

WWI: Paper Poppies Teachers' Resource

Age Range

Key Stage 1

Key Stage 2

Curriculum Links

Art and Design

History

English

RE

Number of Lessons

Three

Location

Church and School





WWI: Paper Poppies

Overview

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Project Aims

- To engage students with the commemoration of the First World War centenary
- To help students understand how the First World War impacted upon their own locality
- To provide students with the opportunity to experience aspects of local history first hand
- To help students understand the role of the church in early 20th century communities
- To provide students with the opportunity to develop and apply a range of investigative, communication and creative skills.

WWI: Paper Poppies

Overview

Description

During the period of 2014 to 2018 people all over the world are engaged in learning, events and activities to commemorate the centenary of WWI. This project provides students with the opportunity to learn how this world event impacted upon the lives of people from their own community.

Suitable For

Churches with WWI memorials.

Find your local CCT church at visitchurches.org.uk

If you wish to deliver this activity in a church cared for by Churches Conservation Trust, please contact learning@thecct.org.uk to confirm availability and book the building.

If you wish to use a church not cared for by Churches Conservation Trust, please contact the relevant parish or diocese in advance.



WWI: Paper Poppies

Lesson One

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Location

Church

Overview

Students will walk in the footsteps of local people, over many hundreds of years, and find the names of local people who were involved in WWI.

Aims

- To discover objects that commemorate WWI in the local community
- To understand why churches were so often chosen as locations for WWI memorials

Finding the Inscriptions

Introduction

Visit your local historic church so that students can see the WWI memorial(s). This experience will introduce students to the names of real people from their own community who were involved in WWI - people who attended that church, walked down its aisles and sat in its pews 100 years ago.

Discussion

The visit will also provide the opportunity to engage students in discussion about the role the church played in community life in Britain at the time of WWI and why churches made suitable locations for the erection of local memorials after the war (see Teachers' Notes). Take photographs of the memorial(s) and make notes of the names and inscriptions on them to refer to in the next lesson.



WWI: Paper Poppies

Lesson One

You Will Need

- Camera(s)
- Paper and pens/pencils to record names and inscriptions on memorials

Plenary

Discuss with the class how their visit to the church and seeing the WWI memorial(s) made them feel and why they think it is important for communities to remember local people who were involved in world events like WWI.



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Lesson Two

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Location

School

Overview

Students research the names they have found, learning more about the lives of local people involved in WWI.

Aims

- To conduct research using different mediums & materials
- To make and share discoveries about local people who were involved in WWI
- To empathise with the lives and experiences of local people from the past

The Stories Behind the Inscriptions

Introduction

As a whole class, look at the photographs taken and notes made during the visit to the church. Read out the names recorded on the war memorial(s) and engage students in a discussion about who they think those people were and what their lives were like 100 years ago.

Activity

Students are now going to conduct research to find out facts about people named on the memorial(s). You may structure the research in whatever way best suits your students – working as individuals, in small groups or as a whole class. Assign/let the students choose the names to be investigated and begin (see Teachers' Notes). Print or make copies of the documents that the students find. You may wish to extend the research element of this project over more than one lesson.



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Lesson Two

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You Will Need

- Printed or projected copies of the photos and notes taken in Lesson One
- Access to research websites and/or hard copies of relevant WWI documents
- Access to printer/photocopier or ability to save documents to be printed later

Plenary

Have the students show copies of the documents they found and share the information that the documents reveal. Discuss whether the information they discovered about the people named on the memorial was what they expected or if there were any surprises.



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Lesson Three

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Location

School

Overview

Students make a paper poppy and consider remembrance.

Aims

- To understand the significance of the poppy as a symbol of war remembrance
- To commemorate the role of local people in WWI through art.

Introduction / Discussion

Discuss with students how and why the poppy was chosen as a symbol of war remembrance (see Teachers' Notes).

Activity

Tell students that they are now going to make their own remembrance poppies out of copies of the documents they found during their research. Show the students the photographs of the example poppies (provided). Have the students place the poppies into the plant pots.

Commemorative Visit

Make a return visit to the church to install the pots of poppies around the WWI memorial(s). You may wish to make the return visit to the church at a later date, depending on the time you have available.



WWI: Paper Poppies

Lesson Three

You Will Need

- Printed copies of WWI documents from Lesson Two
- Poppy flower and leaf tracers
- Green and red crayons/colouring pencils
- Wooden skewers
- Green paper & glue (optional – for wrapping stems)
- Scissors
- Sellotape
- Plant pots
- Polystyrene or oasis foam

Extension Activities for the Whole Project

Make a WWI map of the community, plotting the location of places significant to the locality's WWI history such as the addresses of the people commemorated on the WWI memorial (found on census and military records), the location of military barracks and recruitment centres, the location of local air fields, etc.

Have students conduct research into the role of their own ancestors in WWI and create reports to share in class.

Invite the whole school to make paper poppies to add to the original class display at the local church

Plenary

Discuss as a whole class what the students have learned through the project, their feelings about the people they researched and how they feel when they look at the paper poppy display that they have created and installed in the church.

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Teachers' Notes

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Lesson One: Finding the Inscriptions

The Parish Church During WWI

When WWI broke out, parish churches often became hubs for activities that supported the war effort (fundraising events, clothing drives, charity concerts) and the local vicar and fellow parishioners provided support to people and families impacted upon by the war.

In many parishes, especially small rural parishes, the absence of people from the community who had left to go and fight in the war would have been very noticeable and the death of a soldier from the parish would have been cause for sadness and mourning throughout the community. Many parish magazines written between 1914 and 1918 reflect the impact that WWI had on the lives and lifestyles of communities across Great Britain with articles by the vicars and other contributors recording the activities undertaken within the parish to support the war effort, the opinions of individuals on whether the war was justifiable or not and the role played by people from the parish on the front lines and battlefields of WWI.



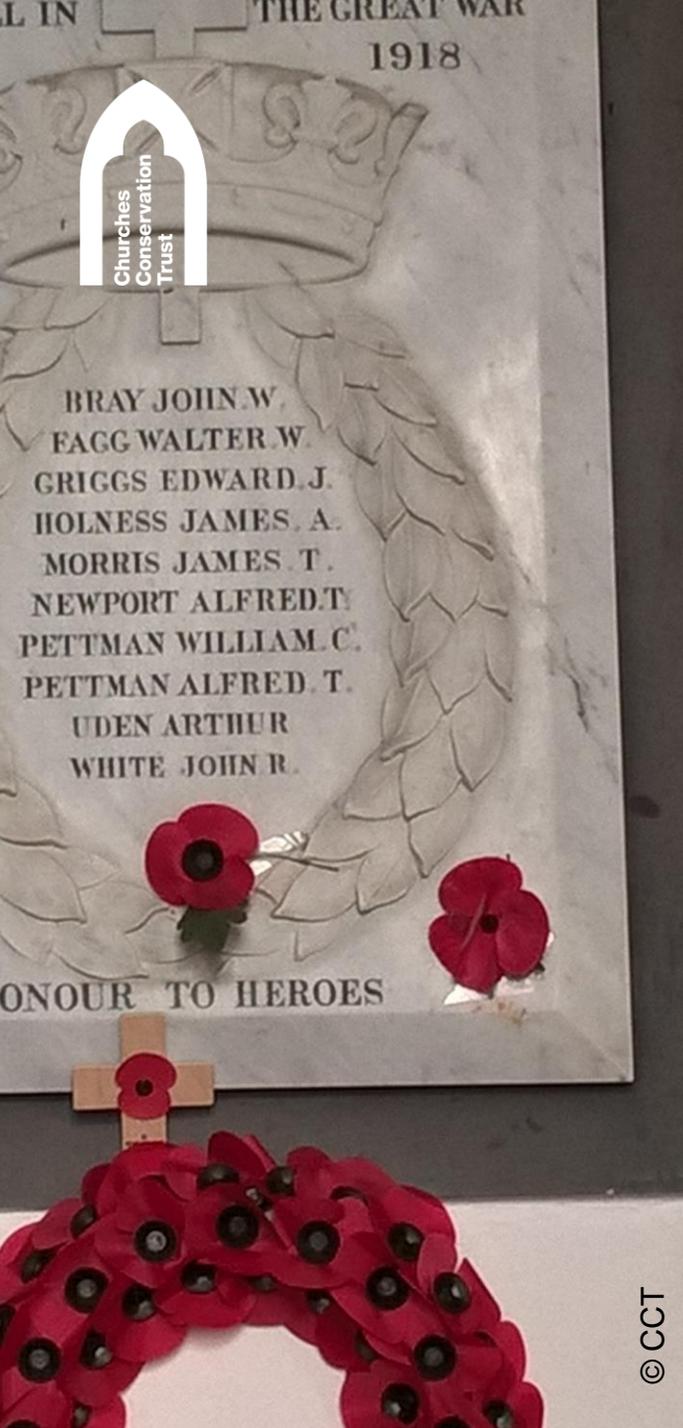
WWI: Paper Poppies

Teachers' Notes

Lesson One: Finding the Inscriptions

The Parish Church Before WWI

In the early 20th century the majority of people in Great Britain would have attended church on a regular basis. The parish church was central to both rural and urban communities and would have been a place where friends and neighbours gathered together to worship and socialise together. The parish church (and associated church hall) was often a multipurpose venue, being used for religious services and celebrations (Sunday mass, weddings, baptisms, funerals) as well as civic gatherings (community meetings, village fetes, a meeting place for special interest groups and clubs). The parish vicar would have been well known within the community and would have offered guidance and advice to parishioners both in church and at home.



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Teachers' Notes

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The Parish Church After WWI

After the war many parish churches installed rolls of honour and erected war memorials to honour the people from their communities who took part in the war – both those who died and those who survived. These were people who were known in the church and who were part of the church community – so the church therefore made an appropriate location to record their names and their wartime stories.



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Teachers' Notes

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Lesson Two: The Stories Behind the Inscriptions

Finding Information

Resources such as the 1911 census, military records and newspaper articles relating to the people named on your memorial(s) are the sorts of documents that will be suitable for this project.

Websites such as [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) and [forces-war-records.co.uk](https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk), local council websites, and local newspaper websites are good places to start your research. Such websites may require enrolment and/or the payment of a membership fee. Your school may already have a membership to these or similar sites. If they do not and you are not in a position to start a new subscription/membership you may find that you are able to access these or similar sites for free at your local library or archives.



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Finding Information (Continued)

Your local library or archive service may be able to provide documents for this project. You may wish to incorporate a class visit to the local library or archive into this project, some may be able to look into their records and locate relevant documents for you if you contact them in advance to allow time for this.

The church may be able to provide you with parish records or parish magazine articles from WWI that contain references to the people you are researching.

Families who have lived in your community for several generations, particularly those who have ancestors named on the local memorial, may be able to share resources like letters and photographs. You may wish to arrange a visit from community members who have family links to the memorial(s).

You are advised to check to see if there are copyright restrictions on the use of the documents sourced by your students.



WWI: Paper Poppies

Teachers' Notes

Lesson Three: Paper Poppies

There are several reasons why the poppy became the symbol for war remembrance. They grew abundantly on the battlefields of France and Flanders during WWI, year after year, bringing with them a sense of life and hope. They were fragile, yet resilient, like the soldiers themselves and their colouring brought to mind the blood of the soldiers, spilled in battle. The poem, '[In Flanders Fields](#)', written in 1915 by Canadian doctor and soldier, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, helped to popularise the poppy as a symbol of remembrance. The first Remembrance Day was marked in Great Britain in 1919 and the poppy was adopted as a symbol of war remembrance by the Royal British Legion in 1921. They were made and sold to raise money for soldiers and their families.

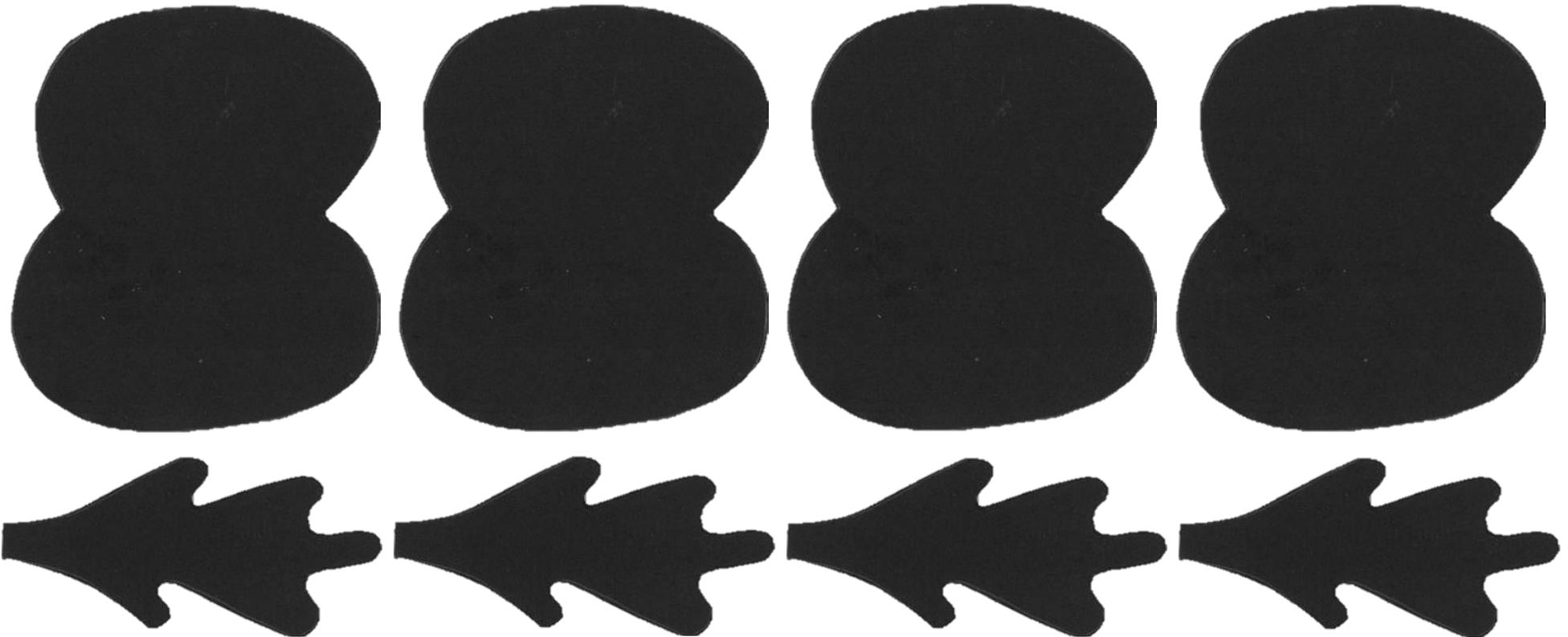
Preparation for the Lesson

In advance of this lesson copy WWI documents sourced during the research lesson(s), allowing at least one document per child. Copy and cut out the poppy flower and leaf tracers.

Resources

Lesson Three: Paper Poppy Tracers

Print and cut out these shapes for the students to trace, around it may be useful to print them on card or laminate them.



WWI: Paper Poppies

Resources

Lesson Three: Paper Poppy Examples

Examples of paper poppies made out of documents related to the WWI memorial at Holy Trinity Church, Sunderland.





WWI: Paper Poppies

Resources

Lesson Three: Paper Poppy Instructions

- Choose one of the WWI documents available
- Lay the black flower and leaf tracers on top of the document and trace around them (try to get key words or pictures within the outlines you trace)
- Shade in the outlines you traced of the flower and leaf shapes with red and green crayons/coloured pencils – shade lightly so the writing can still be read
- Cut out the flower and leaf shapes
- Take a wooden skewer and colour it green or wrap it in green paper, for your stem



This resource was created by CCT's Heritage Learning Team. To book a workshop, or if you have any feedback, questions or notice any problems with the resource, please get in touch:

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Learning at CCT

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Churches Conservation Trust (CCT) is the national charity caring for historic churches and their heritage. With over 350 beautiful church buildings in its care, CCT's collection includes irreplaceable examples of art, architecture and archaeology from over 1,000 years of history.

Our churches are unique spaces that inspire creativity and learning at every age and stage of life. For centuries, these special buildings have witnessed personal moments and the collective histories of the local community they sit in. Today, we work with diverse communities across England to encourage the use, enjoyment and appreciation of these important places; a fundamental part of our shared heritage.

CCT's Learning and Participation Team offers a range of inclusive activities for schools, families and adults taking place in local churches, within communities and online. We welcome people of all faiths and none to engage with the stories and investigate the questions contained in these historic places. Our churches are free to access and open to all.

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