

HISTORY

Fighting in the Trenches

YEAR 6



Get ready for your next field trip...
back to World War One!

National Curriculum History KS2: World War One

Students should be taught:

- › about a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends students' chronological knowledge beyond 1066
- › to know and understand the history of these islands as a coherent, chronological narrative, from the earliest times to the present day: how people's lives have shaped this nation and how Britain has influenced and been influenced by the wider world
- › to gain historical perspective by placing their growing knowledge into different contexts, understanding the connections between local, regional, national and international history; between cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history; and between short- and long-term timescales

Before Your Trip to the Trenches:

Through non-fiction texts, reliable websites and accurate historical fiction, build an idea of what the average World War One soldier was like. How old could they be? Did they have experience of this before? How would you feel if you were in their position? What questions do you have about their experiences? Note down these ideas.

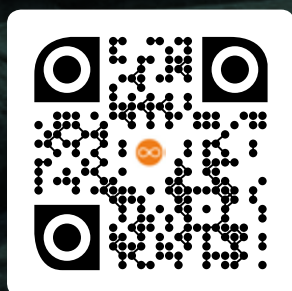
Immersive Experience

Allow students time to explore the trenches on their own first, making sure that they are in a safe position. After a few minutes of independent exploration, turn the headset screens off using your teacher dashboard to bring students back into the room. Collect student ideas about points of note, then dive back in, making sure you draw attention to:

- › The sounds they can hear.
- › The information given to them by the WWI soldier who is speaking.

Conflicts Collection

Look for this icon



Subject

Area of Study

HISTORY

MODERN HISTORY: WORLD WAR ONE

English

Poetry; life as a soldier

Mathematics

Code breaking

Science

Light

Art

Periscope; design and make product for a purpose

Geography

Europe; effects of conflict on geography

Art

Great artists; mastery of technique

After the ClassVR Session:

- What did you see? What did you hear? What did you think it would smell like? What would the surfaces have felt like? Give students the opportunity to discuss the experience with a partner or group to share ideas and different perspectives whilst focusing on the following questions:
- How would it make you feel being there?
- Do any of these senses/emotions remind you of any other experiences?

Follow-Up Activities

- › Once students have gained an understanding of what it might have been like to fight in the trenches, they should use drama skills to create a video diary of one of the soldiers.
- › Create a stop-motion animation of key events of the First World War as a more creative timeline. This can be made more informative by either incorporating text into the animation or by adding a voice over to explain what is happening at each point.
- › Create artefacts that could have been found in the trenches. These can then be swapped with other members of the class to test their historical enquiry skills. Note down observations and questions about the object. These can later be used as an interactive display with hidden explanations of what the objects are.

Links Across the Curriculum



ENGLISH (READING)

Continue to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks; prepare poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, show understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience.

Look at a range of poetry around the theme of World War One, e.g. Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon and explore new vocabulary as well as key features. Create illustrations for mental images conjured by poems or use stills from the VR experience and label with relevant quotes from them.



ENGLISH (WRITING)

Draft and write by describing settings, characters and atmosphere and integrating dialogue to convey character and advance the action.

Create a "Role on the Wall" for the World War One soldier and use vocabulary and carefully selected phrases from further reading to fill this. Use VR experience to help add own ideas to this, building a sense of what it would have felt like to be in the trenches. Explore different text types through this theme e.g. Soldier's letter home; historical narrative; poetry; non-chronological report; diary.



MATHEMATICS

Solve number and practical problems; generate and describe linear number sequences.

Present students with a range of number sequences. They must find the next term in the sequence, find its corresponding letter in order to crack the code and uncover the secret message. Discuss cryptography and why it was used during wartime.



SCIENCE

Use the idea that light travels in straight lines to explain that objects are seen because they give out or reflect light into the eye.

Explore how we know that light travels in straight lines and learn how our sight works through light reflecting off objects. Use this knowledge to create a periscope to be used in the trenches to allow soldiers to see over the top. Consider other real-world applications for this knowledge.



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design purposeful, functional, appealing products for themselves and other users based on design criteria; select from and use a range of tools and equipment to perform practical tasks.

Design a periscope to be used in the trenches in order to see what is happening 'over the top' from the relative safety of the trench. Discuss and agree upon suitable success criteria.



GEOGRAPHY

Locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe; understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom and a region in a European country.

Locate on maps both before and after World War One and discuss what they notice. In KS3 students could explore how conflict can affect geography, looking at population and political boundaries.