

Key Stage 1 and Early Years Foundation Stage



Choices Then and Now is designed mainly for students in KS2, KS3, KS4 and Post-16.

However three stories in particular lend themselves to work with younger students and may be used to explore concepts of friendship, family and remembering in KS1 and in the EYFS (Understanding the World).

Story 1 – Friendship – Football and Friendship

Story 2 – Family - Every Picture Tells a Story

Story 3 – Remembering - Poppies

You will find each short story in this section and an activity to extend understanding of each one. It is possible to make the stories simpler still in the re-telling and they each lend themselves to a number of possible extension activities, to be developed at a teacher's discretion.

Football and Friendship

In 1914 boys and young men from across the world were involved in a war. This war was known as World War I.

Many of them went to fight in France and Belgium.

The two main armies were from Britain and Germany (although the soldiers in these armies came from countries far and wide).



A sketch of a trench from World War I.

Muirhead Bone b.1876 - d.1953 'A Ruined Trench: Mont St. Eloi in the Distance', illustration from 'The Western Front', pub. by Country Life Ltd, Reproduced by The Peace Museum for educational purposes only

The soldiers had a hard time. The noise of the battle was often very, very loud. It was cold, wet, muddy, they didn't always have enough to eat and they had to dig trenches, holes in the ground, where they could shelter from the gunfire and shells. Sometimes the men and boys felt sorry for the soldiers on the other side, because they knew that they were having a horrible time too. On the 24th of December, Christmas Eve, the gunfire suddenly stopped; some German soldiers began to sing Christmas carols. The British soldiers joined in.

Eventually, someone was brave enough to climb out of their trench onto the no man's land that divided the two armies. Others followed slowly and soon men and boys from both sides were making friends, talking, sharing what little they had in the way of food and looking at photographs of each other's families.

On Christmas day the guns remained silent. Someone threw a ball onto no man's land and the soldiers began to play football. In one game a German team beat a British team 3-2! The soldiers realised that although they were from different countries, they could be friends, they were very similar, just young boys and men a long way from home, who liked the same things and wanted to play football and to live in peace, not fight a war!

Sadly the soldiers were not allowed to stay friends for long. Soldiers have to obey orders; they

Football and Friendship



Choices
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have to do as they are told by the people in charge. The gunfire started again and they quickly ran back to their own trenches.



A traditional heavy leather football

by Christos Vittoratos via Wikimedia Commons (CC-BY-SA)

The war continued, but the soldiers never forgot the game of football they shared with friends from the 'other side' on that Christmas day in 1914.

? Key Questions

Why do you think the guns stopped on Christmas Eve?

Was it a brave thing to do to climb out of the trench and go to talk to soldiers from another army?

Can anyone become friends with anyone, if they talk and get to know each other?

What might have made it hard for the soldiers to talk to each other when they met on no man's land? Did this stop them from being friends?

If we play sport or games together does it help us to become friends?

What would you have done when the guns stopped on Christmas Eve 1914?

Would you have played football on Christmas Day?



Football and Friendship

Soldiers in World War I often sent postcards to their families.

Sometimes these might have a picture of themselves in their uniform on the front.

Imagine you were a soldier on the front line Christmas Day 1914 and that you were involved in the football match.

Write a post card to tell your family about what happened and how you felt.



Fold

Fold





Every Picture Tells a Story



Arthur W. Gay, b. 1901 d.1958, The Conchie, 1931.
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The Conchie

This picture is called the Conchie. If you look closely you will see it shows a young man with a book in his hand and two soldiers holding rifles. It looks like they are on a train.

The word Conchie is short for Conscientious Objector.

A Conchie was someone who refused to fight in World War I.

It was a big decision to make the choice to be a Conchie. It made you unpopular and sometimes your friends and even your own family would not want anything to do with you.



Key Questions

If you were one of the people in the painting how you might feel?

What choices might you have made?

Can you write a story that explains what happens next? Paint a picture that shows a scene from your story.

Every Picture Tells a Story



Conscientious Objectors, Autumn 1916, Dyce Quarry, Aberdeen, Bert Brocklesby circled.
Creator unknown, date unknown © Peace Museum

The Brocklesby Brothers

The four Brocklesby brothers lived in Yorkshire in 1914 and they all made very different choices in World War I.

George the eldest of the four was not well enough to join the army, so he took a job encouraging other young men to join the army.

Bert the second eldest believed in a line from the Bible that says 'You shall not kill' so he refused to join the army. He was treated very badly by many people. They said he was scared to fight.

Phil the third brother was not sure what choice to make to begin with and carried on working while he thought things through. Eventually he joined the army.

The youngest brother Harold joined the army immediately; his choice was to fight in the war.

The boy's parents supported each of their son's choices.

Every Picture Tells a Story

In 1916 Bert was sent to prison in Richmond Castle for refusing to join the army. The army then decided to send Bert to France by train (like the Conchie in the painting) where he was tried for not doing as he was told. He was sentenced to death, but this was then changed and he was sent to prison.

Bert managed to send his parents a message on a post card, in a secret code, telling them that he was in Boulogne in France. Phil was sent to fight in France and he promised that he would try to find Bert and he did!

In the last letter he wrote to his parents before the battle of the Somme Phil wrote:

“God bless him, I’m right proud of him. I shall be glad when we can all be together again”.

Bert was sent to prison in England and he had to work in a quarry. He didn’t see his family again until he was set free in 1919.

The brothers all survived the war and returned home.

George, Bert, Phil, Harold and their parents showed that it is possible for people (even in the same family) to disagree with each other, make different choices, hold very different views, but still continue to help, respect and care for each other.



Key Questions

Why do you think the brothers made different choices?

What choice would you have made?

What might have happened to you because of this?

Do you think that the Brocklesby family were right to support each other’s choices?

Poppies



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Have you seen anyone wearing a red poppy?

Have you ever seen anyone wearing a white poppy?

Have you seen anyone wearing a purple poppy?

You might have seen someone wearing all three!

Why do people wear poppies?

People in Britain wear poppies usually around November time to remember the end of World War I on the 11th November 1914.

The red poppy is worn to remind people of all those people in the armed forces and those who have lost their lives in all wars, but they were first worn to remember those who fought in World War I. Poppies were the first wild flowers to grow in the battlefields and were mentioned in a poem by a Canadian soldier, John McRae.

His poem begins:

In Flanders fields the poppies blow.....

Wearing a poppy to show you remember was the idea of an American woman called Moina Michael. A French woman, Anna Guerin, decided to make and sell poppies to raise funds for ex-soldiers and their families. She brought the idea to Britain and in 1921 poppies were made and sold here for the first time.

In 1933 in Britain some women produced and wore a white poppy. They wanted to remember those who had died but also to ask for an end to all wars. They wanted peace. The white poppy is still made and sold today and is worn by people who want to say 'no' to war and 'yes' to peace.

Poppies



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Have you heard of 'War Horse?' You may have even seen the film or read the book! This story is about a horse which, like many thousands of real horses, served in World War I. Dogs and even pigeons were also used by the army. Many animals still serve in the armed forces today.

The purple poppy was first worn to remember these animals in 2007.



Key
Questions

Is it important to remember what has happened in the past?

Which poppy or poppies would you choose to wear?

Why?

Remember some people wear all three poppies!

Poppies



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Activities

Can you write three acrostic poems? One that describes a poppy, then write one that describes war and one that describes peace. Share your poems with a friend.

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