



Experiencing the end of World War 1

How differently did individual soldiers experience the end of World War 1?

Teacher Material

Activity Plan

Student material with annotations

Student Material

Source material about soldiers' memories of returning home

Acknowledgements

Activity amended for Historiana by Helen Snelson from an activity designed by Joshua Crosby with the support of the Historiana learning and historical content teams and EUROCLIO trainees.

Extracts of soldiers' testimony adapted for classroom use from *The Road Home* by Max Arthur, Phoenix (2010). Quote in assessment ideas section from *The First World War* by John Keegan, Pimlico (1999).

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More information about the sources is included in the material for teachers.

This learning activity focuses on enabling students to understand the impact of the end of the war on some of the surviving soldiers. It is common for students to study how World War 1 transformed their country and international relations. In this activity the focus is upon individuals. Students engage with the emotions being expressed in short extracts of source material. Through using this selection of source extracts from survivors, they should be able to produce an answer to the question: "How differently did individual soldiers experience the end of World War 1?" The source material examples here are all from British soldiers returning home. However, the model is easily adaptable to returning soldiers from any other country, or a range of countries. It can also be adapted to include the reactions to the end of the war from other people who had lived through the experience. Overall, it aims to help students to understand that war has diverse consequences for individuals.



Learning outcomes

Students will

 1-2 hours

- Use source material to identify the diverse emotions of soldiers who had survived World War 1.
- Learn about the diverse emotional consequences of World War 1 for a selection of ex-soldiers.
- Learn that when historians consider the consequences of World War 1, they consider social history as well international and national political consequences.
- Explain what they have learnt about the different reactions of ex-soldiers at the end of World War 1, either to persuade a public figure to give consideration to the transition of ex-soldiers to civilian life, or by considering an interpretation in the light of the source material they used.