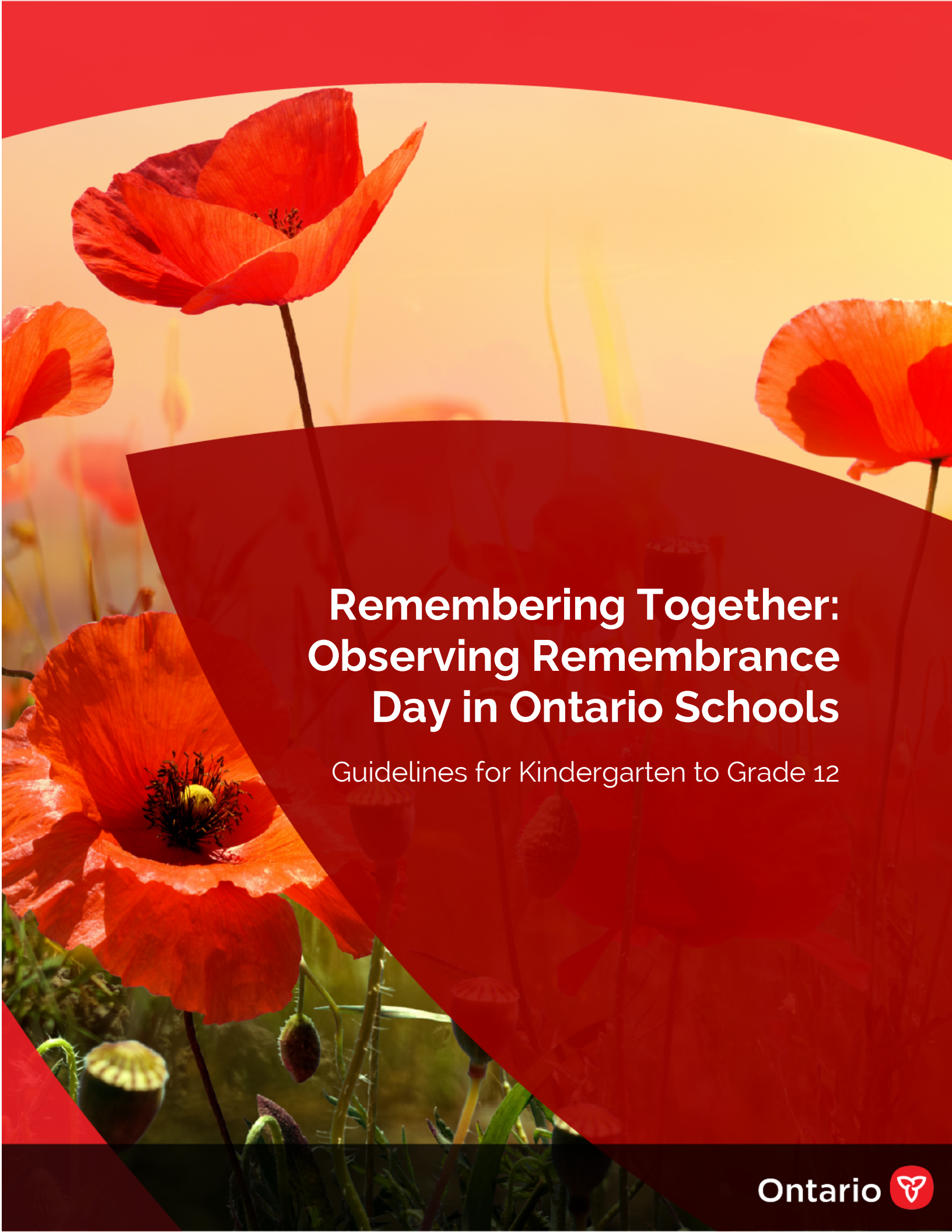


The background of the cover features a close-up photograph of several red poppies in a field. A large, semi-circular graphic overlay in shades of red and yellow is positioned behind the text, creating a layered effect. The top of the overlay is yellow, while the bottom and sides are a deep red.

Remembering Together: Observing Remembrance Day in Ontario Schools

Guidelines for Kindergarten to Grade 12

In this document

1. [Purpose](#)
2. [Context](#)
3. [Why Our History Matters](#)
4. [Implementation Guidelines](#)
5. [Expected Outcomes](#)
6. [Appendix A: Guidance for Commemorative Ceremony and Supports](#)
7. [Appendix B: Ceremony Components and Resources](#)
8. [Appendix C: Classroom Resources](#)
9. [Appendix D: Example Lesson Plans](#)

Purpose

Every November, Ontario schools pause to honour the Canadians who served and sacrificed so that we may live in peace and freedom.

This guide supports school boards in observing Remembrance Day in a way that is meaningful, respectful and rooted in our history. It sets out expectations for school ceremonies, ideas for classroom learning, and the requirements set out for boards in [section 9 of Regulation 304](#) of the [Education Act](#).

Context

[Remembrance Day takes place on November 11th and Veterans' Week](#) takes place from November 5th to November 11th each year. They provide an opportunity to increase awareness and understanding of Canada's military history and the important role veterans have played in securing peace and freedom. Remembrance Day, November 11, marks the final day of Veterans' Week and is a time to honour and recognize all those who have served and continue to serve in the Canadian Armed Forces.

The freedoms Canadians enjoy today were not given to us. Our democracy, our right to speak freely and our way of life were secured by generations of Canadians who answered the call to serve, many of whom never came home. Remembrance Day ensures every student understands the price at which those freedoms were won and the debt of gratitude we owe to those who paid it.

Publicly funded schools in Ontario are required to observe Remembrance Day. The day brings students together to learn about the courage, service and sacrifice of those who have worn Canada's uniform, and to reflect on what it means to be Canadian.

This document was informed through consultation with organizations representing veterans and active service members, whose input is gratefully acknowledged.

Why Our History Matters

Studying our military history helps students understand who we are as Canadians and the role Canada plays in the world today. Remembrance is not only about looking back. It is about understanding how the service and sacrifice of past generations built the country we live in, and the responsibility we share to carry that legacy forward.

A Nation Shaped by Service

Canada's military past is woven into the country we are today. In the First and Second World Wars, Canadians from every region and background served side by side. Through that shared service, they came to see themselves as part of a nation with its own voice and its own place in the world.

The courage and sacrifice of those who served earned Canada the respect of its allies and a seat at the table where the post-war world was shaped. Their service helped define the values Canadians still hold dear: freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and a willingness to stand with others in defence of peace.

That legacy did not end in 1945. Canadians went on to serve in Korea, helped pioneer United Nations peacekeeping, stood with NATO allies through the Cold War, and served in Afghanistan and in humanitarian missions around the world.

When students learn this history, they gain the context to understand Canada's place among the free nations of the world. They also come to appreciate that the peace and freedom they enjoy were defended, at great cost, by ordinary Canadians.

What this Means for Schools

Schools are encouraged to help students:

- understand how Canada's service in the world wars helped shape our national identity and independence
- connect the sacrifices of past generations to the freedoms Canadians enjoy today
- link Canada's military history to its role in the world today, including its alliances and international commitments
- see remembrance as part of learning throughout the school year, not only on November 11

Implementation Guidelines

Timing of Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day is on November 11 each year. As per [R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 304: School Year Calendar, Professional Activity Days](#), school boards are required to hold a Remembrance Day service in every school on the 11th day of November or, when the 11th day of November is a Saturday or Sunday, on the Friday preceding the 11th day of November.

The requirement to hold a service in school does not apply where the school participates in a service of remembrance at a cenotaph or other location in the community.

Boards should avoid scheduling the following on Remembrance Day:

- professional activity days,
- examination days,
- a test required under the Education Quality and Accountability Office Act, 1996,
- the financial literacy assessment required to graduate secondary school.

The day must be communicated in advance to the school community, including students, parents, and educators.

Flag Lowering

Before the Remembrance Day ceremony begins, [all Canadian flags should be lowered to half-mast.](#)

Moments of Silence, Playing of the Last Post and Rouse (Reveille)

Remembrance Day observance ceremonies in schools should include:

- a) the playing of the Last Post as a tribute to Canada's deceased soldiers, symbolizing that their duty is over and that they may rest in peace;
- b) the complete suspension of school activities and the observance of silence at 11:00am for a period of two minutes after the playing of the Last Post so that all persons in the school can concentrate on remembrance; and
- c) after two minutes of silence, the playing of the Rouse (Reveille). This second piece of music was historically used to begin the day at military barracks and is now used symbolically to recognize those who have died and risen above their mortal duties.

O Canada

Singing the official national anthem on November 11 is distinct from the regular school day opening exercises. Accompanying music can be live or pre-recorded in one of Canada's official languages or instrumental.

Criteria for Selecting Activities for Remembrance Day

During the school day, students should have the opportunity to engage in activities that:

- Focus on honouring those who have served and sacrificed their lives in military service for Canada and our allies, with a local perspective where possible.
- Help students understand how Canada's service in the First and Second World Wars helped shape our national identity, and how that history informs Canada's role in the world today.
- Acknowledge Canadian service in more recent conflicts, as well as peacekeeping and humanitarian missions; commemoration should not be limited to the First and Second World Wars; for example, Canadian participation in peacekeeping in the Balkans.
- Recognize the individual and collective accomplishments of the many Canadians who have served, including Indigenous peoples, Black Canadians, women, French Canadians, immigrants and newcomers to Canada; this could

include Canada's No. 2 Construction Battalion, the service of Indigenous Canadians like Francis Pegahmagabow and Tommy Prince, or French Canadians like Léo Major and Paul Triquet.

- Provide meaningful opportunities for participation, such as through art, music, readings or other projects.
- Support personal reflection on service, sacrifice and the freedoms we enjoy because of it.
- Create inclusive and accessible experiences for all attendees.
- Respectfully incorporate commemorative symbols such as wreaths and poppies, with appropriate reverence to what they represent.
 - The context of each symbol should be explained and discussed each year before use. These symbols should be used to reinforce and support observance of the day, rather than being the focus of observance.
- Ensure content is age-appropriate, thoughtfully constructed and curriculum-aligned. Activities for younger students can focus on concrete ideas, while deeper reflection can be implemented for older students.
 - **Kindergarten to Grade 6:** focus on creative and knowledge-based activities (e.g., learning about the meaning of commemorative symbols, exploring concepts of service, peace and bravery).
 - **Grades 7 and 8:** offer meaningful roles beyond attendees at the ceremony and allow for leadership opportunities for older students supporting younger peers.
 - **Grades 9 to 12:** connect to the curriculum through research projects, papers and discussions.
- Include meaningful connections beyond November 11, highlighting relevance throughout the school year connected to the curriculum.

Involving Veterans and Active Service Members

There is no more powerful way for students to understand service and sacrifice than to hear directly from those who have served. Schools are encouraged to involve veterans and active service members in Remembrance Day observances wherever possible.

This may include inviting guests to attend ceremonies, participate virtually, visit classrooms, or engage with students at memorial sites. Local legions, military units, cadet organizations and other veteran organizations can help schools connect with appropriate guests.

- When inviting guest speakers, schools should:
 - provide clear and respectful communication well in advance, outlining the purpose, format, timing and expectations of the visit.

- follow expectations outlined in the Guest Speakers in Schools subsection of [Your child's education: a parent guide to our school system](#).
- Where guest participation is not possible, schools may support personal connection to Remembrance Day through other alternative options, such as digital archives, readings or stories that highlight individual lives, service and the sacrifices they offered.

Appendix A: [Guidance for Commemorative Ceremony and Supports](#) offers additional resources for engaging with Veterans.

Expected Outcomes

It is Ontario's expectation that Remembrance Day activities work toward the following outcomes:

Outcomes for Students

- A deeper understanding of Canadian military service and sacrifice, and of the freedoms it secured
- An understanding of how Canada's service in the world wars helped shape our national identity and Canada's role in the world today
- Respect and gratitude for veterans, those who serve today and those who gave their lives
- A personal connection to Remembrance Day and pride in Canada's history
- Active engagement and participation in commemoration

Outcomes for Educators

- Building educators' confidence in supporting their students' understanding of service and sacrifice by delivering accurate, respectful and meaningful Remembrance Day learning activities

Outcomes for Parents and the Community

- Strengthening confidence that students in the community understand and respect service and sacrifice
- Honouring and remembering Canadian veterans and active service members in appropriate and respectful ways
- Encouraging Remembrance Day learning, understanding, reflection and engagement beyond the classroom

Appendix A: Guidance for Commemorative Ceremony and Supports

The Remembrance Day Ceremony can include the following components. Suggested timing for the activities is also included to ensure two minutes of silence can be observed at 11:00 a.m.

Suggested Time	Component	Details and Resources
10:20 a.m.	Opening Remarks	Opening remarks should be delivered by a school leader. The remarks should welcome attendees, set a respectful tone for the ceremony and introduce the meaning of the day, including the symbolism of the ceremony (e.g., national anthem, Last Post, Rouse). Sample speaking notes that can be adapted as needed are available through the Royal Canadian Legion.
10:25-10:55 a.m.	Ceremony components (see Appendix B)	Additional components can be added to the ceremony agenda at the organizer's discretion. These components should conclude no later than 10:55 a.m. to ensure two minutes of silence can be observed at 11:00 a.m.
10:56 a.m.	Singing of the National Anthem	This is different from the regular school day opening exercises. Accompanying music can be live or pre-recorded in one of Canada's official languages or instrumental.
10:58 a.m.	The playing of the Last Post	Historically, this piece was used to signify the end of the day at military barracks and is now used as a farewell to fallen soldiers. It should be timed to end at 11:00 a.m.
11:00 a.m.	Two minutes of silence	All attendees quietly pause and reflect for two minutes. No musical instruments should be played during this time.
11:02 a.m.	Playing of the Rouse	This second piece of music historically was used to begin the day at military barracks and is now used symbolically to recognize those who have died and risen above their mortal duties.

Appendix B: Ceremony Components and Resources

The following components can be added to the ceremony agenda at the organizer's discretion.

Component	Details and Resources
Placing of wreaths	Pre-made wreaths can be placed by students at the cenotaph, at the front of the auditorium or other location in the school.
Poetry reading	A reading of the poem "In Flanders Fields" by Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae.
Act of Remembrance	Excerpt from the poem "For the Fallen" by Laurence Binyon that honours fallen soldiers, typically read by a veteran. Can also be read by a student or a video/audio recording can be played.
Commitment to Remember	Pledge that can be read by students that highlights the role of younger generations in continuing to honour the fallen. Can be recited with a video/audio recording .
Guest Speaker	Resources for inviting a Veteran to speak during your ceremony include The Memory Project , connecting with your local Royal Canadian Legion branch or the National Veterans' Week Speakers Program . Alternatively, you can share an interview with a Veteran. Many are available through Veterans Affairs' Heroes Remember Project .
Video, slideshow or musical piece	These can be student-made and ideally include content about local veterans.
Solemn dismissal	At the end of the ceremony, if in person, veterans exit first and other participants leave while maintaining the reflective and respectful tone of the ceremony.

Additional Ceremony Resources

- [A Guide to Commemorative Services](#) (Government of Canada): A guide on hosting a Remembrance Day ceremony.
- [Plan a Remembrance Day Ceremony](#) (Royal Canadian Legion): A guide on how to plan a Remembrance Day ceremony.
- [Commemorative music recordings](#) (Royal Canadian Legion): Music for commemorative ceremonies.

- [Last Post and Rouse sheet music and recordings](#) (Canadian Armed Forces): A brief history and explanation of the importance of the Reveille, Rouse and Last Post.
- Wearing of poppies: All students should be encouraged to wear student-made or [Royal Canadian Legion poppies](#) throughout the day.

Appendix C: Classroom Resources

The government and agency resources below give educators a starting point for teaching Canada's military history and honouring those who served, on Remembrance Day and throughout the year.

TVO

TVO co-created digital modules with Honouring Bravery and Canada Company that can be completed prior to the Remembrance Day ceremony. Additional details on how to integrate modules can be found under [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

- [Canadian Stories for Remembrance Day Commemorating Bravery: Canadian Stories for Remembrance Day](#)
 - Primary (Kindergarten to Grade 2): [Respect and Responsibility](#)
 - Junior (Grade 3 to 5): [Remembrance and Bravery](#)
 - Intermediate (Grade 6 to 8): [Service and Sacrifice](#)
 - Senior (Grade 9 to 12): [Trailblazers and Changemakers](#)

The Archives of Ontario

The Archives of Ontario provides access to unique and multi-faceted records that bring Canadian experiences of WWI and WWII to life for Remembrance Day learning in the classroom. This includes wartime posters, photographs and virtual exhibits.

- [Canadian Posters from the First World War](#): Online exhibit featuring Canadian posters from WWI, demonstrating how recruitment and financial support were advertised during this time
- Images from WWI and WWII from Archives Ontario's Collection:
 - [Faces of World War I](#)
 - [The Home Front During WWII](#)
- [Power & Persuasion: Propaganda During the World Wars](#): A virtual workshop offered by Archives Ontario for senior grades (10-11)
- [Lesson Plans](#): Downloadable lesson plans for senior grades on topics related to WWI and WWII, highlighting and integrating pieces from Archives Ontario's archival collection

Veterans Affairs Canada, Government of Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada is a federal department that supports Canada's veterans, active service members and their families, while also promoting remembrance and

public awareness of Canada's military history. Their website offers resources highlighting key events, people and stories about Canada's military history, as well as lesson plans and activities for classroom use.

- [People and stories](#): Stories highlighting the military service of historically underrecognized groups such as [Black Canadians](#), [Chinese Canadians](#), [women](#) and [Indigenous peoples](#)
- [Remembrance Dog Tags: Fallen Black Canadians](#) Research project for intermediate ages and senior grades
- [Remembrance Lesson Plans](#) Collection of lesson plans that teachers can access for students, searchable by age range and military history

Appendix D: Sample Lesson Plans

The following lesson plans provide examples of how educators can incorporate Remembrance Day learning into classroom instruction.

Example Social Studies Lesson Plan - Grade 4

Lesson Title Remembrance and Bravery

Grade Level 4

Subject/Course Language

Duration 40 min

Curriculum Expectations

Specific Expectations

A3.2 demonstrate an understanding of the historical contexts, contributions, lived experiences, and perspectives of a diversity of individuals and communities, including those in Canada, by exploring the concepts of identity, self, and sense of belonging in a variety of culturally responsive and relevant texts

B1.5 use appropriate word choice, including new vocabulary, varied adjectives and adverbs to elaborate, a variety of sentence types, and cohesive sentences during formal and informal communication, to support audience comprehension

Learning Goals

We are learning to:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand the history of Remembrance Day• provide examples of Canadian Armed Forces members who showed bravery• reflect on the importance of Remembrance Day as a National Day of Observance |
|---|

Success Criteria

Students can:

- explain what Remembrance Day is and when it takes place
- describe why Remembrance Day began and who it honours
- make connections between past events and why we remember today
- describe what bravery means in their own words
- explain why it is important to remember and honour others

Materials & Resources

- A device to share videos with the class such as a projector or television
- Student journals

Instructional Approaches

- Direct instruction
- On-screen videos and quizzes
- Classroom discussions (small group and whole class)

Minds-On (10 min)

- Display "[Remembrance and Bravery](#)" on a shared screen for the class to follow along
- Start with the open discussion questions
- Play the video
- Share and discuss the learning goals and success criteria
- Share with students the provided journal prompt

Action (20 min)

- Step 1: Review material
 - Work through the learning material on the TVO Learn page, under "Action". Watch the videos and zoom in on images as necessary
- Step 2: Complete activity
 - Complete the matching activity as a class
- Step 3: Think-Pair-Share
 - Implement a Think-Pair-Share activity as indicated within the page

Consolidation (10 min)

- Students work through the Remembrance Day quiz together as a class
- Students discuss and reflect on what they learned

Assessment

- Due to the personal and solemn nature of this content, students do not need to be assessed through products such as quizzes or tests.
- Observe your students' level of understanding through their participation in the discussions and activities. Whenever possible, have brief conversations about Remembrance Day with students who have not demonstrated their understanding to determine their progress towards meeting the learning goals.
- For more information about assessment and evaluation of student achievement, please visit the [Curriculum and Resources website](#).

Next Steps

- In a future lesson, consider exploring the life of a veteran from your local community or school.
- Consider having students create a collective poem about bravery, then write their own poem focusing on one of the characteristics of bravery.

Example Canadian History Since World War I Lesson Plan – Grade 10 (CHDC2D & CHC2P)

Lesson Title: Forging a National Identity: How Service Shaped Who We Are

Grade Level 10

Subject/Course CHC2D/CHC2P

Duration 75 min

Curriculum Expectations

Specific Expectations

CHC2D

- **B2.1** explain the main causes of World War I and of Canada's participation in the war, and analyse some of the consequences of Canada's military participation in the war
- **B2.2** analyse, with reference to specific events or issues, the significance of and perspectives on Canada's participation in international relations between 1914 and 1929
- **C2.3** explain the main causes of World War II, and analyse Canada's contribution to the war effort
- **C3.2** analyse how Canada and people in Canada, including First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit individuals and communities, responded or were connected to some major international events and/or developments that occurred during this period, and assess the significance of the responses/connections, including their significance for identities and heritage in Canada

CHC2P

- B2.1** identify some of the causes of World War I, and explain some of the consequences of Canada's military participation in the war
- B3.3** explain the significance for identities, citizenship, and/or heritage of some key international events and/or developments in which Canada participated in this period

C3.2 describe responses of Canada and people in Canada to some major international events and/or developments that occurred between 1929 and 1945, including their military response to World War II, and explain the significance of these responses for identities and/or heritage in Canada

Learning Goals

We are learning to:

- explain how Canada's service in the First and Second World Wars helped shape a distinct Canadian identity
- describe how key wartime events shaped the way Canadians see themselves and the way the world sees Canada
- connect Canada's military history to the freedoms we enjoy and Canada's role in the world today

Success Criteria

Students can:

- describe at least two wartime events that changed Canada's place in the world
- explain how one of these events contributed to Canadian identity
- use evidence from a primary or secondary source to support their explanation
- make a connection between Canada's military past and Canada today

Materials & Resources

- a device to share videos and images with the class, such as a projector or television;
- student journals;
- teacher-prepared and printed source packets for each station, drawn from the Veterans Affairs Canada and Archives of Ontario – some resource links provided below:
 - [the Battle of Vimy Ridge, 1917](#)
 - [the Battle of Passchendaele, 1917](#)
 - [Canada's declaration of war on Germany, September 1939 and Canadian contributions](#)
 - [D-Day at Juno Beach and the Liberation of the Netherlands, 1944-1945](#)

Instructional Approaches

- Direct instruction
- small group work with sources;
- Classroom discussions (small group and whole class).

Minds-On (15 min)

- Ask students to write three words that describe what it means to be Canadian, then share a few with the class
- Discuss: do any of these words connect to Canada's history? Where do national identities come from?
- Introduce the four historical moments students will explore during the lesson and briefly situate them within a timeline of Canada's military history. These four moments are listed in Action Step 2.
- Share and discuss the learning goals and success criteria.

Action (45 min)

- Step 1: Mini-lesson (10 min)
 - Introduce the idea that a national identity is built over time, through experiences a country shares. Canada's wartime service is one of those experiences. In 1914, Canada went to war automatically as part of the British Empire; in 1939, Canada's own Parliament made the decision. Use Veterans Affairs Canada's [10 Quick Facts on the First World War](#) and [10 Quick Facts on the Second World War](#) as a starting point.
- Step 2: group stations (20 min)
 - Teacher Note: Before the lesson, prepare a source packet for each station using relevant Veterans Affairs Canada and Archives of Ontario resources in [Appendix C](#).
 - Divide the class into four groups. Each group examines one moment using its source packet:
 - the Battle of Vimy Ridge, 1917
 - the Battle of Passchendaele, 1917
 - Canada's declaration of war on Germany, September 1939 and Canadian contributions to the war effort
 - D-Day at Juno Beach and the Liberation of the Netherlands, 1944–1945
 - Each group answers four questions: What happened and what was the role of Canada and/or Canadians? What was the lasting impact of these events on Canada and Canadian identity? How did this impact the way Canadians saw

themselves? How did it impact the way the world saw Canada?

- Step 3: Share-out (15 min)
 - Each group presents its moment in 2 to 3 minutes. As groups present, build a class "Canadian identity" timeline on the board showing how each event added to the way Canadians understand who they are.

Consolidation (15 min)

- Hold a class discussion: How do the choices and sacrifices made in these wars connect to Canada's alliances and its role in the world today?
- Students complete a journal entry: "One way Canada's military history shaped who we are today is."

Assessment

- Due to the personal and solemn nature of this content, students do not need to be assessed through products such as quizzes or tests.
- Observe your students' level of understanding through their participation in the discussions and activities. Whenever possible, have brief conversations about Remembrance Day with students who have not demonstrated their understanding to determine their progress towards meeting the learning goals.
- For more information about assessment and evaluation of student achievement, please visit the [Ontario Curriculum and Resources website](#).

Next Steps

- There are two task options provided
 - Research a name on a local cenotaph or memorial and share how that person's service connects to the story of Canada.
 - Explain how one event from after 1945, such as the Korean War, UN peacekeeping or the mission in Afghanistan, has shaped Canada's role in the world today.