

# GALLERY 2: THE SOUTH AFRICAN AND FIRST WORLD WARS

The Teacher's Answer Key is a tool intended to help teachers correct worksheets or continue the discussion in the classroom.

Students should be able to answer all of the questions by looking closely at artifacts, images or dioramas, and reading the related exhibition text. In some cases, they will be asked to formulate opinions based on what they have learned.

For each question, teachers will find information to help students find the answer in the gallery, as well as contextual information pulled from the exhibitions.

## ACTIVITY SHEET ANSWER KEY

- 1** Look at the mannequin of the soldier in South Africa. Why would a soldier like him write, "You cannot imagine what war is until you are in it"? (Driver Frederick Lee)

### Student Action:

Students will observe the display, related artifacts and maps, and reflect on the experience of Canadian soldiers during the South African War.

### Answer:

The terrain and fighting conditions were challenging. Over the three years of fighting, 270 Canadians died.

### Additional Information:

Canadians fought with the British against Afrikaner settlers, often called Boers, for control of two small South African republics. After three years of costly battles and guerrilla warfare, the British Empire prevailed.

At Paardeberg, the Royal Canadian Regiment first attacked on 18 February 1900. Accurate Boer fire forced them to take cover. Note the rocky terrain and the difficulty of spotting the enemy. Broiling in the hot sun, this infantryman, trapped in the open, has found partial protection behind a large ant-hill.

Boer forces were drawn from the local population. While they lacked conventional army discipline, their skill at riding, shooting, and living off the land made them effective opponents.

After the Battle of Paardeberg in February 1900, the Boers changed their strategy. Unable to beat the British in battle, the Boers adopted a policy of ambush and retreat. For the British, the war degenerated into frustrating patrols in search of an elusive enemy.

The threat of snipers was ever-present. George F. Roberts, a Canadian serving with the South African Constabulary, placed this Stetson hat on an ant-hill to draw the attention of a Boer sniper. The bullet hole speaks to the sniper's accuracy.

The South African War was the first time that Canada provided an official military contingent for an international crisis. More than 7,300 Canadians served and 270 died.

---

## 2

**At the start of the First World War, strict regulations ensured that becoming a soldier was not easy. Use the interactive to fill in the following:**

**How old are you?**

**Do you wear glasses?**

**Do you have flat feet?**

**How tall are you?**

**Would you have been accepted as a soldier?**

### **Student Action:**

Students will follow the instructions in the recruitment interactive and complete the questionnaire.

### **Answer:**

Based on their responses, students will determine if they would have been eligible to enlist with the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War.

### **Additional Information:**

Thousands rushed to enlist at the outbreak of war. Strict regulations ensured that only the healthiest could serve King and country.

Becoming a soldier was not easy in 1914. Poor teeth, flat feet, or failure to secure a wife's permission could keep a man out of uniform. Many who were too young or too old found ways around the rules by lying about their age, or by applying at different units until they were accepted. Later in the war, the need for reinforcements led the military to lower its entry standards.

Soldiers had to be at least five feet tall. This requirement was later dropped to allow for even shorter men to serve in special 'Bantam' battalions.

Soldiers needed good eyesight to shoot straight. Most soldiers with glasses did not serve overseas.

Bad teeth could keep you out of the army. You needed good teeth to chew the sometimes rock-hard army food.

Soldiers had to march for miles and miles. The military did not care if you knew how to fire a gun, but if you had flat feet, it did not want you.

How many served? During the war more than one million Canadian men tried to enlist and 624,000 were accepted. Of these, 400,000 served overseas.

# 3

Find these three images related to the Second Battle of Ypres. Which one do you think is the closest representation of what it was like to be there? Which one would you use to persuade more Canadians to enlist as soldiers? Why?

### Student Action:

Students will analyze two paintings and a photograph, in order to answer the questions.

### Answer:

Open-ended.

### Additional Information:

#### 1. Trial by Fire: Second Battle of the Somme

Photograph of the Ypres battlefield displayed on the wall.

#### 2. *The Second Battle of Ypres, 22 April to 25 May 1915*

Painted by Richard Jack in 1917

Beaverbrook Collection of War Art

There are no photographic images of the Ypres battle since soldiers were not allowed to carry cameras into the trenches. To document the war, a wealthy Canadian, Lord Beaverbrook, created an official war art program in 1916. He was also responsible for establishing a program of official photographers and cinematographers. Their work helped to provide a visual record of Canada's role in the First World War.

#### 3. *The First German Gas Attack at Ypres*

Painted by William Roberts in 1918

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

Caught within the German chlorine death-cloud, French colonial troops dressed in red and blue and Canadian troops dressed in khaki gasp for breath. The clash of colours and the looks of anguish add to the intensity of the work.

.....

# 4

Look at the trench model. Pick one person and complete the first sentence of a letter home for that person.

### Student Action:

Students will observe the model and read the corresponding text panels.

### Answer:

Open-ended.

### Additional Information:

The trench system became more elaborate as the war progressed. By day, soldiers prepared or improved their defences and tried to sleep; by night, they attacked in trench raids, or defended against them. Artillery, snipers, disease and accidents threatened life relentlessly.

# 5

Using this painting, imagine you were there and complete the following:

The noise was as loud as .....

After 12 hours of firing the gun, I was so .....

that I .....

### Student Action:

Students will examine the painting *Canadian Artillery in Action* and use their observations to fill in the blanks.

### Answer:

Open-ended.

### Additional Information:

*Canadian Artillery in Action*

Painted by Kenneth Forbes in 1918

Beaverbrook Collection of War Art

CWM 19710261-0142

### Quote:

We opened fire here at dawn and fired continually until night...By then we were deaf and had to have orders written. We had splitting headaches. Every time the gun fired it felt like being hit on the side of the head with a board."

– Gunner Gordon Howard

- Artillery fire inflicted approximately 60 per cent of all wounds during the First World War.
- Guns. Artillery refers to the large guns, of many sizes and calibres, that fired shells.
- Shells. The artillery fired hundreds of thousands of shells, before and during large battles.
- Horses. Horses and mules hauled artillery guns and shells to the front. Animals played an essential role in this industrial war.

.....

# 6

During the First World War, would you rather have been:

A pilot

An artillery gunner

A nurse

A child at home in Canada, whose father was away at war

A front-line soldier

Give one reason for your choice.

### Student Action:

Students will reflect on the personal stories and experiences presented throughout Gallery 2.

### Answer:

Open-ended.

# 7

## Why is there a little teddy bear in this gallery?

### Student Action:

Students will locate the teddy bear, view the related artifacts and photographs, and read the corresponding text panels.

### Answer:

Mementos such as the teddy bear served as precious links to home.

### Additional Information:

Ten-year-old Aileen Rogers sent her teddy bear to her father, hoping it would keep him safe. Following Lawrence Rogers' death, soldiers retrieving his body found the teddy bear in his pocket. It was returned to the Rogers family, along with other personal items, including his spare jacket and cap.

# 8

## What happened to these two men?

1. Georges Philéas Vanier
2. Francis Pegahmagabow

### Student Action:

Students will use the artifacts, images and text relating to both men to develop their answers.

### Answer:

#### Georges Philéas Vanier

Maj Georges Philéas Vanier was wounded in battle. After the war, he led a prestigious career, including serving as Canada's governor general.

#### Francis Pegahmagabow

Corporal Frances Pegahmagabow is the most decorated First Peoples soldier in Canadian history.

### Additional Information:

#### Georges Philéas Vanier

Major Georges Philéas Vanier served with the only French Canadian infantry unit, the 22nd Canadian Infantry Battalion. At Arras, the commanding officer was wounded, and Vanier took his place, leading the battalion. During the battle, he, too, was badly wounded. His right leg had to be amputated. Vanier had a distinguished postwar career and was Canada's governor general between 1959 and 1967.

#### Francis Pegahmagabow

An Ojibawa from the Parry Island Band in Ontario, Francis Pegahmagabow enlisted in August 1914 and served until the end of the war. He was a skilled sniper and trench raider, and only one of the 39 men in the entire Canadian Corp to receive a Military Medal with two bars (in other words three times). After the war, Pegahmagabow became chief, then councillor, of the Parry Island Band.

# 9

Why did these events matter to Canadians when they were happening? Why do they matter now? Draw arrows from each event to the reason it mattered then and the reason it matters now.

## Student Action:

Students will reflect on all they have learned in Gallery 2 and consider the historical significance of the events in question.

## Answer:

EVENT	THEN	NOW
South African War	Canada sent troops overseas for the first time	Helps understand Canada's roots as a member of the British Empire
Second Battle of Ypres	6,000 Canadian soldiers were killed or wounded in three days	Reveals much about the conditions and costs of the First World War
Battle of Vimy Ridge	A Canadian victory	Has become a symbol of Canada's accomplishments and identity
Signing of the Treaty of Versailles	Ended the First World War	An important step in Canada's evolution as a fully independent country