

Lesson Six “How should British soldiers who served in the Allied intervention be remembered?”

Learning Objective

To analyse the variety of ways that an historic event might be memorialised.

To analyse the variety of responses to different memorials.

To infer the possible continuing significance of a past event.

Learning Outcomes

- To have considered the different ways that the Western Front has been memorialised.
- To have considered the response to such memorials over time.
- To have considered the different ways that the Eastern Front has been memorialised in Russia.
- To have considered their response to such memorials
- To have inferred the continuing significance of the Eastern Front in modern Russia.
- To draw conclusions about the way that British involvement in the Russian Civil war is still commemorated (or not)

Starter

The students are to think of possible reasons why British people still wear poppies and what the point of remembering bloody battles might be.

SLIDE 2 – Display slide 2 and ask students to think in pairs about why we remember and commemorate wars. Advance the slide and ask students to consider why some people might view the commemoration of wars in different ways using the recent controversy of English footballers wearing poppy bands. (The point of this slide is to get students to see the difference between memorialising and remembering vs glorifying and being jingoistic about a past event. It also introduces the idea that symbols, places and monuments can change their use over time or be used for ulterior purposes.)

Main Activities

Introduction of main activity

1. Display slide 3 and show a short You Tube clip of the Menin Gate commemorative service in Ypres (show the first 3-4 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dn5YlcsYiw> . Give students time to think by themselves about what strikes them about the ceremony, and then discuss this in a pair. Lead class discussion taking suggestions from pairs.
2. Display slide 4 and ask the pairs to think of any other ways that we commemorate war. (Slide 5 could be used to summarise the discussion.

3. Display slide 6. Students should begin to think about what makes a monument or memorial a success/popular. Show the short clip about the 2014 *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* art installation at the Tower of London (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNpJ2IFk9yk>). See if the added stimulus material provokes conversation. Students could be given the opportunity to reflect individually before discussing their reaction as a partner and taking part in class discussion.

Main Activity

4. Display slide 7 and explain the group work activity. For this activity students will need colour copies of the images from slides 8-11 (these depict recent Russian memorials to the Eastern Front since the fall of communism in 1991). Students should use the questions on the slides to analyse the images (students should come to the realisation that they are all Russian, and they all honour the Russian war effort on the Eastern Front in WW1, or links with Russia). Students should have a good idea about what different monuments are like, what they symbolise and how they impact the viewer. Slides 12-13 can be used to aid class discussion/feedback of the previous monuments.
5. Display slide 14. A teacher or fluent student should read the Putin comment on the slide. Lead class discussion about why modern Russia chooses to commemorate the First World War in a patriotic way rather than as a defeat which was a prelude to the Communist Revolution of 1917
6. Display slide 15. Ask pairs of students to decide whether the photograph of the British cemetery in Murmansk looks like a successful remembrance of the British involvement in Russia. Commander Dickson's comment may prove helpful in leading this discussion.
7. Display slide 16 – Lead the discussion about the contrasting ways in which British war dead are commemorated on the Western Front compared to Northern Russia.
8. Display slide 17 - Introduce the idea that the conflict is remembered by Britain in terms of the cemeteries in Russia but little else.

Link to lesson 1 – show the picture of Archangel cemetery on slide 17, and make the link to Harry Driver whose headstone is situated there.

The idea behind this is to show students that men like Harry Driver have largely been forgotten about, and it is their task to design a collage commemorating the service of these men in Russia 1918-21.

9. Reference could be made to the hidden slide 18 should you wish to show students the location of other British cemeteries in Russia.

Plenary

Students are to think about their collage and what they want to include on it and what message they are trying to put across in it.