One from this (that) area. Memorials like this are in most towns and villages across the UK because so many people were killed or injured. The memorials sometimes have names on them, sometimes they just say that they are in memory to those that fought. The memorials also exist to remind us all of the sacrifice made by those that fought.

#### Moment of reflection

All around the UK, the Commonwealth and across the world are memorials about war. Those memorials remind us of the individuals who fought, that at home those people had families and friends. It is because of those individuals from all across the world that we are able to have the lives we do today. Every time we see a memorial we will remember the individuals.

## Prayer or poem

### The Cenotaph

Charlotte Mew, 1919

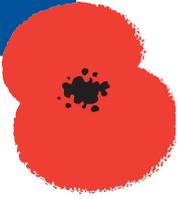
Not yet will those measureless fields be green again  
Where only yesterday the wild sweet blood of wonderful youth was shed;  
There is a grave whose earth must hold too long, too deep a stain,  
Though for ever over it we may speak as proudly as we may tread.  
But here, where the watchers by lonely hearths from the thrust of an  
inward sword have more slowly bled,  
We shall build the Cenotaph: Victory, winged, with Peace, winged too, at the column's head.  
And over the stairway, at the foot -- oh! here, leave desolate, passionate hands to spread  
Violets, roses, and laurel, with the small, sweet, tinkling country things  
Speaking so wistfully of other Springs,  
From the little gardens of little places where son or sweetheart was born and bred.  
In splendid sleep, with a thousand brothers  
To lovers - to mothers  
Here, too, lies he: Under the purple, the green, the red,  
It is all young life: it must break some women's hearts to see  
Such a brave, gay coverlet to such a bed!  
Only, when all is done and said,  
God is not mocked and neither are the dead  
For this will stand in our Market-place -  
Who'll sell, who'll buy?  
(Will you or I  
Lie each to each with the better grace?)  
While looking into every busy whore's and huckster's face  
As they drive their bargains, is the Face  
Of God: and some young, piteous, murdered face.

Or,

### In Memoriam (Easter, 1915)

Edward Thomas

The flowers left thick at nightfall in the wood  
This Eastertide call into mind the men,  
Now far from home, who, with their sweethearts, should  
Have gathered them and will do never again.



## Key Stages 1 & 2 Assemblies

### Remembrance for older pupils - Who are we remembering?

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#### In preparation:

- The Royal British Legion CD Rom.
- Screen.
- In this assembly any of the poets from the selection from World War One on the CD Rom can be selected and the script simply adapted. As an example Isaac Rosenberg and Wilfred Owen have been selected here.

#### Start

Show the pictures of some of the poets from the section 'Soldier Poets of World War One'

#### Script

Do you recognise any of these people?

These are soldiers who fought in World War One. They are also poets.

World War One introduced something called 'conscription'. This meant that men of a certain age could be called up to fight regardless of what their job was. World War One was also a war where the government encouraged all men to join the Army even if they had other jobs.

Both of those things meant that there were men of lots of different backgrounds and skills who fought and were injured or killed.

World War One affected lots of people and many of those who fought wrote about their experiences. Two of these were Isaac Rosenberg and Wilfred Owen. Their poems helped the public in Britain to understand what fighting in the trenches was like.

## **Isaac Rosenberg**

Isaac Rosenberg was born into a working-class Jewish family that had emigrated from Russia and eventually moved to the East End of London.

His economic circumstances prevented him from attending Oxford or Cambridge, but he was a talented artist and enrolled in evening classes in the Art School of Birkbeck College, London University. He had hoped to make his living as a portrait artist and had moved to South Africa to pursue his career when the war broke out. He returned to England in 1915, enlisted in 1916 and was killed on 3 April, 1918.

### **In The Trenches (1916)**

#### **Isaac Rosenberg**

I snatched two poppies  
From the parapet's ledge,  
Two bright red poppies  
That winked on the ledge.  
Behind my ear  
I stuck one through,  
One blood red poppy  
I gave to you.  
The sandbags narrowed  
And screwed out our jest,  
And tore the poppy  
You had on your breast ...  
Down - a shell - O! Christ,  
I am choked ... safe ... dust blind, I  
See trench floor poppies  
Strewn. Smashed you lie.

## **Wilfred Owen**

Owen was injured in March 1917 and sent home; he was fit for duty in August, 1918, and returned to the front line. On November 4, just seven days before the Armistice, he was caught in a German machine gun attack and killed. He was twenty-five when he died.

### **Anthem for a Doomed Youth**

#### **Wilfred Owen**

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?

Only the monstrous anger of the guns.

Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle

Can patter out their hasty orisons.

No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,

Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, --

The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;

And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?

Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes

Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.

The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;

Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,

And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Before 1919 Service men and civilians were not remembered unless they were officers. World War One changed that because so many ordinary people had gone to fight. All across the country war memorials appeared, mainly paid for by local communities so that they would not forget the individuals – the real people.

*Select one of the case studies from World War Two or the one of Rifleman Yubraj Rai. Ask students to read them out.*

Today men and women continue to take part in and be affected by conflict. It is just as important today that we remember their names as it was 90 years ago. After all we are in a society that is relatively peaceful and that is partly due to the sacrifice that others have made.

### **Moment of reflection**

It is sometimes difficult to think of something as horrible as war producing beautiful poetry, but the poetry helps us to understand the horrible experience of war. Although the poetry is often sad it reminds us of what it must have been like to have lived in the conditions that those poets did. It reminds us that those who fight in far away places are still real people who feel and think just like we do.

### **Poem or prayer**

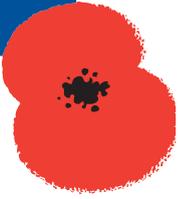
#### **John Jarman**

John Jarman was an officer in World War Two and was killed during the Battle for Normandy in 1944.

#### **At A War Grave**

##### **John Jarman**

No grave is rich, the dust that herein lies  
Beneath this white cross mixing with the sand  
Was vital once, with skill of eye and hand  
And speed of brain. These will not re-arise  
These riches, nor will they be replaced;  
They are lost and nothing now, and here is left  
Only a worthless corpse of sense bereft,  
Symbol of death, and sacrifice and waste.



## Key Stages 1 & 2 Assemblies

### Remembrance for older pupils - Remembrance Day

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#### In preparation:

- The Royal British Legion CD Rom.
- Screen.

#### Start

Show pictures of poppies or the Field of Remembrance outside Westminster from the pictures section of The Royal British Legion.

#### Script

11 November is always Remembrance Day.

Each year on the Sunday nearest to 11 November, at 11 o'clock in the morning, a Remembrance service is held at the Cenotaph. The service is to commemorate British and Commonwealth Service men and women who died in the two World Wars and later conflicts. HM The Queen, religious leaders, politicians, representatives of state and the Armed and Auxiliary Forces, gather to pay respect to those who gave their lives defending others.

*Option – show pictures of World War One.*

The first Remembrance Day took place in 1919, one year after the end of World War One. That war had been one of the worst wars to have taken place. Millions of men from all across the world fought in it. It was also the first war that large numbers of women took part as ambulance drivers, nurses and in war work, such as factory jobs or working on farms.

Millions of men from both sides were killed.

*Option, if not used earlier in the week:*

Some of the bloodiest fighting of World War One took place in the Flanders and Picardy regions of Belgium and Northern France. The poppy was the only thing which grew in the aftermath of the complete devastation. John McCrae, a doctor serving there with the Canadian Armed Forces, deeply inspired and moved by what he saw, wrote these verses.

**In Flanders Fields**  
**John McCrae**

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw the sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

*Or Option 2:*

Some of the worst fighting took place in France and Belgium. That is where the only thing that seemed to grow after the fighting had finished were poppies.

For everyone:

After the War had finished the poppy became a symbol of Remembrance. On the first anniversary of the end of the war a service was held in memory of all those who had fought. At 11 o'clock, the same time that the Armistice (peace agreement) was signed there was a Two Minute Silence.

*Show a picture of the Remembrance Day service from the pictures section*

Now every year on 11 November at 11 o'clock there is a Two Minute Silence. This is also carried out on the Sunday nearest to 11 November.

At the service the following words are usually read out in memory of those who are killed in wars.

**Extract from For The Fallen**  
**Laurence Binyon**

“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.”

Men and women still serve in the British Forces today. And Remembrance Day is for all those that have served and been affected by war.

## **Moment of reflection**

Remembrance Day is a day of reflection, it allows us to remember or think about all those people who are affected by wars, both in the past and now. It allows us to think about all those people who suffer in wars all around the world. And it reminds us how important it is to work for peace.

## **Prayer or poem**

### **Anthem for Doomed Youth**

**Wilfred Owen**

What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?

Only the monstrous anger of the guns.

Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle  
Can patter out their hasty orisons.

No mockeries for them; no prayers nor bells,  
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, --  
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;  
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.

What candles may be held to speed them all?

Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes  
Shall shine the holy glimmers of goodbyes.

The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;  
Their flowers the tenderness of patient minds,  
And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Or,

### **Sometimes**

**Sheenagh Pugh**

Sometimes things don't go, after all,  
from bad to worse. Some years, muscadel  
faces down frost; green thrives; the crops don't fail.  
Sometimes a man aims high, and all goes well.  
A people sometimes will step back from war,  
elect an honest man, decide they care  
enough, that they can't leave some stranger poor.  
Some men become what they were born for.  
Sometimes our best intentions do not go  
amiss; sometimes we do as we meant to.  
The sun will sometimes melt a field of sorrow  
that seemed hard frozen; may it happen for you.