

The Spirit of the Anzacs: History, Heroes, and Heritage

Lesson Overview

This lesson explores the history and significance of the ANZACs (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps). Students will investigate the Gallipoli campaign, the meaning of the "Anzac Spirit," and the cultural traditions that keep this history alive today through geography, storytelling, and hands-on baking.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- Define what the acronym ANZAC stands for and explain its origin.
- Identify the geographic location of Gallipoli on a map and describe the challenges faced by soldiers there.
- Explain the concept of the "Anzac Spirit" (mateship, courage, endurance, and sacrifice).
- Identify key symbols of remembrance, such as the red poppy and the Anzac biscuit.

Materials Needed

- World map or globe (digital or paper)
- Kitchen access and ingredients for Anzac Biscuits (rolled oats, flour, sugar, butter, golden syrup, baking soda, boiling water)
- Red paper, black markers, and scissors (for poppy craft)
- Access to a recording of "The Last Post" (YouTube or audio file)
- A "service record" template (can be a simple piece of paper aged with tea)

1. Introduction: The Hook & Objectives (15 Minutes)

The Mystery Biscuit

Place an Anzac biscuit (or a picture of one) in front of the student. Ask: "*Why would a biscuit be designed to never go soft or moldy, even after months in a shipping crate?*"

The Context: Explain that during World War I, families in Australia and New Zealand wanted to send food to their loved ones fighting far away. They needed something that could survive a long sea voyage without spoiling. This biscuit is a link to a major turning point in history.

Success Criteria: "Today, you will become a historian. You'll know you've succeeded when you can explain why we remember the Anzacs and can demonstrate the 'Anzac Spirit' through a creative project."

2. Body: Content & Practice (The "I Do, We Do, You Do" Model)

I Do: The History (15 Minutes)

The Story: Explain that ANZAC stands for **A**ustralian and **N**ew **Z**ealand **A**rmy **C**orps. In 1915, during WWI, these soldiers were sent to Gallipoli in Turkey. It was a rugged, dangerous place with steep cliffs. Point this out on the map, showing the distance from Australia/NZ to Turkey.

The Values: Introduce the "Anzac Spirit." It isn't about glorifying war, but about the "mateship" (looking out for your friends), courage, and resilience shown in impossible conditions.

We Do: Mapping & Discussion (20 Minutes)

Geography Check: Work together to trace the route from Australia/NZ to the Mediterranean Sea. Discuss: "How would it feel to be 18 years old, leaving home for the first time, and traveling this far on a boat?"

Primary Source Analysis: Read a short diary entry or letter from an Anzac (many are available online through the Australian War Memorial or National Library of NZ). Discuss what the soldier mentions most: is it the fighting, or is it his friends and the food from home?

You Do: Hands-On Application (60 Minutes)

Choose one or both of the following activities to solidify learning:

- **The Chemistry of Mateship (Baking):** Follow a traditional Anzac biscuit recipe. While mixing, discuss why these specific ingredients were used (e.g., no eggs were used because they spoiled quickly and were scarce during the war).
 - *Math Connection:* Have the student double or halve the recipe to practice fractions.
- **Symbols of Remembrance (Art):** Create a red paper poppy. Explain that poppies were the first flowers to grow on the battlefields after the war ended. On the back of the poppy, have the student write three words that define the Anzac Spirit.

3. Conclusion: Closure & Recap (15 Minutes)

Recap: Ask the student to explain the ANZAC acronym without looking at notes. Ask them to share their favorite part of the "Anzac Spirit."

Reflection: Play a recording of "The Last Post." Ask the student to stand in silence for one minute (The Minute of Silence). Afterward, ask: "Why do you think it is important for us to still remember people who lived over 100 years ago?"

Final Takeaway: The Anzac story is a story of how people handle hard times by sticking together.

Assessment Methods

- **Formative:** During the mapping activity, check for the student's ability to locate the relevant countries and explain the acronym.

- **Summative:** The "Service Record" Project. Have the student create a one-page "Service Record" for a fictional or real Anzac soldier, including their name, where they went, what they ate (biscuits!), and one example of how they showed the "Anzac Spirit."

Adaptability & Differentiation

- **For Younger Learners:** Focus on the "Mateship" aspect and the poppy craft. Use a simplified map.
- **For Advanced Learners:** Research the role of "Simpson and his Donkey" or look into the different perspectives of the Gallipoli campaign (including the Turkish perspective).
- **For Classroom Context:** Turn the baking into a demonstration or have students work in "platoons" (small groups) to create a mural of a Gallipoli trench vs. the beautiful poppies that grow there now.