

Activity

Episode 32
11th November 2014

War Nurses

Key Learning

Students will create written journals and narratives reflecting the daily life experiences of war nurses. Students will learn about the roles and responsibilities of war nurses.

The Australian Curriculum

History/Historical Knowledge and Understanding/Community and remembrance

Days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia (including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day) and the importance of symbols and emblems. [\(ACHHK063\)](#)
Year 3



History/Historical Skills/Analysis and uses of sources

Locate relevant information from sources provided [\(ACHHS084\)](#)
Year 4



Locate information related to inquiry questions in a range of sources [\(ACHHS102\)](#) [\(ACHHS121\)](#) Years 5 & 6



History/Historical Skills/Chronology, terms and concepts

Sequence historical people and events [\(ACHHS081\)](#) [\(ACHHS098\)](#) [\(ACHHS117\)](#) [\(ACHHS205\)](#) Years 4, 5, 6 & 7



Use historical terms [\(ACHHS082\)](#) [\(ACHHS099\)](#) [\(ACHHS118\)](#) [\(ACHHS206\)](#) Years 4, 5, 6 & 7



History/Historical Skills/Explanation and Communication

Develop texts, particularly narratives and descriptions, which incorporate source materials [\(ACHHS105\)](#) [\(ACHHS124\)](#) Years 5 & 6



Discussion Questions

1. In which war did Olive Haynes serve?
2. About how many women served in the Australian Army Nursing Service?
3. Olive was a
 - a. Doctor
 - b. Nurse
 - c. Soldier
4. Women were allowed to fight in World War I. True or false?
5. Where did most of the fighting in WWI take place?
6. What risks did the nurses face in the war?
7. Describe the sorts of jobs women did back home during the war.
8. When did WWI end?
9. Why do you think women weren't recognised for their efforts in the same way returned soldiers were?
10. How did you feel watching this story?

Activities

Graphic organiser

Discuss the *War Nurses* story as a class. What questions were raised in the discussion (what are the gaps in their knowledge)? The following KWLH organiser provides students with a framework to explore their prior knowledge on this topic and consider what they would like to know and learn.

What do I <u>know</u> ?	What do I <u>want</u> to know?	What have I <u>learnt</u> ?	<u>How</u> will I find out?

Hold a classroom discussion using some of the following questions.

- What did you learn from watching the BtN *War Nurses* story?
- Why do you think women wanted to serve as war nurses during the First World War?
- Imagine what the conditions would have been like for war nurses. Discuss in pairs.
- What are some of the risks and challenges that war nurses face going to war?
- Do you think it is important to learn about war nurses? Why or why not?
- How did you feel watching this story?

Research project

Students will research an Australian nurse that has served in war. Students will locate relevant historical information from sources provided and present their findings to the class.

- In what war did they serve?
- What is their background? E.g. family, where were they born, education.
- Create a timeline of their life. Consider adding photos and video.
- What were their roles and responsibilities as a war nurse?
- Did they receive any awards? If yes, what did they do to earn this award?
- Write a journal entry depicting a day in the life of this nurse.

Research sources

Stories of Australia's wartime nurses – <http://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/Devotion.pdf>

We served too – <http://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/primary-we-served-too.pdf>

Rachael Pratt – <http://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/primary-rachael-pratt-1.pdf>

Florence Nightingale – <http://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/primary-nightingale-1.pdf>

Betty Jeffrey – <http://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/primary-betty-jeffrey-1.pdf>

Bessie Pocock – <http://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/primary-bessie-pocock.pdf>

Letter writing

Imagine you are a nurse on board a ship travelling abroad to serve in the First World War (see photographs below). Write a diary entry or letter describing what you are doing, the conditions, and how you are feeling.



Soldiers and nurses aboard HMAT Euripides prior to its departure, May 1915.
<http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/resources/hilda-samsing/>



Australian War Memorial
<http://www.awm.gov.au/education/memorial-boxes/1/the-uren-family-look/>

Poetry

The following poems were written by soldiers about their nurses. Read them aloud as a class and then answer the questions below. Students will then write their own short poem about war nurses. Make a classroom poetry book using the students' poems.

- How did you feel listening to these poems?
- What words were used to convey feeling and emotion?
- What images do these poems evoke? Illustrate an aspect of the poem.
- Did you notice any patterns? For example, rhyme or line structure.

A prayer of thanks

The night is dark and dank and drear,
I toss upon my fevered bed
And softly comes on soundless feet
An earthly angel to my head;
And over my burning brow her hand
So soft and cool in sweet caress,
A healing touch that soothes my pain
With loving care and tenderness.
God bless "The Rose of No Man's Land",
Who guides me through my night of pain,
And keep her safe throughout the storm.

Anonymous. AWM PR 00526

Smilin' thru'

Though fate has been unkind to us with sickness and in pain,
It takes the kindness of the nurse to bring us health again;
Her smiling face so cheerful, with radiance aglow,
I'll praise her work unending wherever I may go.
No words that I can utter with justice half express
The gratitude I'll always feel, the depths you cannot guess.
The kindness and devotion bestowed in Mercy's cause,
Deserves the highest praise of all – a round of loud applause!
No doubt they have their troubles (who hasn't some these days?)
But they never show they have them, dispensing kindness many ways.
There's one just here as I'm writing, who is always bright and jolly,
And the first prize I would surely give to one whose name is Polly.
So Australia is indebted, and the soldier thankful too,
To the sisters and the nurses, with their motto *Smilin' thru'*.
Farewell I'll soon be leaving, you've done so much for me,
For others in their illness and Australia generally.

A.M. McDermott, AWM PR 88019

Nurses in poetry – resource

<http://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/primary-nurses-in-poetry-1.pdf>

Olive Haynes – We Are Here Too

Olive Haynes, who featured in BtN's *War Nurses* story, was one of around 3000 women who served with the Australian Army Nursing Service.

Olive Haynes' war stories are now well known thanks to a book compiled by her daughter Margaret Young. Mrs. Young used her mother's diary and hundreds of letters from the front to help compile the book which is called '*We Are Here Too*'.

- What do you think is meant by the title '*We Are Here Too*'?
- What can we learn from the letters and journal entries written by war nurses? Why are they so important to us now?
- What other historical sources can help us learn about the past?

Memorial Box: Hands on activity

Australian War Memorial – Memorial Box

Borrow a memorial box from the Australian War Memorial. Memorial boxes can be used in different ways by students of all ages from primary through to senior secondary. They can be adapted to cover a wide range of curriculum areas, including history, social studies, politics, language, visual arts, cultural and gender studies.



Memorial box #5 – We want to do more! The experience of women and children during the Second World War

Many women were left largely on their own in the home and workplace during the Second World War. This box explores opportunities opened up to women who enlisted or who took over jobs that had belonged exclusively to men before the war.

Below are some examples of the type of objects you will find in this Memorial Box.



Memorial Box links

- Learn more about Memorial Box #5 <http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/memorial-boxes/05-women-and-children-in-ww2/>
- Download the resource book for Memorial box #5 http://www.awm.gov.au/education/box/05_res_book.pdf
- Book a memorial box <http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/memorial-box/agents/>

Related Research Links

Australian War Memorial – Australian Nurses (resources)

<http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/resources/nurses-primary/>

Women at War: the changing role of women in times of conflict

http://www.dva.gov.au/commems_oawg/commemorations/education/Documents/workingtheweb_5.pdf

Behind the News – Remembrance Day

<http://www.abc.net.au/btn/story/s3880227.htm>

Australian War Memorial – Memorial Box

<http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/memorial-boxes/05-women-and-children-in-ww2/>

Australian War Memorial – Stories of wartime nurses

<http://www.awm.gov.au/sites/default/files/Devotion.pdf>