

Teaching History – Assessment 2

Key Stage 3 – History Lesson

Recruitment in the First World War

Project Overview:

The project I have chosen is a year nine history lesson that forms part of a wider syllabus that is covering the First World War. I have chosen this as a project, as I am looking to move into secondary teaching following the conclusion of my history degree and completion of a PGCE. The lesson in question will cover the recruitment of British soldiers throughout the war, from volunteers and Pals Battalions to conscription. The lesson will also introduce the idea of propaganda and how it was used in relation to recruitment. The national curriculum for Key Stage 3 indicates that students must cover ‘challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day’, with one topic covering ‘the First World War and the Peace Settlement’, which is covered in the syllabus below.¹ Although the First and Second World Wars are currently non-mandatory topics at Key Stage 3, the subject of the Holocaust is mandatory, and it is key to understand how both world wars led to the Holocaust, so this syllabus is key to a year nine pupil.² In researching how the First World War is taught in schools at Key Stage 3, it seemed best to place this lesson near the start of the wider topic, so students could begin to understand what role recruitment played throughout the war. As the history curriculum is ‘largely chronological’ between year seven and year nine, it was important to place this syllabus in year nine to fully prepare students for GCSE history where this base knowledge will be vital in their studies.³

As most history teachers would agree, the First World War is an ‘important topic that all students in the UK should be exposed to’ especially before history becomes an ‘optional subject at GCSE and above’.⁴ As mentioned, the understanding of the First and Second World Wars is key to contextualising the mandatory topic of the Holocaust, so for these

¹ ‘National Curriculum in England: History Programmes of Study’, 11 September 2013 [online source] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study> accessed on 17 April 2023.

² ‘National Curriculum in England: History Programmes of Study’, 11 September 2013 [online source] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study> accessed on 17 April 2023.

³ Catriona Pennell, ‘On the Frontlines of Teaching the History of the First World War’, *Teaching History* 155 (2014), 34-40 (36).

⁴ Pennell, ‘On the Frontlines of Teaching the History of the First World War’, 36.

reasons, the lesson I have created fits into the wider syllabus which I have also developed.⁵ The syllabus covers the First World War in line with a research survey completed in 2013 by the universities of Exeter and Northumbria, called History Pathway. The study, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and entitled ‘The First World War in the Classroom: Teaching and the Construction of Cultural Memory’, concludes that ‘Origins/Causes of the War’, ‘Trench Warfare’, ‘the Western Front’, and ‘Propaganda’ were the most taught topics regarding the First World War.⁶ These results show us that the learning focused ‘primarily on the trenches of the Western Front’ and did not look at who the soldiers were and how they ended up at the Western Front in the first place, something I thought would be necessary when teaching this subject.⁷

Although the above topics were included in my syllabus, I felt the lesson on which I wanted to focus my project on should revolve around recruitment and give the pupils an insight into why and how so many men were called upon to fight. As Kenneth Brzezicki puts it, children must ‘begin to recognise what factors motivated people to participate in, or indeed initiate, particular events’, which in turn will help children to ‘develop an understanding of the past’.⁸ From this research, and after the initial discussion around volunteers and the Pals Battalions, including a BBC Bitesize video, I created the first task for the lesson.⁹ The tasks will see each pupil given a specific figure, for example a factory worker. Each student would be asked to put themselves in the position of their figure, think about what their life would have been like, and what opportunities joining the army may have brought. This links back to Brzezicki’s idea of recognising the motivating factors, but also relates to the idea of enabling students to ‘emphasise strongly with their perspective on events’, as suggested by Snelson, Lingard and Brennan in *Teaching History*.¹⁰ Combining these ideas allowed me to create a task that not only asks the pupil to think about the situation from a different perspective, but also allows them the freedom to develop their own understanding of the past.

⁵ ‘National Curriculum in England: History Programmes of Study’, 11 September 2013 [online source] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study> accessed on 17 April 2023.

⁶ Pennell, ‘On the Frontlines of Teaching the History of the First World War’, 36.

⁷ Pennell, ‘On the Frontlines of Teaching the History of the First World War’, 36.

⁸ Kenneth Brzezicki, ‘Talking About History: Group Work in the Classroom – Practice and Implications’, *Teaching History* 64 (1991), 12-16 (15).

⁹ ‘Propaganda and Conscription’ [online source] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zdp6d6f/articles/znv496f> accessed on 20 April 2023.

¹⁰ Helen Snelson, Ruth Lingard & Kate Brennan, “‘The Best Way for Students to Remember History is to Experience it!’ Transforming Historical Understanding Through Scripted Drama’, *Teaching History* 148 (2012), 28-36 (35).

After giving the students the opportunity to understand the volunteering aspect of First World War recruitment, the lesson turns to conscription and introduces the idea of propaganda, a key aspect of any students' understanding of the First World War. As it is 'unusual for a lesson to consist of just one activity', the second task is a group task, which sees students analyse propaganda recruitment posters, and gives them a chance to express their opinions on why the images and wording were used.¹¹ According to Brzezicki, group discussions can 'lead to increasingly sophisticated levels of thinking and ultimately a better understanding' of the topic, which highlights the 'importance of talking to each other'.¹² As Haydn, Stephen, Arthur and Hunt suggest, by giving the students the autonomy to analyse the sources themselves, it 'encourages the students to use sources not as discrete and often arid exercises, but as a means of conducting an investigation of a real historical issue or problem'.¹³ From this, students will be able to grasp the idea of propaganda and begin to develop more 'sophisticated understandings and abilities related to historical enquiry', a key skill they will need going into their GCSEs.¹⁴

To conclude, the project I have created, underpinned by pedagogical research, has allowed me to build a basic lesson and syllabus plan on the First World War. The project has allowed me to further develop my understanding of the national curriculum, and how it plays a role in all lesson and syllabus plans. The lesson I have created would allow me to teach the lesson with a 'range of teaching approaches', including individual and group work, and would give the students the opportunity to develop their own understanding of the past.¹⁵ I believe the ideas that Brzezicki lays out are still relevant today, and that students must recognise the motivations of people in the past to fully understand what life was really like, especially when it comes to the subject of the First World War. As I take the next step in my teaching career, this base knowledge will allow me to further understand the topic and deliver better lessons to students going forward.

¹¹ Terry Haydn, Alison Stephen, James Arthur & Martin Hunt, *Learning to Teach History in the Secondary School: A Companion to School Experience* (Abingdon, 1997) 94.

¹² Brzezicki, 'Talking About History', 15.

¹³ Haydn, Stephen, Arthur, Hunt, *Learning to Teach History in the Secondary School*, 101.

¹⁴ Haydn, Stephen, Arthur, Hunt, *Learning to Teach History in the Secondary School*, 102.

¹⁵ Haydn, Stephen, Arthur, Hunt, *Learning to Teach History in the Secondary School*, 94.

Lesson Slides:



Last Lesson We Learnt...

- When did the First World War breakout?
- What were the causes of the First World War?
- Why did Britain join the First World War?
- Who were Britain's allies in 1914?



Learning Objectives

Introduce recruitment into the army during the First World War

Identify the methods used to recruit soldiers

Recognise key terms related to recruitment

Understand why recruitment was key to the British Army



Volunteering

In August 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War, Britain had to recruit a huge army to help fight the war. Britain's army was not big enough, so volunteers were essential.

- ❖ Over **750,000** men signed up within the first eight weeks
- ❖ **Pals Battalions** were created to allow friends and workmates to join the army together

Reasons for volunteering:

- ❖ A sense of duty
- ❖ Patriotism
- ❖ A belief in the war
- ❖ An adventure
- ❖ Because your friend had volunteered
- ❖ Financial benefit
- ❖ 'It will be over by Christmas'



Pals Battalions

Pals Battalions were a uniquely British phenomenon, and the British army pushed the idea of signing up with friends, relatives and workmates.

- ❖ They were created all over the country, with a high proportion being from the north of England
- ❖ The high number of casualties had a significant impact upon their communities back home

[Pal Battalions Video](#)



Task One

On your own think of reasons why you would want to volunteer for the army in 1914, depending on the background I give you:

- 1 – Factory workers
- 2 – Servants at a country house
- 3 – Students at university
- 4 – Office workers in a city

Think about what your life might be like at the time, would the ideas we've already discussed impact your decision?

Each person to give one reason why they would want to volunteer



Conscription

Due to the high number of casualties, in 1916 Britain introduced **Conscription** to recruit more men to the army

- ❖ Conscription = compulsory active service
- ❖ All men aged between 18 and 41 were required to join the army

Exemptions from conscription:

- ❖ Medically unfit men
- ❖ Clergymen
- ❖ Teachers
- ❖ Certain industrial workers
- ❖ Conscientious Objectors



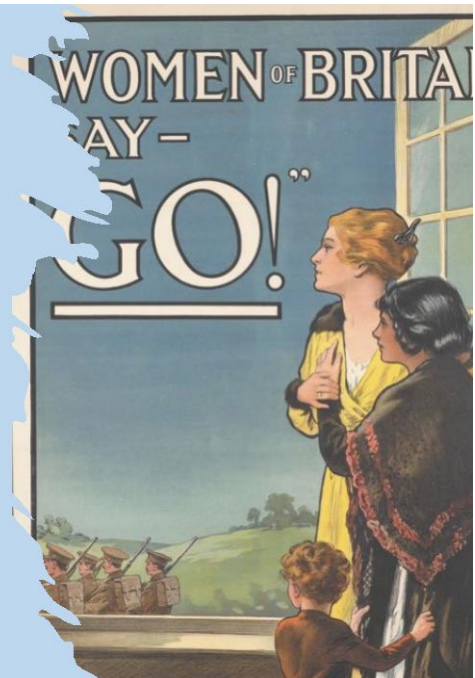
Propaganda

Propaganda = information, of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view

The British government used propaganda throughout the First World War to persuade men to join the army as a sense of patriotic duty.

One way to do this was through posters, which would have been placed all over the country where lots of people could see them:

- ❖ Train stations
- ❖ Bus stops
- ❖ Town squares
- ❖ Pubs



Task Two

In your groups, review your propaganda poster and discuss the following for 10 minutes:

- ❖ What is being depicted on the poster?
- ❖ Why would this poster make men want to join the army?
- ❖ Why do you think this poster was used?

Use the Post-Its to note down your ideas

Each group to present their findings back to the class



Concluding Questions

What methods were used to recruit soldiers to the army during the First World War?

What reasons may have led someone to volunteer for the army?

Why did the army need to introduce conscription in 1916?

What is propaganda and how was it used by the British government?



Lesson Plan:

Year 9	Term: 2	Subject: First World War – Recruitment	Week: 2
Lesson Objectives:		Lesson Outcomes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To introduce the idea of recruitment into the army during the First World War- To identify methods used to recruit soldiers into the army- Recognise key terms related to recruitment- To understand why recruitment was key to the British Army		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Pupils will gain an understanding of recruitment and why it was important during the First World War- Pupils will understand the differences between volunteering and conscription and why both were necessary- Pupils will understand why so many men volunteered to join the army in 1914- Pupils will understand the idea of Pals Battalions and why they were created to increase recruitment- Pupils will be able to recognise key terms that are related to recruitment – e.g. propaganda and conscription- Pupils will understand why certain men were exempt from conscription- Pupils will understand the idea of propaganda and why the government used it to recruit soldiers	
Time	Structure	Task	Resources
5 minutes	Whole class	Quick fire questions to recap the last lesson	PowerPoint
2 minutes	Whole class	Discuss the learning objectives with the class	PowerPoint
8 minutes	Whole class	Discuss volunteering and pals battalions – including follow up questions and video	PowerPoint Video ¹⁶
7 minutes	In groups	Task One - students to work in groups to decide why they might have volunteered, depending on their background	Handout
5 minutes	Feedback	Each group to feedback their answers	N/A

¹⁶ 'Propaganda and Conscription' [online source]

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zdp6d6f/articles/znv496f> accessed on 20 April 2023.

10 minutes	Whole class	Discuss conscription and propaganda – including follow up questions	PowerPoint
8 minutes	In groups	Task Two – Handout a poster to each group for discussion and analysis	Poster handout Post-Its
5 minutes	Feedback	Each group to feedback on their poster and use their Post-Its	PowerPoint Post-Its
5 minutes	Whole class	Concluding questions to reaffirm learning objectives Set homework task	PowerPoint Homework handout
Total Time: 55 minutes			

Year 9 Term 2 Syllabus – First World War:

Week One – Causes and Recruitment	
Lesson One	Lesson Two
Cause of the First World War: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term causes - Imperialism - Short-term causes - Key figures in 1914 - Alliances 	Recruitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - British Recruitment - Volunteering - Pals Battalions - Conscription - Propaganda
Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why did Britain join the war? - Which countries were allied with who? 	Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why was conscription introduced? - What is propaganda and how did it play a part in recruitment?
Week Two – Trenches and Battles	
Lesson One	Lesson Two
Trench Warfare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conditions in the trenches - The use of trenches - Blackadder - Example - Letters and poetry 	Battles and Technology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key battles – Battle of the Somme - Reaction back home - New technology in use – e.g. tanks
Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why were trenches used during the war? - How did the condition of the trenches impact upon moral? 	Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why was the Battle of the Somme such a significant battle? - Why did technological advances increase war casualties?
Week Three – The Home Front	
Lesson One	Lesson Two
Men and the Home Front: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Men not in military service - War work on the home front - Conscientious Objectors - Propaganda 	Women and the Home Front: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women recruited into men's roles - Munitions roles - Contribution of women to the war effort - Propaganda
Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why were some men conscientious objectors? - What non-military roles did men have on the home front? 	Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What roles did women have on the home front? - Why was it important that women supported the war effort?

Week Four – End of the War	
Lesson One	Lesson Two
Reasons for the end of the war: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russian Revolution/Communism - USA joining the war/Capitalism - Ceasefire - Armistice 	End of the war: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reaction in Britain - Casualties - Remembrance
Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When did the Russian Revolution occur? - What is meant by ceasefire and armistice? 	Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was the reaction in Britain when the war ended? - Why was remembrance embraced?
Week Five - Aftermath	
Lesson One	Lesson Two
Britain after the war: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role of soldiers after the war - Role of women after the war - Impact on British society 	Treaty of Versailles & the League of Nations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What the treaty was and covered - The countries involved in the treaty - The outcome of the treaty - How the League of Nations was formed - The countries involved in the league - The role of the league
Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What did soldiers do after the war had ended? - What did women do after the war had ended? 	Key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why was the Treaty of Versailles seen as a necessity? - Why was the League of Nations created?
Week Six – Conclusions and Recap	
Lesson One	Lesson Two
Recap & Quiz: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causes & Recruitment - Trenches and Battles - The Home Front - End of War & Aftermath 	Conclusion & Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conclusions of the class - What they thought was most important - Why did the war happen/why did it end? - Was it worthwhile?

Task Two – Posters:

Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4



Fig.5



Bibliography

Brzezicki, Kenneth. 'Talking About History: Group Work in the Classroom – Practice and Implications', *Teaching History* 64 (1991), 12-16.

Haydn, Terry, Stephen, Alison, Arthur, James & Hunt, Martin. *Learning to Teach History in the Secondary School: A Companion to School Experience* (Abingdon, 1997).

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'Propaganda and Conscription' [online source] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zdp6d6f/articles/znv496f> accessed on 20 April 2023.

Snelson, Helen, Lingard, Ruth & Brennan, Kate. "'The Best Way for Students to Remember History is to Experience it!'" Transforming Historical Understanding Through Scripted Drama', *Teaching History* 148 (2012), 28-36.

List of Images:

Figure 1: *Britons. Join Your Country's Army!*, Imperial War Museum, 1914 [online source] <https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/first-world-war-recruitment-posters> accessed on 20 April 2023.

Figure 2: *Women of Britain say 'Go!'*, Imperial War Museum, ca. 1914 [online source] <https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/first-world-war-recruitment-posters> accessed on 20 April 2023.

Figure 3: *Are You in This?*, Imperial War Museum, ca. 1914 [online source] <https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/first-world-war-recruitment-posters> accessed on 20 April 2023.

Figure 4: *Step Into Your Place*, Imperial War Museum, ca. 1914 [online source] <https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/first-world-war-recruitment-posters> accessed on 20 April 2023.

Figure 5: *Forward!*, Imperial War Museum, 1915 [online source] <https://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/first-world-war-recruitment-posters> accessed on 20 April 2023.