

LESSON PLANS

Remembrance Day or “Poppy Day”



Remembrance Day is on 11th November every year. It is a special day to remember the soldiers who died in wars, especially during the two World Wars. This day was once called Armistice Day, but after World War II, it was renamed Remembrance Day. It is celebrated in the UK and all Commonwealth countries (nations that were once part of the British Empire).

Remembrance Day is held on the 11th of November because this was the day in 1918 when World War I ended. At 11 a.m., a two-minute silence is observed to remember the fallen.

The day is marked by a symbol that originated during World War I: the red poppy. During the war, much of Western Europe's land was left in ruins, with fields filled with mud and devastation. Yet, amid this destruction, red poppies began to grow in the ruined countryside.

This sight inspired Canadian Lieutenant Colonel **John McCrae** to write the famous poem *In **Flanders Fields***, reflecting on the significance of the poppies growing in the midst of chaos.

In 1918, **Moina Michael**, an American teacher, was inspired by McCrae's poem and wrote her own, ***We Shall Keep the Faith***, in which she promised to wear a poppy "in honour of our dead." She encouraged others to do the same, and soon the poppy became a symbol of remembrance in countries like the UK, the US, Canada, and Australia.

In 1921, the Royal British Legion in the UK sold poppies to raise funds for veterans, marking the beginning of the Poppy Appeal. The success of the first appeal raised money to help veterans with housing and employment.

Today, the Poppy Appeal continues, with thousands of volunteers selling millions of poppies each year to support military veterans and their families. In the UK, these poppies are made in special factories by disabled ex-servicemen. Scotland has its own version of the poppy, which has four petals instead of the usual five.

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In Flanders Fields

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.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

- John McCrae

- Read the poem aloud twice: once for comprehension, then a second time to focus on the tone and emotions.
- Ask students to identify words or phrases that evoke strong feelings (e.g., sadness, hope, remembrance).

We Shall Keep the Faith

Oh! you who sleep in Flanders Fields,
Sleep sweet - to rise anew!
We caught the torch you threw
And holding high, we keep the Faith
With All who died.
We cherish, too, the poppy red
That grows on fields where valour led;
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies,
But lends a lustre to the red
Of the flower that blooms above the dead
In Flanders Fields.
And now the Torch and Poppy Red
We wear in honour of our dead.
Fear not that ye have died for naught;
We'll teach the lesson that ye wrought
In Flanders Fields.

-Moina Michael

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Little Poppy

Little poppy
Given to me,
Help me keep Canada
Safe and free.
I'll wear a little poppy,
As red as red can be,
To show that I remember
Those who fought for me.

Remembrance Day

We wear a poppy
On Remembrance Day,
And at eleven
We stand and pray.
Wreaths are put
Upon a grave.
As we remember
Our soldiers brave.

Poppy

We are but children small,
We are too little to do it all.
Children you may do your part.
Love each other is how you start.
Play without fighting.
Share your games and toys.
Be kind and thoughtful,
To all girls and boys.

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For younger audiences, you can show this simple and short video about how wars are experienced by animals: **How War Is Experienced by Animals**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeR5JWalcpo>

Then ask them simple questions like:

- How do you think the animals felt when the war started?
I think the animals felt... because...
- What did the colours in the video look like at the beginning?
The colours were... because...
- How did the colours change when the war began?
When the war started, the colours became... because...
- What do you think the poppy represents in the video?
The poppy represents... because...
- What do the animals do when the poppy field grows? How do they feel?
- The animals looked happy because...
- How did you feel when the bunny played with the butterfly?
I felt... because it was...

For a simple, short history of Poppy Day, you can also show this video to your students:

A Short History of the Poppy. **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGCHk5_2skY**

Then ask them questions like:

- Why do people wear poppies on Remembrance Day?
People wear poppies to remember... because...
- Why do you think it's important for people to remember the soldiers and people affected by war?
It's important to remember them because...
- What do you think we can learn from wearing poppies every year?
We can learn to... because...
- What is one thing you learned about Remembrance Day from the video?
I learned that... because...
- Why do you think it's important to have Remembrance Day each year?
It's important to have Remembrance Day because...

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GRADE LEVEL	A2 - B1
CLIL SUBJECT	History
OBJECTIVE	• Students will develop their speaking skills in English while learning about the history, significance, and symbolism of Remembrance Day (Poppy Day). • The lesson will integrate aspects of history, social studies, and language skills through discussions and activities.
MATERIALS NEEDED	• Poppy pictures or templates for making poppies • Paper and markers • Whiteboard and markers • Prepared Remembrance Day quiz or question cards • Printed copies of the poem “In Flanders Fields” (optional)
LESSON DURATION	45-60 minutes

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

- Start with a short class discussion about the concept of remembrance and why we remember things.
- Ask the class if they know why people wear poppies.
- Write "Remembrance Day" on the board and ask students if they've heard of it. Introduce the topic: "On November 11th, we remember the people who fought in wars and gave their lives for us."

2. INTRODUCTION TO REMEMBRANCE DAY (10 MINUTES)

- Provide a simple explanation of Remembrance Day, focusing on the history and the symbol of the poppy. We provided one at the beginning of the lesson plan.
- Read aloud the poem "In Flanders Fields" and the other poems on pages 2 and 3 (optional) to introduce students to the significance of poppies.
- Show pictures or videos of poppies (there are two suggestions on page 4) growing on battlefields and how they became a symbol for remembrance.

3. SPEAKING ACTIVITIES (20 MINUTES)

• Activity 1: Poppy Symbol Discussion

1. Show a picture of a poppy and ask students to describe it.
2. Then, discuss why poppies are worn on Remembrance Day.
3. Encourage students to speak using sentence starters:
"The poppy reminds me of..."
"I think the poppy is important because..."
"When I see a poppy, it makes me feel..."
"People wear poppies to show..."

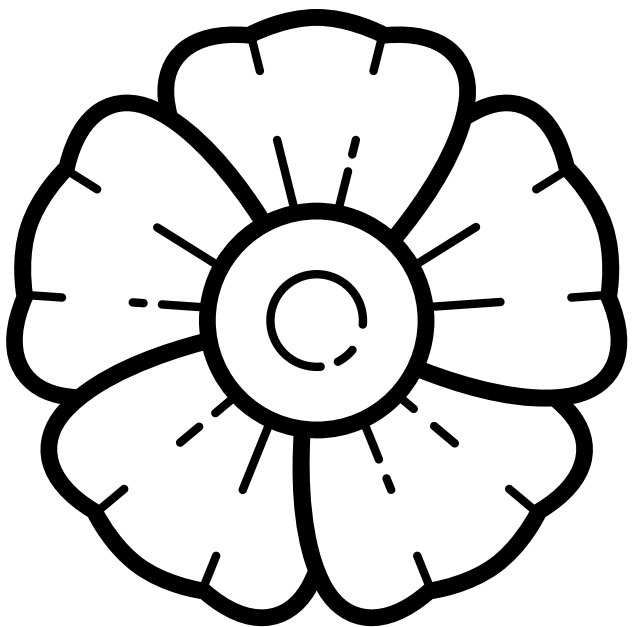
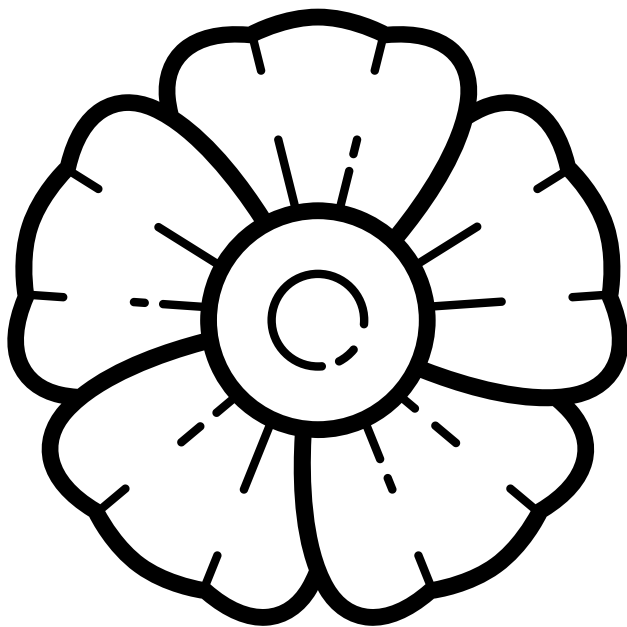
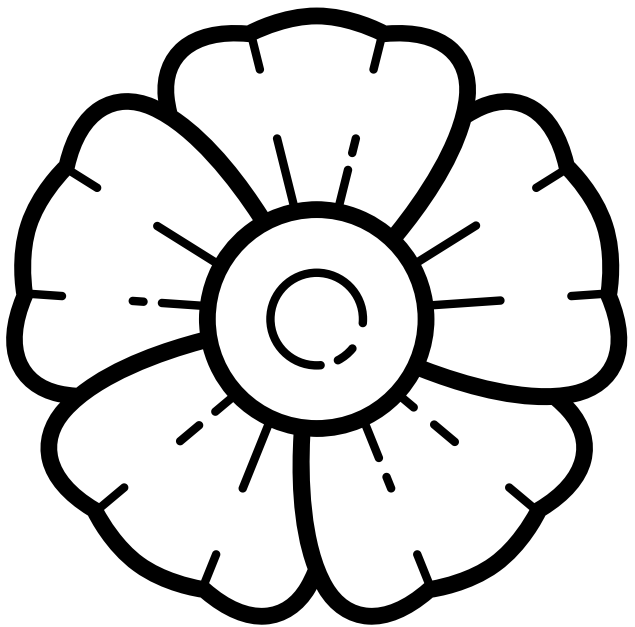
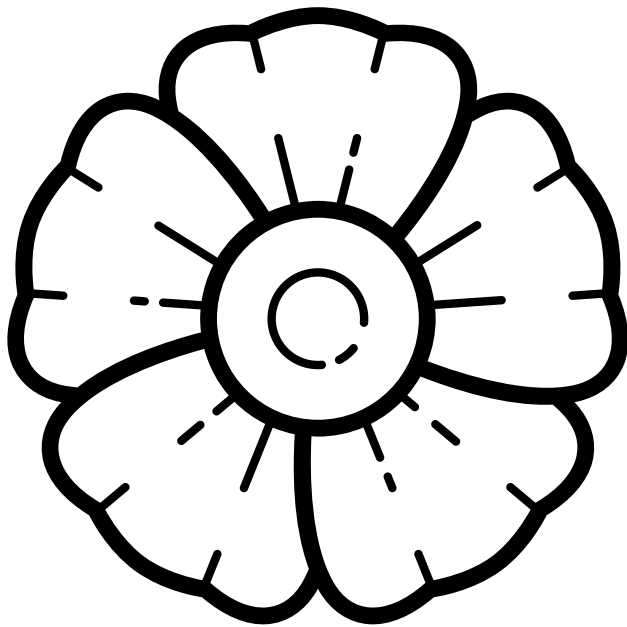
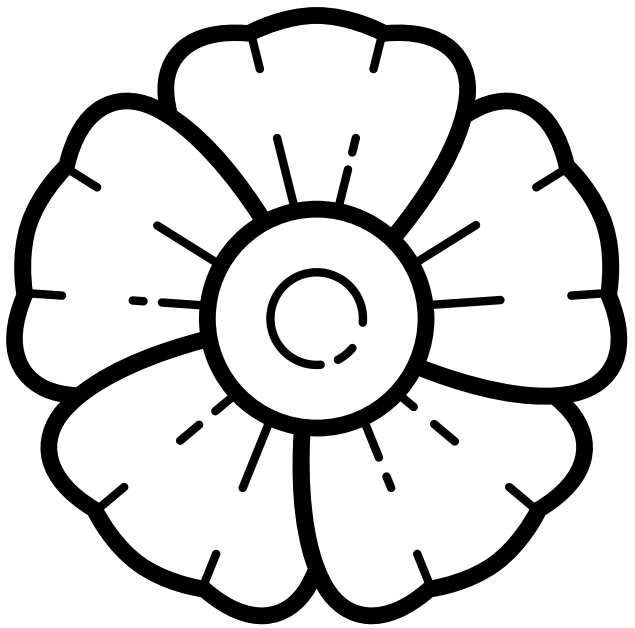
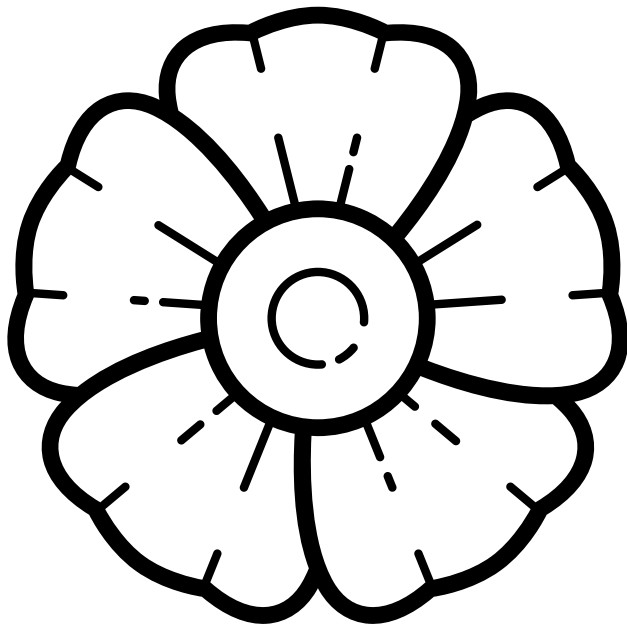
• Activity 2: Remembrance Day Word Web

1. On the board, write the phrase "Remembrance Day" in the centre.
2. Ask students to brainstorm words related to Remembrance Day (e.g., poppies, soldiers, peace, sacrifice, bravery, etc.) and write them around the center word.
3. After creating the word web, ask the students to speak about how each word relates to Remembrance Day.
Some examples:
"We remember the soldiers because they fought for us."
"Peace is important because it means no more war."
"We wear a poppy to remember those who died."

4. CONCLUSION (10 MINUTES)

- Recap the significance of Remembrance Day and why it's important to remember those who fought in wars.
- Encourage students to share their thoughts on why it is important to think about peace and remember the past.

ASSESSMENT	Assess students based on their participation in the Poppy Symbol discussion and the Word Web activity. Evaluate their ability to explain the significance of the poppy, their use of related vocabulary, and how clearly they express their understanding of Remembrance Day.
EXTENSION	Students can create a short presentation or poster about Remembrance Day. They can include key symbols, such as the poppy, and explain their meaning. The activity can also involve students researching a famous figure or event related to Remembrance Day, like a soldier or a significant battle, and sharing their findings with the class.



INSTRUCTIONS

- Download the file
- Print poppies onto red paper, OR print onto white paper and have students colour / paint the poppies red
- Print the black circles onto white paper or cut circles out of black paper to make the poppy centre
- Fit a pin to the centre

Poppy centres

