The Human Face of War: The First World War and Beyond

Applicable to the Australian Curriculum: Humanities (History and Civics & Citizenship)

Year 6

Written by Ann Parry, ACT
This Unit has eight lessons over a three-week period.
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Learning Objectives

In this unit, students will examine how the First World War (1914–18) affected people serving in the conflict, and those at home, and compare this with people’s experiences in the War in Afghanistan (2001 – present). The unit will help students understand Australia in the twentieth century and to reflect on the roles and duties of citizens in a time of war.

Curriculum Links

The unit addresses the following requirements of the Australian Curriculum: Humanities, and Social Sciences, for Year 6 students:

History:
- How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century? (Key Inquiry Question)
- Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary and secondary sources (ACHASSI123)
- Interpret data and information displayed in a range of formats to identify, describe and compare distributions, patterns and trends, and to infer relationships (ACHASSI128)
- Evaluate evidence to draw conclusions (ACHASSI129)
- Examine different viewpoints on actions, events, issues and phenomena in the past and present (ACHASSI127)
- Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges (ACHASSI122)
- What contribution have significant individuals and groups made to the development of Australian society? (Key Inquiry Question)

Civics and Citizenship:
- Identify the obligations citizens may consider they have beyond their own national borders as active and informed global citizens (ACHASSK148)

Year 6 Achievement Standard:

By the end of Year 6, students identify change and continuity and describe the causes and effects of change on society. They compare the different experiences of people in the past. They explain the significance of an individual and group. Students sequence events and people (their lifetime) in chronological order, and represent time by creating timelines. When researching, students develop questions to frame an historical inquiry. They identify a range of sources and locate and compare information to answer inquiry questions. They examine sources to identify and describe points of view. Students
develop texts, particularly narratives and descriptions. In developing these texts and organising and presenting their information, they use historical terms and concepts and incorporate relevant sources.
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<td>1–2</td>
<td>Introduction: <em>In this unit we will be exploring how the First World War affected and changed people’s lives. We will look at people who served in the conflict and those who stayed at home. To get us started, let’s look at more recent wars and how the experience of war has changed since the First World War.</em>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;1. Have students complete Worksheet 1: Warfare Then and Now (see below).&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;NB. It is important for students to note that the images of Afghanistan do not show soldiers in combat situations/positions. Teachers should counter any suggestions that soldiers in Afghanistan have it ‘easy’ compared to the First World War.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;2. Discuss as a group the questions raised in the worksheet – in particular, in what ways would serving in Afghanistan have been similar to serving in the First World War?&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;3. Extension activity (if time permits): Invite students who know someone who served in a recent conflict to share what they know about the person’s experiences. (You might invite them in to speak to the class.)&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Note to teachers:</td>
<td>• How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century? (<a href="#">Key Inquiry Question</a>)&lt;br&gt;• Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary and secondary sources (<a href="#">ACHASSI123</a>)&lt;br&gt;• Develop appropriate questions to guide an inquiry about people, events, developments, places, systems and challenges (<a href="#">ACHASSI122</a>)&lt;br&gt;• Interpret data and information displayed in a range of formats to identify, describe and compare distributions, patterns and trends, and to infer relationships (<a href="#">ACHASSI128</a>)</td>
<td>• Worksheet 1: Warfare Then and Now&lt;br&gt;• Find information using web-based sources&lt;br&gt;• Discuss and defend evidence&lt;br&gt;• Participate in discussion with a veteran (extension)</td>
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| 3      | Several activities in this unit would work well using the ThingLink app, which allows users to ‘hotspot’ a photograph or diagram and add web links, comments, questions etc. It is also possible to search for other people’s creations and set up safe student groups online. Basic use is free, and teachers can join the teacher group for extra ideas and support, after registering. Visit the site at [https://www.thinglink.com](https://www.thinglink.com). | • What contribution have significant individuals and groups made to the development of Australian society? ([Key Inquiry Question](https://www.thinglink.com))  
• Identify the obligations citizens may consider they have beyond their own national borders as active and informed global citizens ([ACHASSK148](https://www.thinglink.com))  
• Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary and secondary sources ([ACHASSI123](https://www.thinglink.com))  
• Examine different viewpoints on actions, | • Worksheet 2: News from the Front  
• Discuss and defend evidence |
| 3      | Introduction: *Fighting in the First World War had a big impact on people, at the time and afterwards. What would it have been like to live in the trenches, such as on the Western Front?*  
1. Complete Worksheet 2: News from the Front. This worksheet shows examples of trench life on the Western Front (Europe) during the First World War, and parts of a blog from the War in Afghanistan (written in 2013).  
2. Share your responses to the worksheet with the class. Compare the evidence you chose and the conclusions you came to. | | |
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| 4–6    | Introduction: Wartime is not just about the front line. During wartime, many people at home are affected by the war in a number of ways. During the First World War, people from all walks of life gave their time and skills to raise money for the war effort or to improve the morale of service people. Some of these groups became a central part of community life.  
2. Share and compare responses to the worksheet, including students’ graphs on which groups would have been most valuable to service people and/or the war effort.  
3. Complete Worksheet 4: The Home Front Experience (Now). Discuss what you have found in a group or as a class.  
- Evaluate evidence to draw conclusions (ACHASSI129)  
- Examine different viewpoints on actions, events, issues and phenomena in the past and present (ACHASSI127)  
- Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary and secondary sources (ACHASSI123)  
- What contribution have significant individuals and groups made to the development of Australian society? (Key Inquiry Question) | - Worksheet 3: The Home Front Experience (Then)  
- Worksheet 4: The Home Front Experience (Now)  
- Notes on how women were affected by the First World War  
- Performance in group play |
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<td>christmas-hampers/</td>
<td>Then perform a short play in a small group, showing the importance of the hampers for people at home and/or people serving overseas during the First World War. OR Investigate the following site: <a href="http://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/explore-history/australia-wwi/home-wwi/homefront">http://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/explore-history/australia-wwi/home-wwi/homefront</a>.</td>
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<td>7–8</td>
<td>Introduction: <em>Now that we’ve compared warfare in the First World War and now, and seen how a range of people experienced both conflicts (at home and overseas), it’s time to bring it all together to consider how a society supports its service people, and how this has changed over approx. 100 years.</em> Summative Assessment Task In a small group, create a poster, museum exhibit, presentation, performance or artwork that answers ONE of the Summative Assessment Task topics below. Your assessment task should include 3–4 of the primary sources examined in this unit. Topics: (choose one) • How has life as a serviceperson changed since the First World War?</td>
<td>• How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century? (Key Inquiry Question) • Identify the obligations citizens may consider they have beyond their own national borders as active and informed global citizens (ACHASSK148) • What contribution have significant individuals and groups made to the development of Australian society? (Key Summative Assessment Task)</td>
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<td>• Compare the ways in which people at home supported the war effort, and service people, during the First World War and the War in Afghanistan. Explain why you think the level of support might have been different in the two conflicts.</td>
<td>Inquiry Question</td>
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<td>• What is civilian life like during a war? How have people at home contributed to service people and/or wars over time?</td>
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<td>As a class, share your Summative Assessment Tasks with each other. You might nominate a time in which other classes, along with parents or grandparents, will come in and view the students’ work. Alternatively, you might choose some students to present their work at assembly.</td>
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<td>• Examine different viewpoints on actions, events, issues and phenomena in the past and present (ACHASSI127)</td>
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<td>• Evaluate evidence to draw conclusions (ACHASSI129)</td>
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## Resources

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| 1–2    | • Worksheet 1: Warfare Then and Now (see below)  
• https://www.awm.gov.au/ then follow the path /Education/Memorial boxes/Australia in the First World War/Box 1: Online Resources (choose a family to research, then click on the icons across the top)  
• https://www.thinglink.com |
| 3      | • Worksheet 2: News from the Front  
• http://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/ < teachers < tag education resources and First World War to see: ‘Australian Women in War 2008’ (go to p. 35,38); ‘Schooling, Service and the Great War’ (Primary Resource) 2015 (Investigation 5) |
| 4–6    | • Worksheet 3: The Home Front Experience (Then)  
• Worksheet 4: The Home Front Experience (Now)  
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<td>7–8</td>
<td>• Tips for giving a presentation: <a href="http://www.skillsyouneed.com/present/presentation-tips.html">http://www.skillsyouneed.com/present/presentation-tips.html</a></td>
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Worksheet 1: Warfare Then and Now

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Look at the images on the following pages (Sources 1–8), which show aspects of warfare in the First World War (1914–18) and the War in Afghanistan (2001–present). With a partner, work through the questions below. Be ready to explain your responses to the class.

Which images show the First World War and which show the War in Afghanistan? How can you tell?

What are some of the main differences you see in the ways the soldiers ate and slept in the First World War and the War in Afghanistan? What kinds of facilities did they have in each conflict? What medical care was available? Make notes to remind you later.

What would the most difficult parts of the conditions have been for the soldiers? What would have made the experience more bearable? In what ways would serving in Afghanistan have been similar to serving in the First World War?

2. Choose one of the websites below. Find information about conditions for soldiers in the First World War or the War in Afghanistan, particularly about food, sleeping and time away from the fighting. Add the extra information to your previous notes.

Follow the path /education/Memorial boxes/Australia in World War I Box 1/ online resources. Choose a family to research, then click on the icons across the top.


Read the following reports from the ABC war correspondent in Afghanistan: ‘Getting battle ready’, 7 June 2012, ‘Down time at the airbase’, 8 June 2012, and ‘Relief in place’ at Tarin Kot, 20 June 2012.


3. Examine the Source Details list that follows the collection of images. How accurate were you in answering the questions above?
Source 1
Source 2
Source 3
Source 4
Source 5
Source 6
Source 7
Source 8
Source Details

Source 1: Australian accommodation at the Multi-National base in Tarin Kot. This accommodation is vault-like in nature to increase safety and security. Nick Fletcher, Australian War Memorial P10271.141.

Source 2: Blast Shelters used at the Multi-National Base Tarin Kot. Stephanie Boyle, Australian War Memorial P10925.059.


Source 4: Sunset, flight line, Kandahar. ART93301 Australia War Memorial, Lyndell Brown, Charles Green.

Source 5: Informal portrait of Captain C E W Bean, Official War Correspondent, knee deep in mud in Gird trench, near Gueudecourt in France, during the winter of 1916-1917. Herbert Frederick Baldwin, Australian War Memorial E00572.

Source 6: Gallipoli Peninsula. c May 1915. An unidentified Australian soldier standing in a communication trench, either on 400 Plateau or near Bridges’ Road. Note the men sleeping on the floor of the trench, and the hole dug into the side of the trench used for storage or used by men as a place to sleep. Charles Ryan, Australian War Memorial P02667.013.

Source 7: Group portrait of four artillery drivers, two of whom are eating, at their shelter during the Somme offensive. Australian War Memorial C00474.

Source 8: Members of the 9th Light Horse Regiment bringing in Turkish prisoners (Sinai, Egypt, First World War). Australian War Memorial P00228.023.
Worksheet 2: News from the Front

INSTRUCTIONS
Examine the sources below and complete the activities that follow.

Source 1
The trenches were wet and cold and at this time some of them did not have duckboards and dug-outs. The battalion lived in mud and water. Altogether about 200 men were evacuated for trench feet and rheumatism. Gum boots were provided for the troops in the most exposed positions. Trench feet was still a new ailment and the provision of dry socks was vitally important. Part of the trench was reserved for men to go two at a time, at least once a day, and rub each other’s feet with grease.

Captain G.H. Impey, 7th Battalion, Royal Sussex Regiment.

Source 2
The men in the trenches are having a bad time, owing to standing in the frozen water they get trench feet (which) swell up 2 and 3 times their normal size and get white and fluffy ... they say the pain resembles that of plunging the feet in boiling water.

Private Edward Munro, 5th Field Ambulance, AWM 1DRL/0526, cited in M. Johnston, Stretcher Bearers: Saving Australians from Gallipoli to Kokoda (Cambridge University Press, Melbourne 2015, 111).

Source 3
Dearest Mother,
I’m sorry it has to be another pencil scribble this time, but ... if you could see the hole I’m scribbling in you’d understand! We blew in here yesterday, just on nightfall and by the time the horses were picketed and fed ... it was dark. I had already got my eye on a tiny kind of trench about 8 ft long and usual width – good enough for one passenger. I thought P and J could possibly squeeze in and so we set to work, got some more or less punctured tin sheets and made a roof. It was raining and so we widened the lowest part so that we can just squeeze in by lying on our sides. So good and warm anyhow and also rain proof, and we had a glorious night’s sleep after having been without any the previous night. We came along ... the evening before and by some mischance got separated from the main [group] whom we didn’t find till about 2.30 am- 6 hours in the saddle and mighty cold too. Slept under a wagon, but it was too cold wrapped in my saddle blanket and spent most of the time stamping about. There was frost in the grass in the morning ...

Had a parcel from [Aunt Sue] again the other night ... all tinned stuff and very good too. One thing that seemed a little out of place was a tin of turtle soup, the directions telling to bring to a boil and flavour with Madeira [sweet wine] to taste. The canteen doesn’t run to Madeira, only cigarettes these days. ...

My feet are like ice – think I’ll turn in now. Feeling ok and only hope we get a full night’s kip [sleep].

Your loving son,
Keith


Source 4

6am came far too quickly but I’m surprised at how quickly I’m finding my feet.

Shower (three minutes maximum for water conservation). Stop at the laundry to drop my clothes in the washing machine (I only have three sets of clothes because of the need to travel light – and I’ve been told to wash clothes whenever I get a chance). Breakfast at the mess (wash your hands and use hand sanitiser – no exceptions! This one is about reducing the risk of disease, colds, flu, gastro etc. and it’s taken very seriously).

Breakfast is great. In fact, eating is great. The food is good, there’s a wide range of it and someone else cooks it for you.

Source 5

The base is called Tarin Kot ... It’s in the mountains of the Hindu Kush, so it’s at a higher altitude than Kandahar and cooler, thankfully. The base is set in the Tarin Kot bowl and it literally is a bowl of rolling plains surrounded by magnificent, sharply ridged mountains which create beautiful vistas. The sunsets and sunrises are breathtaking.

By contrast, the Tarin Kot Base is dusty and dry, busy and bunkered. It’s at the centre of the front-line for Australia and that’s evident. Every building is bomb-proof and surrounded by bunker walls, including the chapel. The briefing on arrival is confronting, making it clear that security risks are extremely high.

From Tarin Kot, the soldiers deploy out to forward operating bases and from there patrol local areas, engage with locals and mentor the Afghan National Army as it engages with insurgents ... The risks are very high for them. IEDs (improvised explosive devices) and weapon fire are a significant, serious and on-going threat...

Back on the base we’re also told there’s a water shortage, so we need to keep showers to a maximum of two minutes, no flushing unless necessary and tourniquets to be carried at all times.
in such close quarters. I haven’t been here long enough to learn them and after two nights my roomies are ready to kick me out.

Accommodation for Australian troops at Tarin Kot in Afghanistan is all built to withstand rocket attacks. Four people share each room for the length of their deployment. ABC News: Kathy McLeish.


ACTIVITIES
1. Write definitions for the following terms from Sources 1 and 2:

*Duck board:*

*Dug-out:*

*Rheumatism:*
Trench feet:

2. a) What do Sources 1–3 add to your understanding of soldier life in the First World War? (Compare with Worksheet 1.)

b) From all of the sources in Worksheet 1 and 2, what impression do you get about what the soldiers would have needed or wanted to get through the experience of the First World War? Why might they have gone to fight in the conflict?

3. a) What do Sources 4 and 5 add to your understanding of soldier life in Afghanistan? (Compare with Worksheet 1.)

b) From all of the sources in Worksheet 1 and 2, what impression do you get about what the soldiers would have needed or wanted to get through the experience of Afghanistan? Why might they have gone to fight in the conflict?
Worksheet 3: The Home Front Experience (Then)

During the First World War, many Australians’ daily lives were affected by the war even if they weren’t service people. Find out more about the badges below, which belonged to a range of groups that actively supported the war effort. (You might divide the badges up among class members.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Badge</th>
<th>Where to find information</th>
<th>What did the group do? Who could join it?</th>
<th>How did the group help soldiers or the war effort?</th>
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**Graphing task:** Conduct a survey asking people which of the above groups they think would have been most valuable to soldiers or the war effort in the First World War. Then graph the results – which one was most popular, and why?
Worksheet 4: The Home Front Experience (Now)

INSTRUCTIONS
Examine the extracts from an Afghanistan blog below and complete the activities that follow.

Afghan Assignment – Embedded with the troops, 27 June 2012

- Every Australian base has ‘welfare phones’ or a ‘welfare room’ where phones and computers are freely available for use at any time. Usually, there’s a row of booths and each one has a phone and computer in it. Dialling home is basically a direct call to Australia and there is no time limit on the calls.
- Wireless internet access is also available at every Australian base, so soldiers can use the welfare computers or connect to the network from their laptop. A lot of people call home via video chat software to see their family.
- Postage is also free for troops, both coming and going from Australia. So, people in Afghanistan can send packages for free within certain size restrictions and families and friends can send care packages to Afghanistan for free too. Apparently the number one item is lollies and small luxuries along those lines.
- Care packages don’t just come from people who know someone deployed in Afghanistan. The troops are sent letters and care packages from schoolchildren and other Australians. They’re often addressed to ‘An Australian Soldier’. The packages are made up of a wide range of items like socks, books and lollies. One person I spoke to received a care package with tins of sardines and cotton buds in it. It was sent by a Vietnam veteran who explained in a letter that in Vietnam soldiers ate a lot of sardines for the protein and were always wishing for cotton buds to clean the sand and dust out of their ears.
- It’s amazing to see how many people write and send packages just wanting to let Aussie troops know they’re being supported and appreciated. It means a great deal to the troops. The letters are often up on pin boards for everyone to share. Units also write back to classes of schoolchildren and tell them about life here and send photos.
- There’s a group called ‘Hero Quilts’ which emails or writes to Aussie soldiers to find out what they’re interested in and then make them a quilt and send it over. So, if you support a certain sporting team or you have a particular interest they’ll make a quilt to match. The support is greatly valued by the Diggers.
- But some things never change. Everyone I’ve spoken to here who is about to be deployed has said the thing they are most looking forward to is mail, because they can read and re-read a letter anytime, anywhere.
A postcard sent by eight-year-old Maddy as a ‘token of appreciation’ hangs on a pinboard at an Australian military base in Afghanistan.

ABC News: Kathy McLeish.
Messages written on a calico banner by children in Australia to their fathers serving in Afghanistan. Australian War Memorial P09777.019 Shaun Gladwell.
Australian soldiers using ‘welfare’ phones to communicate with family and friends. Australian War Memorial P05730.758 Sean Hobbs.
ACTIVITIES

1. Judging from the sources, list some of the ways in which people at home support and keep in touch with service personnel serving overseas today.

2. In the diagram below, note the things that are similar and different about the support/services offered to soldiers in the two conflicts. (Look back at all Worksheets.)

3. What other things have changed for soldiers and their families since the First World War?