

Remembrance Day: First World War Centenary

What Is Remembrance Day?

Remembrance Day helps us to remember what happened during the First World War and any other wars that have happened since. We remember the soldiers who have fought and died for our country.

What Happens on Remembrance Day?

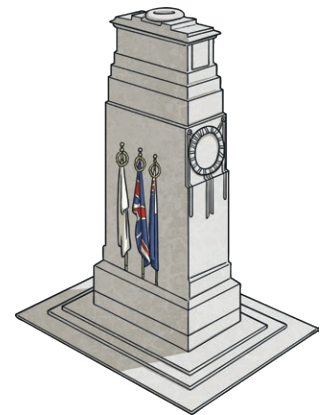
The signing of the **Armistice** happened on 11th November 1918 to signal the end of the First World War. So, the eleventh hour (11 a.m.) of the eleventh day of the eleventh month is the time when we have two minutes of silence to remember those that have helped our country during wars. Many towns and cities also have parades, which are often joined by **veteran** soldiers, Scout groups and Guide groups, to show that they remember. This usually ends at a war memorial or **cenotaph**.

Why Is the Centenary Important?

A centenary is the hundredth anniversary of a significant event. This year marks the hundredth year since the end of the First World War and over the past four years, there have been a variety of events to commemorate this important event in our history.

What Events Will Take Place?













- In Whitehall, London, the Queen and other important people pay their respects during the national ceremony for Remembrance Day. For the centenary event, this will follow traditional lines with the Queen laying the first poppy wreath at the Cenotaph and other wreaths then being laid by members of the **armed forces**, but the march-past which follows will be larger than usual. Families of First World War veterans will join the armed forces as they march past the Cenotaph to commemorate the sacrifice made by their relatives.
- During the day, bells will be rung across the UK as they did at the end of the First World War. There will be 1400 bell ringers – the number lost during the war.
- A large church service will be held at Westminster Abbey, London, to end the celebrations and give thanks for peace and those soldiers who returned home. Other large services will be held in Glasgow, Cardiff and Belfast along with many smaller services across the UK.



- Exhibitions and films will be shown to reflect on the upheaval of war but also the hope of the years following the 'Great War'.

Poppies

After the war, only poppies grew on the scarred earth of the battlefields in France and Belgium. This was described in the poem 'In Flanders Fields' written in 1919 by the medical soldier and poet, John McCrae, following his time fighting in Flanders, Belgium:

		In Flanders fields the poppies blow		
		Between the crosses, row on row,		
		That mark our place; and in the sky		
		The larks, still bravely singing, fly		
		Scarce heard amid the guns below.		

Wearing poppies helps us show our respect for those who have died and buying them raises money for charities to help wounded soldiers and their families. A display of 888,246 ceramic poppies (one for every British and **Commonwealth** soldier that died during the conflict), marked the hundredth anniversary of the start of the First World War in 2014 at the Tower of London. This will be reinstalled at venues in London and Manchester to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War.

Glossary

armed forces: A country's army, navy and air force.

Armistice: An agreement made by opposing sides in a war to stop fighting for a certain time; a truce.

cenotaph: A monument to someone buried elsewhere, especially one commemorating people who died in a war.

Commonwealth: An international association consisting of the UK together with states that were previously part of the British Empire.

veteran: An ex-member of the armed forces.

Questions

1. What is a centenary? Tick **one**.

- the First World War
- the hundredth anniversary of a significant event
- the end of the First World War
- two minutes of silence

2. Draw a line to complete the sentence.

Commonwealth

An ex-member of the armed forces.

veteran

An international association consisting of the UK together with states that were previously part of the British Empire.

cenotaph

A monument to someone buried elsewhere, especially one commemorating people who died in a war.

3. How many people will ring bells?

4. Why do we wear poppies? Give two reasons.

- _____
- _____

5. **Find** and **copy** a word from the 'Poppies' section which tells you that the land was damaged.

6. Summarise what usually happens on Remembrance Day in 30 words or less.

7. What is significant about the ceramic poppies?

8. Why is it important to remember the First World War?
