

# Remembrance



War Memorials Trust

On this sheet you will learn:

- What Remembrance Day is and why it is held on 11<sup>th</sup> November.
- What happens on Remembrance Day.

## What is Remembrance Day and why do we hold it on 11<sup>th</sup> November?

**11<sup>th</sup> November 1918** at **11 o'clock** in the morning, was the moment the First World War ended. The war had started in August 1914, so had been going on for over four years. Many people from the UK and other countries had **died** and many more were **injured** or **missing**. This meant that although people were happy and **relieved** that the war was over, there was also **sadness** as they thought about people that were not going to come home again.

On the first anniversary of the day the war ended (this was known as Armistice Day because it was the signing of the **Armistice** that ended the war) a minute of **silence** was held at 11 o'clock, the exact moment the fighting had stopped the year before. During the silence many people **remembered** people that had been killed during the war. This was the first Remembrance Day.

A silence is still held at 11 o'clock on 11<sup>th</sup> November. Today, however, we remember people affected by the First World War and also **later conflicts**. 11th November is now known as Remembrance Day.

## Why have poppies become a symbol of Remembrance?

During the war a soldier called John McCrae wrote a poem called 'In Flanders Fields.' The poem mentions **poppies**, and these were the only thing to grow in the battlefields of the First World War, where the land had been destroyed by the

fighting. Because it was able to grow in a place where such terrible things had happened the poppy came to symbolise **strength** and **hope**. After the war it gradually became a **symbol** associated with remembering the First World War and people wore poppies on **Remembrance Day**. People today still wear poppies in the lead up to Remembrance Day to show that they are **remembering** everyone who has been affected by wars.



Poppies attached to wooden crosses at the Field of Remembrance, Westminster © War Memorials Trust, 2011

Other things happen on Remembrance Day too. People hold a minute's **silence** at 11 o'clock. Remembrance services are held at **war memorials**. A famous war memorial is the **Cenotaph** in London. On Remembrance Sunday lots of people go there to lay **wreaths** of poppies, including the Queen and political leaders. Other services also take place at local war memorials in towns and villages.

## Summary

- Remembrance Day is held on **11<sup>th</sup> November**, with a silence held at 11 o'clock. This is when the **First World War** ended in 1918.
- On Remembrance Day many people wear **poppies** and go to services and events held at war **memorials**.
- The poppy became a symbol of Remembrance because of a poem written during the First World War called 'In Flanders Fields.'