

# Peace and Armistice Resource 'Lest We Forget'

'The armistice was signed at five o'clock this morning, and hostilities are to cease on all fronts at 11 a.m. to-day.'

British Prime Minister David Lloyd George in a communiqué to the British public.  
November 11th 1918



## What was the armistice?

An armistice is an agreement in a war made by both sides to stop fighting. The armistice to end the First World War was signed between France, Britain, and Germany on 11th November 1918 in a railway carriage in the Forest of Compiègne, about 60 km north of Paris.

It ended a global conflict in which millions of soldiers and civilians lost their lives. This terrible war touched the lives of men, women and children across the globe and continues to have lasting implications in the world today.

Nearly 30 countries had taken part in the fighting which stretched from Northern France through to Russia, the Middle East, Africa, China, the Caribbean and South America. India alone provided a massive volunteer army of close to 1.5 million men including soldiers and non – combatants. They served in places as far apart as Belgium, France, Gallipoli, Palestine, East and West Africa and took part in some of the fiercest battles at Ypres, Givenchy, Neuve Chapelle and Loos, winning a number of Victoria Cross medals for their bravery. One in five New Zealand men also served in the armed forces and volunteers from Jamaica and other parts of the Caribbean played significant roles in the conflict along with nearly half a million North and West Africans who served in the French army. \*

After the huge losses at the Battle of the Somme in 2016, Allied forces were struggling to cope with the demand for workers. From January 1917, people were recruited from the UK, China, India, South Africa, Egypt, Canada, the Caribbean and many other places within the British Empire to join the Labour Corps, to keep the Army supplied with weapons and ammunition, food and fodder, water and fuel. They built and maintained roads and railways and were essential to the war effort.

Tens of thousands travelled thousands of miles to defend freedom and although they rarely saw service in the frontline, many died or were seriously injured. Today their contributions and sacrifice are all but forgotten

The centenary of the armistice is an opportunity to remember the global nature of the war, the role of people around the world who were affected by it and the importance of peace. As historian Dan Snow states in the British Council report, *Remember The World As Well As The War*, “We should search out its lessons and above all, do everything in our power as individuals, voters, leaders and communities to avoid another.”



## Promoting Peace

The United Nations stresses that peace is more than just the absence of war, and calls for efforts to achieve a common vision of a life of dignity and well-being for all. In 2015 Secretary General Ban Ki Moon stated:

‘We know that peace cannot be decreed solely through treaties – it must be nurtured through the dignity, rights and capacities of every man and woman.’

Many organisations around the world are using the centenary of the armistice to reinforce this idea and take action in their schools and communities to support active steps towards peace.

This idea is also addressed by Sustainable Development Goal 16 Peace and Justice, which promotes peaceful and inclusive societies which provide access to justice for all and to build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The materials in this resource link to SDG 16 and include background information, discussion points and activities to inspire learning across the curriculum leading up to Armistice Day. The resources can be used as starting points for lessons and an assembly or as elements of a joint cross-curricular project to develop knowledge and transferable skills and values in your classrooms or with a partner school.

\* Statistics from War Office (1922) cited in Das (2011, Andrews EM (1993) *The Anzac Illusion*, Michel M (1982) *L'Appel à l'Afrique* and Smith R (2004) *Jamaican Volunteers in the First World War*. All listed in the British Council report *Remember the World as Well as the War*.





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**Subject Links:** English, History, Citizenship, Personal, Social and Health Education.

**Sustainable Development Goal:** SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

**Core and transferable Skills:** Citizenship, leadership and personal development, digital literacy, communication and collaboration.

**Learning objectives:** To inspire young people to commemorate the armistice and take positive action towards peace in their schools and local communities.

**Resources:** Copies of Oasis Peace Pledge.

## What does peace mean to you?

### Background information

INSPIRE is a call to action on the centenary of the end of the First World War to create a movement of young change agents for peace. It invites young people not only to learn from the past but also to engage with the present.

It began in the UK in November 2014 when an organisation called Oasis worked with London schools, St. George's Catholic Cathedral, the Imperial War Museum and a group of local churches to bring 1000 young people together in an act of collective remembrance. The youth-lead event consisted of music, poetry, readings and videos and a two-minute silence culminating in the mass planting of thousands of paper poppies made by the young people forming a giant word 'PEACE' as a piece of public art.

In 2018, they are encouraging young people to commemorate Armistice Day and use their entrepreneurship, networks, creativity and energy to come together across the world and take part in collective and interactive events, and work towards taking positive action towards peace and conflict resolution in their local communities and personal relationships.





## Activity 1

Ask your pupils to think about and discuss with a partner what peace means to them? Share their responses and then ask them to come up with 5 things that help to create a peaceful society.

Older students could rank the following factors in order of importance and compare their thoughts with young people in other countries, by looking at the data collated by the British Council in their peace poll. This can be found at <https://www.britishcouncil.org/research/peace-poll>

### Factors that help to create a peaceful society

- There is justice for acts of violence
- Opportunities to improve my social status
- Access to education
- Politicians represent my interests in decision making
- Less violence around me
- Can participate in local decision making
- Vote in election
- Can earn a living to support family
- Less crime
- More security forces on the street
- Resolve disputes peacefully

Print off and share with your pupils the INSPIRE Peace Charter on activity sheet 1.

Discuss and debate the charter's values and then use this to create your own shared pledges for peace building in your class, Student Council, or whole school.

You can look on the INSPIRE resource page at <https://www.oasisinspire.org/resources> for ideas and read stories from other young people and schools about what they have done and the impact they have had.

Whatever you decide to do, share your ideas and pledges by tweeting your photographs and suggestions @School\_on\_Line using the hash tags #INSPIRE2018 #armistice100

### Partner School activities

If you are working with a partner school you could:

- Exchange your thoughts on peace pledges and ideas and photographs of commemorative community events and activities with each other.

## The INSPIRE Peace Charter

By choosing to sign the INSPIRE Peace Charter I commit not simply to support the idea of peace, but to strive to live out its values through my example. In doing so I choose to follow in the steps of those, of all faiths and none, who throughout history have understood that the beginning of all peacemaking is the simple, though challenging, daily commitment to treat others as I would wish to be treated myself.

### I COMMIT TO:

- Building peace as the way to ensure a more just and secure future for everyone.
- Pursuing reconciliation in every sphere of life at an individual, community, national and global level.
- Engaging with, listening to and seeking to understand those whose opinions, cultures and perspectives differ from mine.
- Responding nonviolently in all situations of tension and conflict.
- Building a society in which the value and rights of every human being are upheld.
- Treating all people – without exception – with justice and respect, regardless of their religion, gender, race, class, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation or physical and mental capability.
- Playing my part with others to prevent war and violence around the world.
- Recognising that the actions of individuals and small groups can create great change.

### Our INSPIRE Peace Pledges

The INSPIRE Peace Charter means taking action for peace. Peacebuilding is a journey of many steps which we will take together. As a community, we will seek to turn our commitments into reality with the following pledges:

### THE PLEDGE:

- We pledge time in school to exploring what peacebuilding means and how we are, and can be, a school for peace.
- We pledge to engage in peace education as urged by the United Nations.
- We pledge to develop peacebuilding literacy, empowering staff and students to use appropriate methods to respond to conflict constructively, such as peer mediation and restorative practices.
- We pledge to explore the root causes of violence as well as to ensure balanced views are presented to our young people about war, the military, armed violence, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.
- We pledge to build a school culture of inclusion and openness.
- We pledge to create a learning environment where dialogue and critical thinking are used to build a belief and commitment to justice and fairness for all people locally, nationally and globally.

### From Pledges to Action

As a practical follow-up to signing the INSPIRE Peace Charter, your next step within your class, year group, whole school or youth group maybe to take the values you have committed to and work together to create your own additional shared pledges for action.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_





# Activities to commemorate the armistice

**Subject Links:** History, English, Citizenship, Personal, Social and Health Education, Art and Design.

**Sustainable Development Goal:** SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

**Core and transferable skills:** Critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration, digital literacy, creativity and imagination, citizenship, student leadership and personal development. Imagination and creativity.

**Learning objectives:** To encourage pupils to reflect on the armistice of the first world war and what peace means to them today.

**Resources:** Copies of activity sheets 1 and 2, art and craft materials

## Activity 2

Discuss with your pupils why events such as Remembrance or Armistice Day are important.

Find out if there are commemorative events for Armistice Day taking place in your locality. If not perhaps you could help your students to organise their own event in the week leading up to the Armistice or on Armistice Day. Encourage them to come up with their own creative ideas to commemorate the centenary of the armistice, remembering the Global impact of the first world war and promoting peace in their school and community. Share information about your event using the hashtag #armistice100



Share the photographs on activity sheet 2 showing people celebrating the armistice in different countries. Discuss the following in pairs:

- What can you see?
- Where do you think the photograph was taken? What makes you think that?
- Who do you think is in the photograph?
- What do you think the people are thinking and feeling?
- Who might have taken it and why?
- What questions would you like to ask the people in the photograph?





## Activity sheet 2



## Activity 3

Remembering all those buried in Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) war graves is a fitting way to mark the Centenary of the Armistice. There are graves in 23,000 locations, in more than 150 countries, including 300,000 CWGC war graves and memorials in the UK. Many lie in hidden corners of cemeteries and local communities are often unaware of their existence. If you visit one of the war graves you could choose an individual grave to focus your remembrance activity on.

Read more about what the markings on the headstones mean, how to find graves, making rubbings of headstones and other activities here

[https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/british\\_council\\_somme\\_resource.pdf](https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/british_council_somme_resource.pdf)  
p28-32





## Activity sheet 3



## Commemorative Artwork

A series of creative arts events leading up to the centenary of the Armistice and promoting peace are taking place in many countries. In the UK this includes bell ringing across the country, a display of 1500 LED-lit pigeons soaring into the skies above the River Thames to recognise the role played by pigeons delivering messages and a permanent display of ceramic poppies to commemorate the British and Commonwealth soldiers who lost their lives installed at the Imperial War Museums in London and Manchester.

Invite your pupils to create their own pieces of artwork to commemorate the armistice and explore symbols of peace. This could include paintings of poppies and cornflowers, designs for a class tapestry, stained glass window or peace poles or displays of hanging origami doves in different colours.

They could also join in with the Ringing Remembers campaign taking place across the world, where bells are being rung at Commemoration events to replicate the spontaneous outpouring of relief that took place in 1918 as news of the Armistice spread.





Case study

Pupils at Frances Olive Anderson Primary School in the UK worked with pupils from their partner school Mohammad Shamel Public Elementary School in Lebanon on a joint peace project. They decided on words and phrases linked to the theme of peace and used FaceTime to teach each other some of these in English and Arabic. They created their own Peace Poles for their school grounds and banners with peace images and messages in English and Arabic, which they exchanged.



School making their peace banners.



Teachers exchanging their peace banners.



Pupils from Frances Olive Anderson Primary School and Mohammad Shamel Public Elementary



Credit Stewart Cook



## Stories about Peace

Children from Commonwealth countries have written stories on the theme of peace for a story-writing competition. Two of the stories written by children in Pakistan and Northern Ireland are printed on activity sheet 3. Share the children's stories with your pupils. Ask them to discuss the things they like about the stories in pairs and their thoughts on the images of peace used by the children. Encourage your pupils to go on to write their own stories on this theme. To help them get started you could share top tips with them from award winning children's writer and former Children's Laureate Anne Fine, which can be found at:

<https://literature.britishcouncil.org/blog/2016/anne-fines-writing-tips/>



## Activity sheet 3



### The Golden Glow of Peace by Hira Siddiqui, Practical Schooling System, Pakistan age 7-10 category

Once upon a time the earth was very beautiful. The water was pure and there were many trees which gave food and shelter to all living creatures. At night the sky was so clear that the starlight was as bright as the moon. The people of the earth lived close to nature and never took more than what they needed from it. The people lived in peace; that's why they prospered.

But one day, a terrible thing happened. A strange spirit of greed entered the hearts of mankind. People became jealous of one another, and they were not satisfied with all the good things they already had. They took all the precious minerals from the earth to build terrible weapons. They polluted the air and the water with poisons. Nature began to die. This is called war. It destroys love, hope and peace.

Then one day a magical thing occurred. The animals of the air, land and water came to an agreement. If they wanted to survive they had to stop wars and develop peace. We must find among us a symbol of peace.

"I am what you need", said a golden sunflower. "My leaves and seeds are food for all living beings. The seeds I drop can take root and I will grow again. I can be your symbol of peace." All nature rejoiced, and it was decided that the birds would each take one sunflower seed and would plant seeds in the earth. The seeds took root and grew.

Wherever the sunflowers grew, there seemed to be a special golden glow. The people could not ignore such a magical sight. Soon they began to understand the message of sunflowers and decided to destroy all of their terrible weapons. This is why we called nature a symbol of peace.



Peace by Elena Gourley  
Strathearn School, Northern  
Ireland UK age 11-14 category

The Earth held its breath. Silent. Still. Waiting. Curiosity compelled me to peer out through my window. Darkness cloaked the frosted landscape. With gentle grace the moon smiled sleepily down upon the glistening ground beneath her. She danced with the shadows. The glittering sky, shimmering with stars, glowed majestically. All was quiet. All was still.

It was then that I saw Peace. Half-hidden in the shadows, she stood in silent splendour. She radiated calmness and serenity. Though she drew no attention to herself, I could not help but be drawn by the warmth and comfort of her presence.

Then, a whisper swept through the night. A warning. Wide-eyed in trepidation I watched the trees begin to shiver. Dark clouds choked the moon. Even the very stars seem to shrink back in fear.

Suddenly, a white scar shattered the Earth. In a torrent of fury, the wind tore savagely through the trees. Like a ravenous beast, it snarled in rage as it shook the window with mighty hands. Thunder joined in with a furious roar to reach a deafening crescendo. High above, the sky burst. Great tears spilled from the clouds, rolling down their frozen cheeks and splashing upon the ground.

In my distress, I searched for Peace but I could no longer see her there. I turned from the scene and fled, seeking comfort from my bed. But there was no escape from the anger of the storm. The haunting cry of the wind's lament echoed through throughout the house. The deathly cold crept through the sheets to freeze me to the core.

So I picked up a book from my bookcase and opened it.

And in spite of the chaos that raged around me, I found Peace there; nestled between the pages. She whispered to me through the words penned long ago by the author's hand. Words that calmed me, words that filled with the warm glow of hope and inspiration, words that carried me from the boundaries of my room into lands without limits. Peace comforted me with the scent of the paper that reminded me of happier times. Peace soothed me with the gentle rustle of the pages and as my fingers felt the familiar creases and bends and tears that are found in only the most treasured of books, I rediscovered the forgotten adventures we had shared together. Into the inky depths of the night I read and, as I did, I found myself becoming part of the story.

And somehow through it all, it seemed as though the wind blew less coldly, and that the night felt less lonely.

For Peace can be found even in the midst of the storm, if only you look between the pages of a book.

**Partner School activities**

If you are working with a partner school you could:

- Find out about the symbols associated with peace in each other's countries.
- Share photographs of your designs for artwork.
- Learn some words associated with peace in your partner's home language.
- Exchange thoughts and ideas about what peace means to you and your stories on the theme of peace.



# Find Out More

## Other resources you may find useful:

- The British Council's report on the First World War Remember The World As Well As The War presents findings from an international survey in seven countries (Egypt, France, Germany, India, Turkey, Russia and the UK) carried out by YouGov. It can found at: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/policy-insight-research/research/remember-the-world>
- Our Shared Past - Remembering the First World War this cross-curricular resource pack, is designed to support and enhance a globalised approach to teaching and learning with a focus on how people remember and commemorate the First World War at local, national and global levels in countries around the world.
- <https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list/our-shared-past-remembering-first-world-war>

## Football Remembers

The Football Remembers education pack is designed to offer support and resources for pupils learning about the Truce events that took place in 1914, during the First World War.

The pack contains original accounts as well as activities for developing knowledge, skills and understanding across a number of curriculum areas. [https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/football\\_remembers-pack-full.pdf](https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/football_remembers-pack-full.pdf)

- Remembering The Battle of the Somme: <https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list/somme-1916-2016>  
This pack contains resources to help students develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of The Battle of the Somme in 1916. It covers topics including experiences of the Somme from around the Commonwealth, Pals Battalions, conscription, recruitment and remembrance today.
- The Peace Museum in Bradford is a member of the International Network of Museums for Peace. Find out more about the work that it does at <http://peacemuseum.org.uk/>

- The British Council resource Time to Talk helps young people to develop the knowledge and skills they need to become confident, effective communicators. <https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list/time-talk>
- The Peace Museum in Bradford is a member of the International Network of Museums for Peace. Find out more about the work that it does at <http://peacemuseum.org.uk/>
- The website of the Imperial War Museums explores the causes of war and its impact on people's lives. It can be found at: <https://www.iwm.org.uk/>
- Malala's Magic Pencil by Malala Yousafzai illustrated by Kerascoët, published by Puffin Books
- To find out more about the Oasis Peace Pledge, visit <https://www.oasisinspire.org/>

Pack written by Alison Willmott



British Council  
10 Spring Gardens  
London SW1A 2BN

[schools@britishcouncil.org](mailto:schools@britishcouncil.org)  
[www.britishcouncil.org/schoolsonline](http://www.britishcouncil.org/schoolsonline)

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