Friday 6th November 2026

What is Remembrance Day and why do we celebrate it?

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The Story of Remembrance



The Great War



The Great War is over! At 11 o'clock today, the armistice was signed and we could put down our weapons. An armistice is an agreement to stop fighting and discuss peace. Now, after four long years, we can go home. We call it 'the war to end all wars'. I really hope so.

Today, we call the 'Great War' the First World War because so many countries from across the world were involved. Lasting from 1914-1918, British servicemen and troops from across the British Empire fought together in this war. Almost one million of these men were killed and thousands more were injured.

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Remembrance



Whe
we c do

The phrase ‘Lest We Forget’ means ‘it should not be forgotten’.

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Two-Minute Silence



In 1919, King George V said, "…..it is my desire and hope that at the hour when the Armistice came into force - the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month - there may be for the brief space of two minutes a complete suspension of all our normal activities."

…ecame the nation's special tribute to the … in the First World War. For over 100 years, …e have stopped and paused in silence for two …tes every November 11th.

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The Cenotaph



In 1920, I unveiled a new war memorial in Whitehall, London. It was named the Cenotaph, which means 'empty tomb'. This year, as well as the two-minute silence on Armistice Day, wreaths were laid at a special ceremony of remembrance.

The Cenotaph is Britain's national war memorial. It was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens and like St Paul's Cathedral, it is made from Portland limestone. Today, Armistice Day is also known as Remembrance Day. After the end of the Second World War in 1945, Armistice Day became more widely known as Remembrance Day to include all those who had fallen in the two world wars and in later conflicts.

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The Cenotaph



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War Memorials

Many war cemeteries are abroad, in countries such as France and Belgium. However, in the days of the war, they were too far for most people to visit. Families wanted somewhere special to go to remember the loved ones they had lost in war so a war memorial in each community was very important.



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All our war memorials provide a place where people can come together, unite and remember the fallen.

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The Remembrance Poppy

In 1921, I founded the Royal British Legion. The red poppy was chosen as its symbol for remembrance. Selling poppies around Armistice Day raised funds to help veterans and their families.





Red poppies grew on the battlefields during the First World War. Once the war had ended, Moina Michael from America and Anna Guerin from France were the first to promote the poppy as a symbol to remember the fallen. In 1921, the First World War general Douglas Haig established the Royal British Legion.

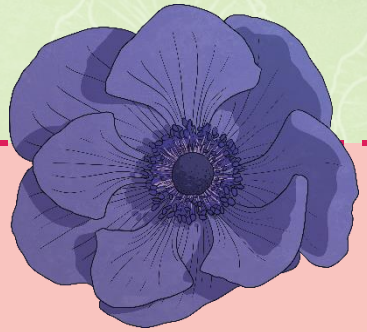
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The Remembrance Poppy

In recent years, other colours of poppy have also been introduced.



For all the Black servicemen and servicewomen from countries around the world who fought and died to bring peace.



For all the animals that contributed to the war effort. Many animals suffered or died in the wars.



Worn as a symbol of remembrance and peace with the message 'never again'.

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Remembrance Sunday

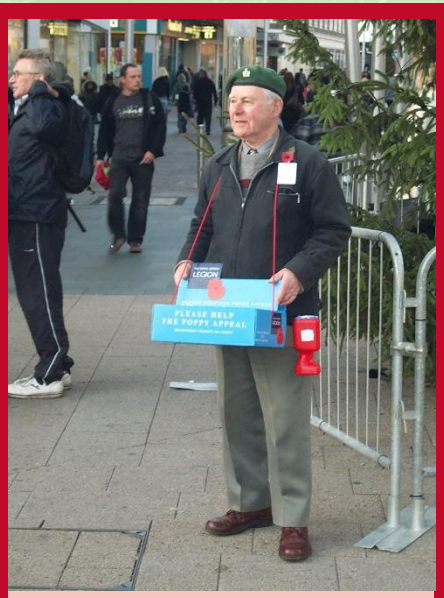


During the Second World War (1939-1945), the time set aside for remembrance was moved from Armistice Day to Remembrance Sunday. It was important that wartime production was not disrupted but the time for acts of remembrance even in wartime was not forgotten.

Remembrance Sunday is held on the Sunday closest to 11th November. This is the second Sunday in November. Our national ceremonies and church services take place across the country on this day. Local associations and veterans' groups also take part in parades and the laying of wreaths. At 11 a.m. there is a two-minute silence.

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The Poppy Appeal





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The Royal British Legion's first poppy factory opened in 1922 and disabled veterans would make the poppies. Visitors to the factory can see how veterans still make poppies and poppy wreaths there today.

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Who Attends on Remembrance Sunday?



On Remembrance Sunday, we gather at the Cenotaph with thousands of others to pay our respects. Veterans, the monarch, other members of the Royal Family, politicians and representatives from different Commonwealth countries all attend.

Veterans are servicemen and women who served in the army, navy or air force. For remembrance, veterans join local communities to visit war memorials or take part in parades or services. They want to remember all those who served in wars and conflicts, especially their comrades.

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Who Attends on Remembrance Sunday?



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On Remembrance Sunday



After a two-minute silence at 11 a.m., I lay the first wreath on the steps of the Cenotaph as a solemn act of remembrance. My mother, HM Queen Elizabeth II, did this same act of remembrance 65 times when she was queen.

At 11 o'clock, people gather at war memorials across the nation and fall silent for two minutes. They remember all of the people who served in the two world wars, as well as other conflicts.

In London, as Big Ben chimes eleven, a single gun on Horse Guards Parade is fired before the silence and a second round of gunfire signals the end. Then the bugle call 'The Last Post' is played. King Charles and others, including High Commissioners from the Commonwealth, lay wreaths of poppies on the steps of the Cenotaph.

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We Remember

Today, we can remember by wearing a poppy, by joining in a two-minute silence on the 11th November (Armistice or Remembrance Day) or by visiting a war memorial on Remembrance Sunday. The remembrance traditions that began after the First World War over 100 years ago continue so we can remember those who have lost their lives in wars and conflicts to enable us to live in peace.



Since the First World War, there have been many more wars and conflicts. In November, we join our Scout troop and take time to remember and show we are grateful to all those who fought to protect our country and bring about peace.

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We Remember



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Task

Create a fact file all about Remembrance Day.

Include some or all of these headings in your fact file

*The Great War
*Two minute silence
*The Cenotaph
*War Memorials
*The Remembrance Poppy
*Remembrance Sunday

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