**Beyond Remembrance Day**

2018 saw 100 years since the end of the First World War and there were special events on and around the 11 November (Armistice Day) to remember the sacrifice and contributions of those involved. This short activity goes beyond the immediate remembrance of the soldiers who were killed or affected during the conflict and focusses on those who helped to respond to the humanitarian impact of the war.

## Why we remember

1. Begin by asking learners if they were involved in any form of centenary events for the end of World War 1 (or to summarise what they did if the school was involved) and ask them to share experiences.

* How did the experience make them feel?
* Why do they feel it is important to remember something that happened so long ago?

1. Ask learners what flower is connected with the First World War and why. You can display the following poem (slide 2) to give them an idea.

In Flanders fields the poppies grow  
    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 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.

Consider the words that are used in the poem – how do they help with remembering what happened? Are there any words or phrases that stand out to leaners in the poem that help them to reflect on WWI?

After the end of the First World War, the poppy was one of the only flowers to grow on the fields that were ravaged by war. It was inspired as a symbol of remembrance by the poem “In Flanders Fields” written by Canadian soldier John McCrae in May 1915. We now use the poppy to represent the lives of the soldiers who died during the First World War and has been used since then in several countries to remember the loss of life in other conflicts since then.

1. Introduce learners to the idea that as well as soldiers there were many others who served their country during the First World War and in conflicts since then. Many people gave service as volunteers to support the humanitarian response to the war. Can they think of who these people might have been and what they did?

Share some examples of different roles volunteers with the Red Cross played in the PowerPoint (slide 3).

* Medical support for the wounded and sick – providing hospitals, doctors, nurses in the battlefields and back at home for returning soldiers.
* Transport services – transporting vital medical supplies, food, fuel and other things needed to provide for people’s basic needs.
* Missing persons service – helping families to track down people missing during the conflict and trying to reunite them or give them information.
* Rest stations – for injured soldiers returning from the field.

(You can explore these roles further [here](https://vad.redcross.org.uk).)

## Humanitarian actions

1. These roles are not always publicly remembered in the annual Armistice Day events. Why do learners think it might be important to also remember these actions? What qualities do they show? Responses might include:

* Kindness and respect for humanity can be shown even in times of crisis;
* They highlight our shared humanity and the dignity of ensuring basic physical and emotional needs are met;
* The kindness and selflessness shown can inspire us to help others.

5) Thinking about the conflicts around today, what parallels can learners see in the people who help?

6) What qualities do the learners have that they could use to help others in their own lives?

*This resource was written by Rob Bowden and Rosie Wilson of Lifeworlds Learning and published in November 2018.*