

Lest We Forget: An ANZAC Day Exploration

Level: Approximately 12 years old (adaptable)

Lesson Activities:

1. Introduction: What is ANZAC Day? (15 mins)

Begin with a discussion: "Have you heard of ANZAC Day? What do you think it might be about?" Briefly introduce ANZAC Day (April 25th) as a national day of remembrance in Australia and New Zealand. Explain that it originally honoured the soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZACs) who fought at Gallipoli during World War I. Mention that it now commemorates all Australians and New Zealanders "who served and died in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.". You could search online for a short, age-appropriate video explaining ANZAC Day (ensure parental guidance for viewing).

2. Historical Context: The Gallipoli Story (20 mins)

Explain the Gallipoli campaign (1915) in simple terms: where it happened, who was involved (ANZACs, British, French vs. Ottoman Empire), and the difficult conditions the soldiers faced. Focus not just on the battle, but on the emergence of the 'ANZAC Spirit' – qualities like courage, endurance, initiative, discipline, and mateship (looking after your friends). Discuss why this event became so significant for Australian identity. Use a map to show Gallipoli's location relative to Australia.

3. Symbols of Remembrance (15 mins)

Discuss common symbols associated with ANZAC Day:

- **The Red Poppy:** Explain its connection to WWI battlefields in Europe (inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields") and its adoption as a symbol of remembrance.
- **Rosemary:** Explain that rosemary grows wild on the Gallipoli peninsula and is worn for remembrance.
- **The Rising Sun Badge:** Briefly mention its significance for the Australian Imperial Force.

Activity: Ask the student to do a quick online search (with supervision) to find an image of each symbol and one sentence explaining its link to remembrance.

4. Literary Connection: Voices of the Past (15 mins)

Read an excerpt from a relevant poem. A good choice is the fourth stanza of Laurence Binyon's "For the Fallen," often recited at ANZAC Day services:

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them."*

Discuss: What does this stanza mean? How does it make you feel? What words stand out? How does it relate to the idea of remembrance?

5. Creative Response: Art for Remembrance (30-40 mins)

Instruct the student to create an artwork inspired by what they've learned about ANZAC Day. Suggestions:

- Draw or paint a field of poppies.
- Create a silhouette artwork of soldiers against a sunrise or sunset.
- Design a commemorative wreath incorporating symbols like poppies and rosemary.
- Illustrate a scene depicting 'mateship' based on the historical context.

Encourage them to use colours and imagery that reflect the themes of remembrance, sacrifice, and hope.

6. Written Reflection: Lest We Forget (20 mins)

Ask the student to write a short piece reflecting on the lesson. Choose one prompt:

- Imagine you are a young person attending an ANZAC Day dawn service. Describe what you see, hear, and feel.
- Write a short diary entry from the perspective of an ANZAC soldier at Gallipoli, focusing on the conditions and the importance of friendship (mateship).
- Write a paragraph explaining why you think it is important to remember ANZAC Day today.

7. Conclusion & Sharing (10 mins)

Discuss the student's artwork and written piece. Ask:

- What did you find most interesting about ANZAC Day?
- Why is it important for countries to remember historical events like this?
- How did creating the art or writing help you understand the topic better?

Reiterate the core message: ANZAC Day is a solemn day to remember sacrifice, courage, and the enduring spirit of those who served.

Differentiation Notes:

- **Support:** Provide pre-printed templates for art, sentence starters for writing, or focus discussion on only one or two key symbols.
- **Extension:** Encourage research into a specific Gallipoli battle, the role of nurses, or how ANZAC Day is commemorated in different communities. The student could write a longer piece or create a more complex artwork.