

Teaching notes

Two poppy templates – one blank set of four and one larger labelled poppy (see pp.3–4 below).

Here are some suggestions for how you might use them with KS3–4 students.

1. Remembering the fallen

On 11th November, or the nearest school day, I've used the poppies to encourage students to remember the fallen.

In the run-up to 11th November

In early November, we asked our Gifted and Talented GCSE Citizenship students to make a PowerPoint presentation to show to other students. We asked them to include images of: poppies, people laying wreaths, memorials, and serving personnel marking 11th November in the field.

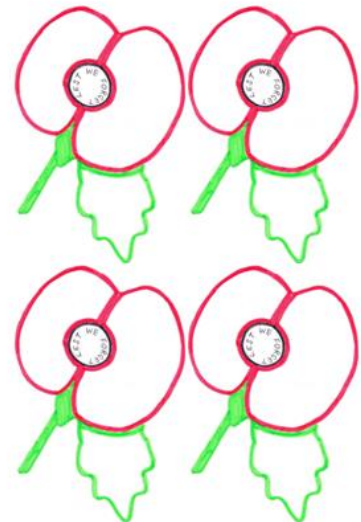
If your school is an established school with detailed records, then you may well have access to the names of former students and staff who have served and fallen in the line of duty. We have a school presentation that we use in a whole school assembly on 11th November and which has images of the Great War, World War II, and disputes from that time up to the present day, interspersed with the names of our staff and students who have fallen. You could use the run-up to 11th November to make a similar presentation.

If your school does not have access to such records, you could visit war memorials in the local area, look for surnames that the students recognise, lay wreaths and take photos to use in either of your presentations.

On 11th November, or the nearest school day

As students enter the room for form time, play one of the PowerPoint presentations that you made earlier in the month.

Using the **small poppy templates**, students can reflect on their own reasons for remembering the fallen and write their messages of gratitude in the petals and leaves. You can then use the poppies to make a display in your classroom or in the assembly hall.



2. Thinking critically

Using the **large poppy template**, students make notes in the petals and leaves. The categories I've used are:

- What peace looks like.
- Why we should remember.
- Our heroes today.

To prepare students for the 'heroes' section, you could show them the names and/or photos of people who have been described as 'heroes' in the news recently and ask students if they know why those people might be 'heroes'.

You could look at the winners of the *Daily Mirror's* Pride of Britain award:

www.prideofbritain.com/

This could lead on to a broader discussion of whether the following are or can be heroes:

- soldiers
- firefighters
- doctors and nurses
- news reporters
- sports personalities
- explorers
- freedom fighters.

Ask students challenging questions such as:

- Can someone be a hero if they're doing the job they're paid to do?

For example, are all soldiers heroes, or only if they show exceptional bravery, such as getting injured themselves to save a fellow soldier?

Are all doctors and nurses heroes, or only ones who do more than their job requires (e.g. nurse William Pooley who went to Sierra Leone to help patient with Ebola and contracted the disease himself)?

- Can someone be a hero if lots of people disagree with their ideas (e.g. the Suffragettes in the early 20th century; e.g. British Muslims going to fight in Syria)?
- Can an animal be a hero (e.g. the cat which saved a toddler from the neighbour's dog: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSG_wBiTEE8)?

Alternative categories

Other possible critical thinking categories could include:

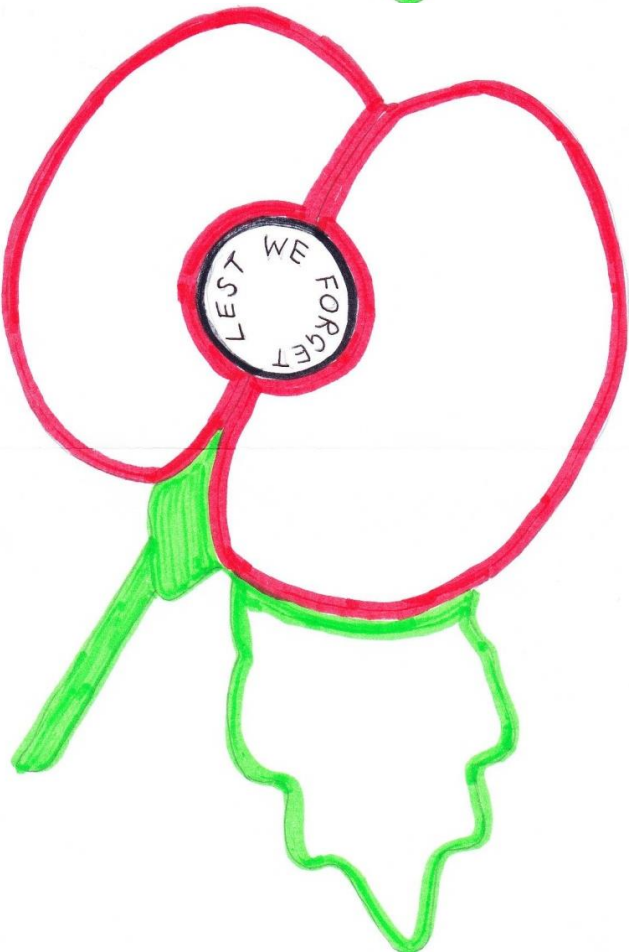
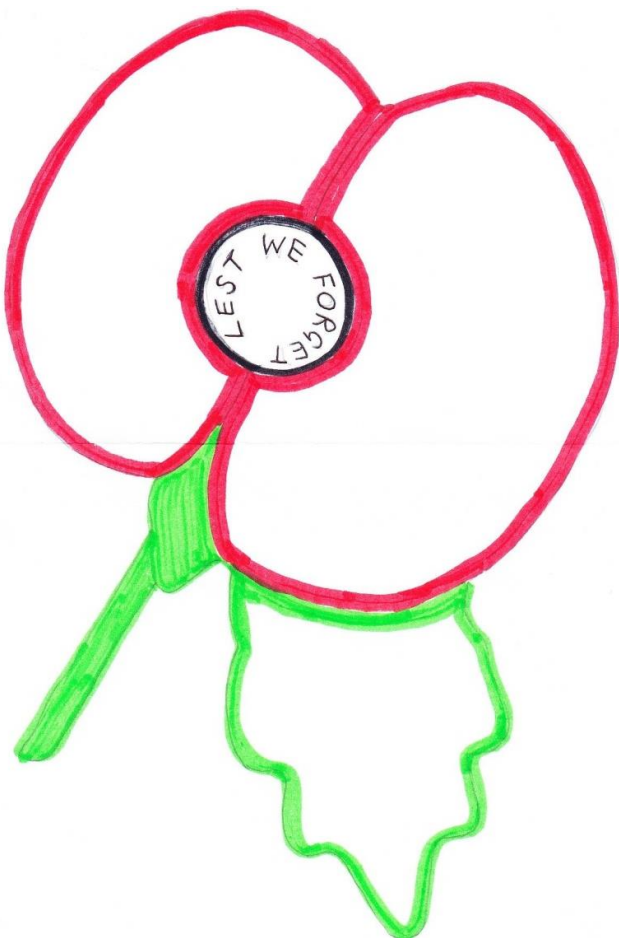
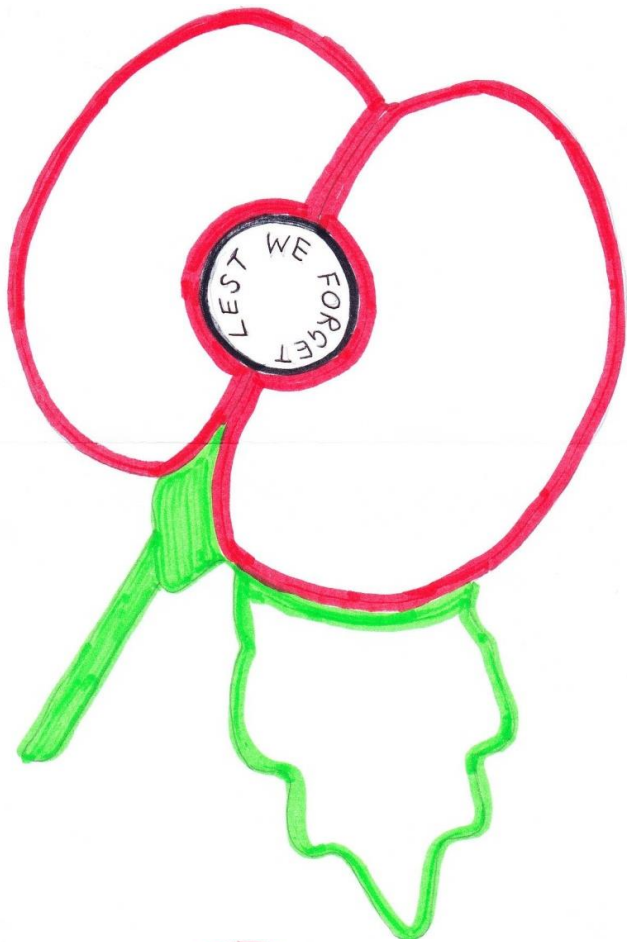
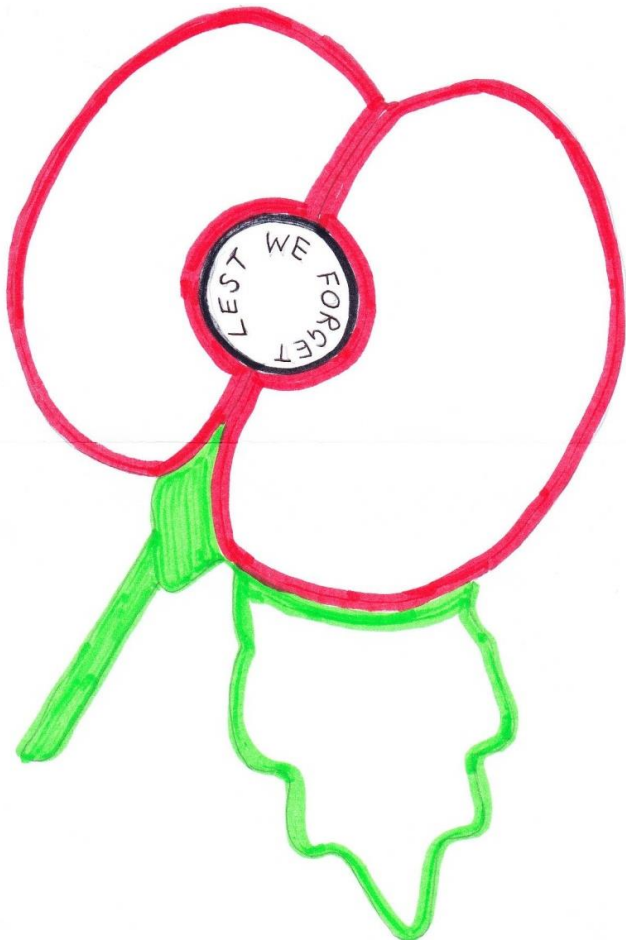
- Can war be justified? Yes.
- Can war be justified? No.
- Other ways of resolving conflicts.

It's obviously helpful with these categories to explore recent and current conflicts as well as historical ones.

Note that some people who believe that war cannot be justified or should not be glorified prefer to wear white poppies instead of red ones. Students could therefore colour the 'Yes' side red and leave the 'No' side white to reflect this.

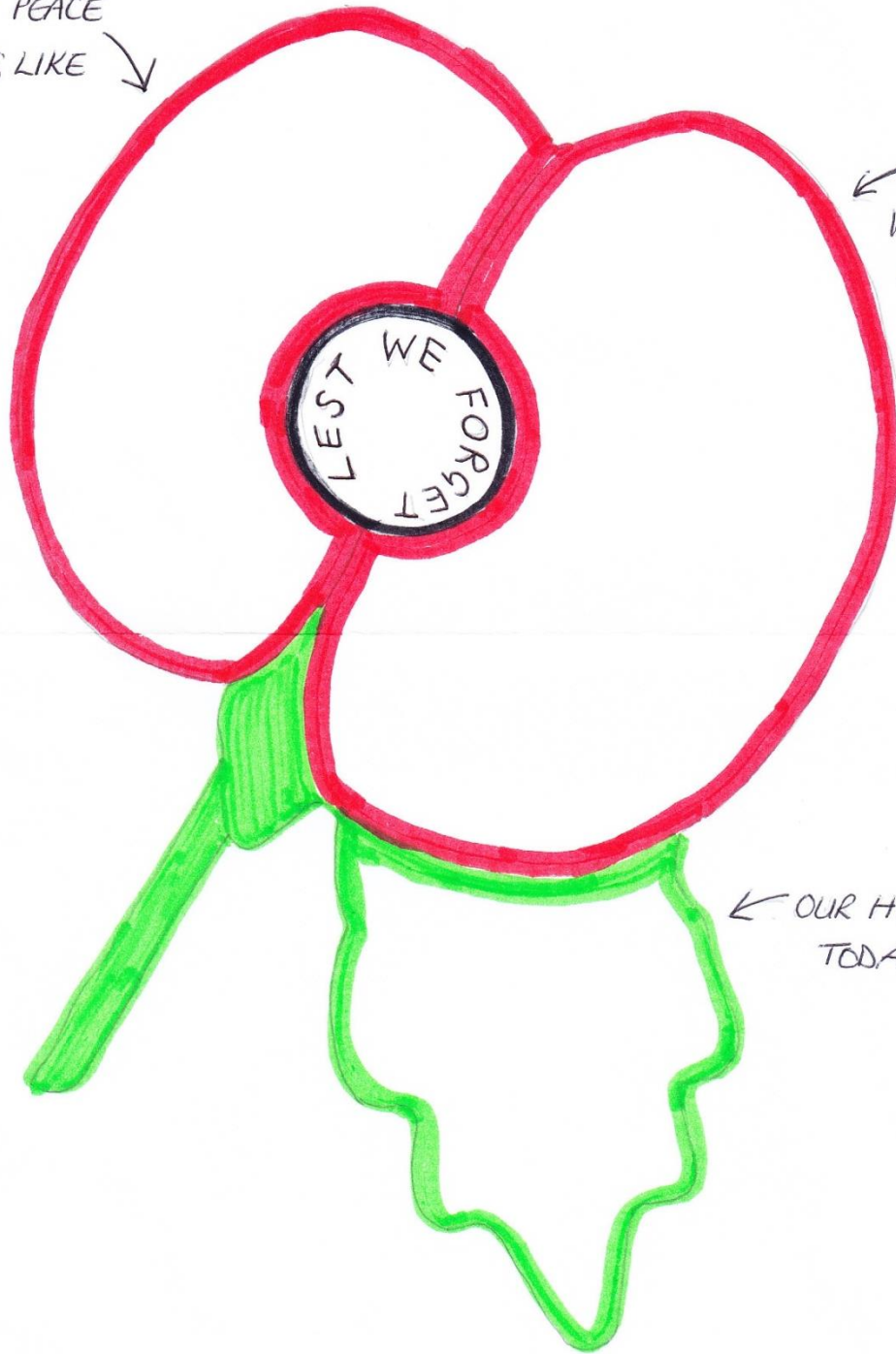
Background information

For information about the history of red poppies as a way of commemorating World War I, and for details of why they can be problematic as a symbol, you could see the following Peace Pledge Union website: http://www.ppu.org.uk/whitepoppy/red_poppy.html



WHAT PEACE
LOOKS LIKE ↘

← WHY
WE SHOULD
REMEMBER



← OUR HEROES
TODAY