



## ENQUIRY 4

# How can we discover the world they went to and the world they left behind?

### Key stage 3

## ENQUIRY OVERVIEW

Before using this enquiry with your students you will need to carry out some research into the life or lives of a name(s) on a local war memorial. The key is to try to find individuals for which there are sufficient sources to make a worthwhile enquiry. This enquiry is accompanied by a detailed teacher's guide [**TwoWorldsWW1ResearchGuide**] setting out how to carry out the necessary research into specific names on a local war memorial.

What follows is an outline of how the outcomes of your research can be used in a history enquiry for students.

The enquiry is based on doing 'local'(or 'localised') history. The students should build knowledge and understanding of what life was like at home for the serviceman or woman before the First World War. They should also get a sense of what life was like for the person in the theatre of war in which they served. They should become more aware of opportunities and challenges when working constructively with sources to build knowledge and understanding.

The guidance here can only be general and teachers will need to select and adapt according to their context and the findings of research. The aspect about the 'world they went to'(e.g. the Western Front) can be enhanced by other enquiries from this website. These in turn should be incorporated into visits to sites.

The end product could well be a display with the name and image of the person and his grave at the centre and sources with explanation on the left about pre-war life at home and sources (the world he left behind) and explanation on the right about the particular theatre of war in which he served (the world he went to). Both parts must show what sources have been used and what conclusions have been drawn. Where possible, maps and photographs should figure prominently.

You can lead the class through the study of just one person, or model what they must do with one person so that groups do the same at each step for a variety of names from a local memorial. The second approach depends on you having done far more advanced research. It is essential to know that the person(s) selected for study will allow a good range of helpful source materials to be used. If at all possible, choose someone for whom you have found a photograph as this helps personalise the study. If the person's story is interesting though this is not essential.



## ENQUIRY OVERVIEW

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There are opportunities for imaginative representation in art and literature of each of the two worlds, but if the historical focus is to be maintained students should be required (e.g. through log books or study diaries) to trace any visual or verbal interpretation back to the sources so that their work is more than a mere 'flight of fancy'.

Depending on what sources are found there may be very good links with geography as so much fighting in all theatres was shaped by the lie of the land. Students could be asked to identify the strategic points in enemy lines from close study of maps and contours and/or to overlay trench maps from the First World War.

If PowerPoint is used to display the findings, there will be good links to a range of techniques such as hyperlinking slides and making images fade from a modern to an old scene.

The degree of challenge in this study can be controlled in two main ways:

1. By the range of the research (e.g. studying more people with diverse experiences).
2. By the degree of support offered (i.e. the teacher may provide a wide range of sources but with very little structure or start with very few sources but require students to suggest 'leads' and where else they would look for sources. Only when students show a grasp of what might be worth seeing and where they might find it would the teacher provide the resources.



## LESSONS

### STAGE 1 Does anyone here know ... (insert name that you are researching)?

The first step as always should 'hook' the learners into the enquiry. One way might be to reveal the name of one person from a local war memorial in isolation in the middle of a blank screen. *Does anyone know who this person is or was?* Then show other names from the same memorial – *Does this help?* Then show the memorial itself with the names (if they are engraved on it). *Does this help? Where is this? What is it? What is the point of a memorial? How many of us have spent time reading the names? Why? Why not?* Suggest that it will help if we can go beyond just reading a name and get to know more about the lives of one (or several) of those listed.

Then show an image of where that same person is buried or commemorated overseas. Use this to suggest that in his last years, months or weeks of life he would have known two very different worlds: the world he lived in before the First World War and the world he fought in. In pairs get them to speculate, using their knowledge of the First World War, what he may have seen in each of those two worlds.

Take their informed speculation and use it to help you decide what they know already about the First World War and the Edwardian era. Now give a sense of what the class will do: show a PowerPoint screen such as the outline provided (**TwoWorldsDisplayOutline**). Tell them that the challenge is to start with just the name (shown in the centre) and to work as historians to research that person so they can produce a display in some form that moves beyond speculation to evidence-based knowledge.

Then ask the class to come up with a long list of types of source they think they may use in their research. For each one they should be ready to say what they think it might reveal, why this would help and how likely they are to find the source. Take their ideas and respond accordingly. Tell them they will certainly use some of these and others over the next few lessons.

### List of resources, worksheets, video clips and interactive activities for use with Stage 1

**TwoWorldsWW1ResearchGuide (For teachers only)**

**TwoWorldWW1DisplayOutline (For students)**

### STAGE 2 How can we find out?

Use the PowerPoint slide you have made based on the one referred to above to remind the class of their challenge. Tell them they will start today by tracking down the one person they are researching from all those who died in the First World War i.e. about 16 million on all sides, of which about 1.2 million were from Britain and its Empire.



## LESSONS

### STAGE 2 How can we find out? (continued)

Bring up the Commonwealth War Graves Commission home page and explain what the website does. Show the filters that can be applied to searches under 'Find War Dead'– Advanced. You could reproduce these categories on a sheet. Invite students to say what they would fill in if they were to search for the person you are studying and why. *Are there any they are unsure about? Is it better to leave these blank or fill them in? What might be the effect etc?*

Then invite one or two to come up and to do the search online. *Does it bring up the person they are looking for or are there extra problems e.g. too many people with that name? What would they do next?* (NB This is where it is important that you have been down the research road ahead of them and have chosen a person for research that CAN be traced).

Once the class has found the right person's details, show how the site allows you to download a 'Certificate' for each soldier that gives what details are known and shows the overseas cemetery or memorial where they are buried or commemorated. Show this and ask them what leads they may now have that allow them to take the next steps. Help them to see the value of e.g. next of kin, date of death, regiment etc. in finding out more about the person.

Based on this discussion, they annotate a copy of the certificate (or a simplified version) to record what leads may help in what way.

Take and discuss a selection of their suggested follow up work. Then place a copy of the person's certificate in the centre of the display, to show how the person who was just a name is slowly becoming more real to them. They will learn even more next time.

### List of resources, worksheets, video clips and interactive activities for use with Stage 2

TwoWorldsWW1ResearchGuide (For teachers only)

TwoWorldWW1DisplayOutline (For students)



## LESSONS

### STAGE 3 What sort of world did he/she leave behind?

The next steps depend very much on what you have been able to find in advance about the person and what resources you can provide. Typically you would work through the following:

1. Provide or just show online the census returns for e.g. 1911 and 1901 in which your person appears. (NB This is where it is helpful to have selected someone who was not a professional soldier before the War, as the contrast may not be as great as you would wish). Get students to comprehend what the census is telling them – find the person's name, family, occupation, address etc. Also (for 1901) find surrounding addresses and occupations etc. Get them to discuss the difficulties with census as a source (legibility may be one) but also its strengths. *For this particular enquiry is the 1911 or 1901 one more useful?* (1901 will give much better sense of surrounding houses and families etc.). Ask them what leads they might follow up from the census and link to next steps below.
2. Show old maps of the locality online or in printed form. *Where did the person live? What landmarks can they locate? How much appears to have changed since the time of the map? What? Why?*
3. Issue old photographs of the locality or of similar localities/ occupations. (Try to find a range including some that are NOT relevant or would for some reason be unhelpful as sources in this context.) Challenge students to study them and consider what they reveal, how relevant they are to any aspect of the person's life and to select e.g. three for inclusion in the display. They must justify their choice and explain e.g. why it may be acceptable to use an image from another not too distant time or place to give a sense of how the person lived IF they think it is close enough. Students might also take photographs of scenes from the old images as they appear today. These could sit side by side in the display or (if PowerPoint is being used) could 'fade' from new to old.
4. Show pages about the locality pre-1914 from an old directory. These are available online or in libraries. Suitably selected extracts allow the character of the locality to be shown in the lists of trades and the evident attention to status in the names of local people that are given. Some pages will also have advertisements that suggest the way of life at the time. Old newspapers can be used for this as well. You may even find articles that mention the exact person you are studying.
5. You can also, of course, do a much wider study of pre-war Britain using sources that give a national picture of what may be termed 'The Edwardians'. Suggested resources are given in the guidance.

After doing some or all of the above, either step -by-step as a whole class or in groups, the students should talk through their findings and conclusions before they write a 'summary' in a given number of words that attempts to catch the essence of the world the person was leaving behind. Pay particular attention to adjectives: *What sort of life had he known? What characterised his experiences?*



## LESSONS

### STAGE 3 What sort of world did he/she leave behind? (continued)

#### List of resources, worksheets, video clips and interactive activities for use with Stage 3

TwoWorldsWW1ResearchGuide (For teachers only)

### STAGE 4 What sort of world did he/she go to?

The second half of the enquiry naturally depends on the theatre of war and the exact time when the person served and/or died. Use one or more of the other enquiries supported on this website to amplify this part of the work i.e. 'The world he went to'.

The teacher research guidance shows how to find relevant details about the war experiences of those whose deaths were recorded on war memorials using e.g.

- service records
- war diaries including trench maps
- images taken or painted at the time.

It will be helpful to go beyond a stereotypical 'Life in the trenches' if the person is fighting on the Western Front. Draw on other enquiries provided on this website to ensure that the range of activity is covered i.e. at the front line and away from the line and that the diversity of the fighting force is also evident. Soldiers would be meeting men and women from other parts of Britain and the place they served as well as troops and labourers from all over the British Empire.

Once again, at the end of the research, the students should summarise what they have found out about the world he went to, how they know this and how they would characterise the experience.

A selection of relevant and revealing sources can be included on the class display(s) with student explanations about what they show. Every student should write a summary about the life the person left behind and the life he or she went to even if their work is not on display.

#### List of resources, worksheets, video clips and interactive activities for use with Stage 4

TwoWorldsWW1ResearchGuide (For teachers only)