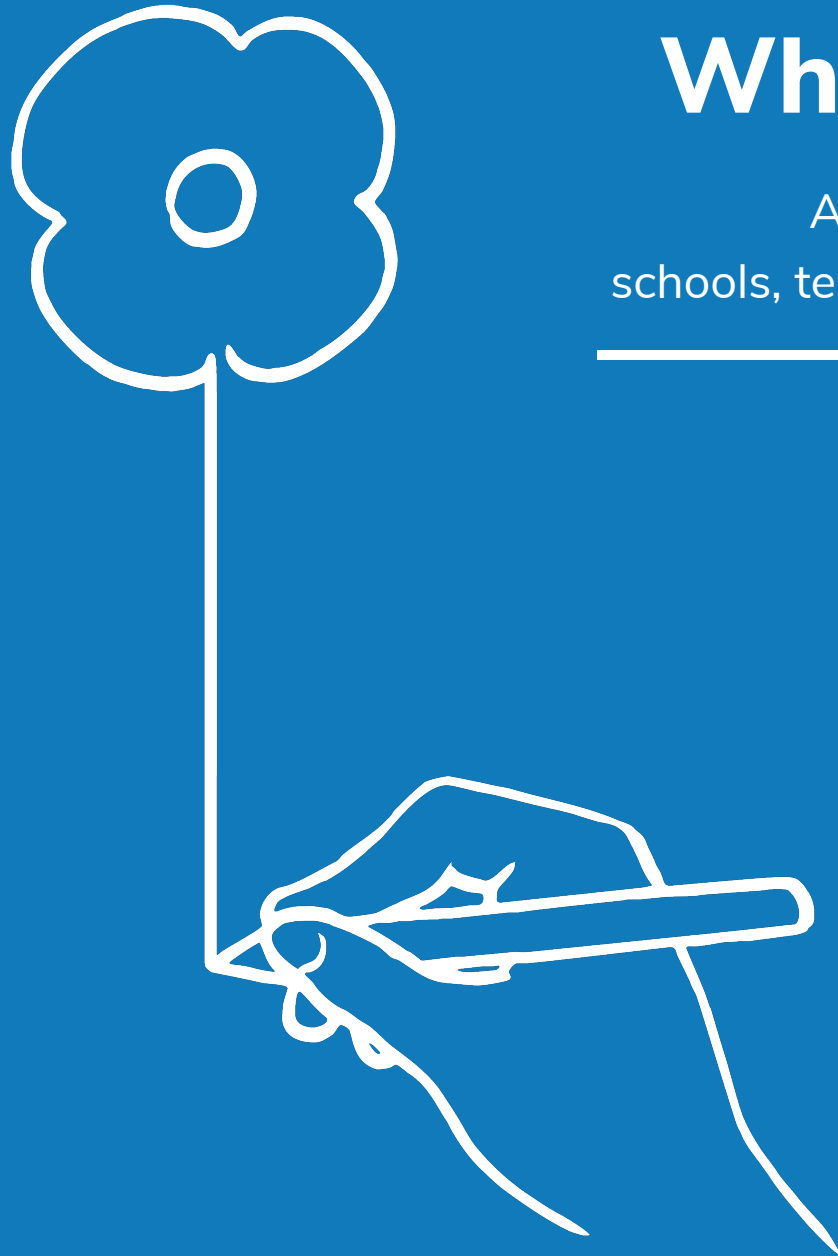

Remembrance and White Poppies

An educational resource for
schools, teachers, parents and carers



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www.ppu.org.uk

In this pack you will find...

- Introduction to an alternative approach to Remembrance Day
- The meaning of the white poppy
- Curriculum links
- How to start a discussion around Remembrance Day
- Whole school activities
- Activities for primary level
- Activities for secondary level
- FAQs and further resources

Introduction

At the Peace Pledge Union, we believe that young people should hear a range of views and perspectives on war and peace, allowing them to form their own views as they grow up.

We promote an alternative approach to remembrance that focuses on remembering all victims of war, with a view to creating a more peaceful world. We believe it is important to explore diverse experiences of war, to question common assumptions and to avoid euphemistic or militaristic language. The white poppy fosters an understanding of the value of a peaceful society and alternatives to armed force.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres states that “conflict is the greatest threat to children’s rights and magnifies all other threats. Peace remains their best protection.” In line with UN Sustainable Development Goals, this pack aims to provide students with the awareness and skills to promote “a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity.”

The activities, discussion points and resources below can be used during the remembrance period to explore how and why we remember. This can be a challenging time and there are many difficult concepts to address. Our hope is that focusing on positive action and change will empower students and communities to champion alternative voices and to stand up for a more peaceful world.

If you would like to start a discussion on remembrance or distribute white poppies in your school or community, we would love to hear from you.



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Remembrance Day and the White Poppy

Some history...

White poppies were first produced in 1933 by the Co-operative Women's Guild, made up largely of women who had lost husbands, fathers, sons, brothers and friends in the First World War. They were troubled by the growing militarisation of remembrance events. The Guild's General Secretary, Eleanor Barton, called for renewed commitment "to that 'Never Again' spirit that was strong in 1918, but seems to grow weaker as years go on."

Today, white poppies are distributed by the Peace Pledge Union. Every year, wreaths of white poppies are laid at **alternative remembrance ceremonies** around the UK and abroad.



Teaching remembrance

This is a vital time to be giving space to alternative and marginalised voices. Many organisations and movements are calling for greater diversity and positive action in education (such as decolonising the curriculum and addressing the climate crisis). The remembrance period is a crucial time to consider the wider implications of war by listening to unheard voices, including those resisting war, both in the past and today. It is an opportunity to talk about the impact of conflict on ordinary people's lives and its far-reaching, long-term consequences around the world.

This approach is in line with the Education Act 1996 which asks that "where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils... they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views." Offering an alternative approach to remembrance supports critical thinking and helps students navigate broader topics such as human rights and conflict resolution.

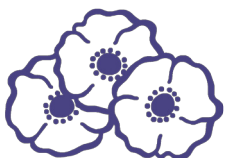
What does the white poppy stand for?

The white poppy has three meanings...



Remembering all victims of war

including both civilian and military victims, and people of all nationalities.



Building a culture of peace

by addressing the causes of war and fostering nonviolent alternatives.



Challenging militarism

including any attempts to glamorise or celebrate war.

Curriculum links

The activities described in the following pages are particularly relevant to the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience of the Welsh curriculum. They also support the development of ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world, in that they encourage critical and creative thinking and enable pupils to

- find, evaluate and use evidence in forming views
- engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and values
- be knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past

Starting a discussion around Remembrance Day

Has a pacifist or anti-war perspective been included?

Is there a balance in content between peace movements or activism and a military perspective?

Has the impact of war on civilians been described and explored?

What opportunities are there to discuss the meaning of remembrance more broadly, for example its emotional and societal impacts? Is there an opportunity to explore and question preexisting knowledge?

Are contemporary wars or violent conflicts being addressed?

Are there staff, children, parents or carers present who may have experienced war or violent conflict first hand? How might they be impacted by remembrance? How could you include their lived experiences?

How can you support students (and staff) to safely express their opinions and manage conflicting ideas?

What vocabulary and concepts are typically used around remembrance (e.g. victory, enemy, sacrifice)? How could these be interpreted differently?

Whole school activities

Hold a school assembly close to Remembrance Day to introduce an alternative perspective

Distribute white poppies in your school

Plan an alternative remembrance ceremony with students

Hold a remembrance art project or competition to explore the meaning of the white poppy

Make white poppy wreaths using coat hangers and foliage

Plan and create a peace monument, mural or display for your school

Hold a 'Peace Week' to explore the values you want to emphasise as a school and the kind of society you want to live in

Activities, videos and example projects at www.ppu.org.uk/education

Primary

Draw your own white poppies or make them from paper plates or cupcake holders. Add a message of remembrance. Put these poppies together in a display or garden.



Explore all the poppies available during the remembrance period (red, white, black, purple). What are the key themes? What unites people who choose to wear the different poppies?

Write an imaginary letter to yourself from someone who has experienced war. What do you think they would want you to know? What would they want you to remember?

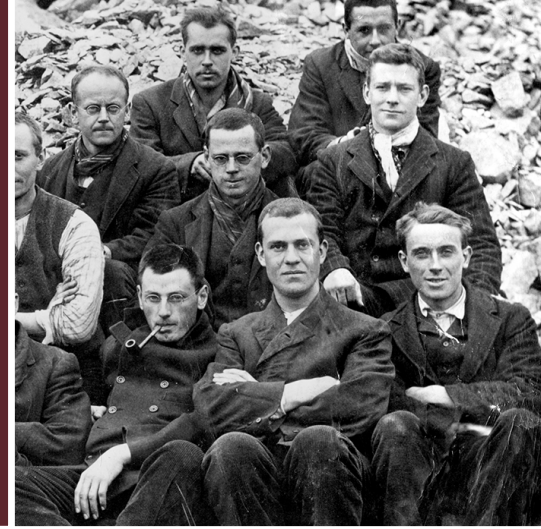
Write a Peace Pledge for children.



Design a remembrance poster around a phrase such as 'no more war', 'never again' or 'a culture of peace'.

Secondary

Research a local war memorial. Discuss what it represents and how it conveys its meaning. What would a peace memorial look like?



What practical steps can be taken to avoid violent conflict and resolve disputes? Write a 'Plan for Peace' and think about how this can be implemented in your school or community.

Research events that could be remembered on Remembrance Day, especially ones that aren't often mentioned such as colonial conflicts. Why aren't they mentioned? What was the impact on civilians?

Research a local conscientious objector. Where did they live? On what grounds did they object? What happened to them during the war? What happened after?



Watch an alternative remembrance ceremony (videos on PPU website). What are the key ideas and concepts?

What impact does war have on ordinary people's lives? Create a presentation or timeline about both the immediate effects and the long-term consequences.

FAQs

What is the difference between the white poppy and the red poppy?

The red poppy traditionally commemorates UK and allied military victims of war. Whilst other victims of war are sometimes mentioned, this remains the red poppy's main official purpose. The white poppy stands for remembrance of all victims of war, both civilian and military, and of all nationalities. It also represents an active commitment to peace and challenges attempts to glamorise or celebrate war.

Where does the money go?

Any profits from white poppy sales go towards the PPU's work promoting peaceful alternatives to war, campaigning against militarism and championing peace education. The reality is that far fewer white poppies are currently sold than red poppies, so any profits are relatively small. White poppies are more about a message of peace than raising funds. At a local level, peace groups, shops and other outlets can donate money raised to charities or campaigns supporting victims of war. This is not controlled centrally and a number of charities benefit.

Why do you wear white poppies on Remembrance Day rather than at a different time of year?

Because they are a symbol of remembrance. White poppies have been worn on Remembrance Day for over 85 years, for almost as long as red poppies.

Is the white poppy a political symbol?

Both the white poppy and the red poppy represent distinct values and perspectives. In this sense they are both political symbols. For example, choosing to remember only UK and allied military personnel is as political as choosing to remember all victims of war. The Royal British Legion state that red poppies show "support for the armed forces". Whether or not you agree with this position, it is a political position, just as making a commitment to peace is political. We believe students should hear a range of views on such topics, so they can form their own opinions.

How many white poppies are sold each year?

The number of white poppies sold each year has varied over time, but has risen in recent years. In 2015, the number of white poppies sold passed the 100,000 mark for the first time.

Further Resources

On the Peace Pledge Union's website you will find a range of educational resources on remembrance, as well as on our other campaigning areas such as peacebuilding and nonviolence. Visit **www.ppu.org.uk/education** for

- Activities for **primary** level, such as 'A Tale of Two Poppies'
- Resources for **secondary** level, including conflict case studies
- Information to support **parents, carers and educators**
- Resources for **further education** and self-led learning
- '**The Men Who Said No**', on the lives of conscientious objectors from the First World War

Join the conversation. Join the PPU Education Network at www.facebook.com/PPUTeachers

These organisations also provide resources on alternative approaches to Remembrance Day.

- **Forces Watch** - www.forceswatch.net - 'Rethinking Remembrance Day in Schools'
- **Peace Education Network** - www.peace-education.org.uk - 'Teach Peace Pack'

Where can I get white poppies?

You can buy white poppies online at **www.ppu.org.uk**. You can also find **outlets** selling white poppies near you on our website, including shops, cafes, faith groups and community centres.

If you would like to distribute white poppies in your school or community we offer an **education pack** including 100 white poppies, stickers, leaflets and other resources. Please get in touch with any queries or feedback - we would love to hear from you.



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