

# War Correspondents Unit

War Correspondents is a 'learning adventure' where students learn about some of the characteristics of Australia prior to WW1, Australia's involvement in the Great War and some of the lasting consequences of the war, while developing their history skills.

## What is a learning adventure?

- Students complete the unit activities independently either through an activity booklet or online
- The activity booklet can be provided as a complete unit booklet (PDF), or in staggered 'assignments' as they progress, and is designed to be easily photocopied and/or loaded to the class digital learning platform and interactive whiteboard by teachers; if the online option is chosen, students can save their work regularly to a suitable digital platform decided by the school/teacher
- Each time they finish an activity 'assignment' or end of section Quiz they come and show the teacher, reviewing their progress with their Learning Checklist
  - The teacher decides if the activity has been completed successfully – if so, this gets recorded on the spreadsheet (that can track XP) and what level they are at
  - If the activity hasn't been done correctly, you quickly reteach the material and they redo it
  - It is important that students 'own' the Learning Checklist so that interests and strengths are recognised, and areas for development encouraged and supported
- This unit package and approach swaps the learning from teacher-led to student-led
- The central component of the unit is the National Museum of Australia's Defining Moments and Digital Classroom <http://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/defining-moments-timeline> which is a flexible-access, constantly expanding platform of peer-reviewed quality resources for years 3 to 12. Educators can utilise primary and secondary sources to deconstruct political, social, cultural and economic defining moments in Australian History from 65 000 years ago to recent months in 'ready to teach' formats. This unit focuses on 13 of the defining moments, but it is well worth looking at the timeline to see the hundreds of others
- Content knowledge
  - students learn at their own pace by reading the adventure
  - They then do regular content tests 'Quizzes' (four in total)
- Historical skills
  - The booklet contains the teaching of each skill, worked examples and exercises
  - The teacher then sees if they have done it correctly or not, if not, they reteach there and then to just that one student.

## Benefits

- The unit focuses on in-depth learning through:
  - Historically accurate and authentic narratives, giving the learner choice
  - Targeted HASS skills-development at each stage
  - On-going review, reflection and evaluation processes, and data tracking
- Independence

- Carefully designed, authentic real-world project-based learning
- problem-solving
- creative thinking
- the unit can be presented flexibly at each stage as paper or electronic stimuli, and as independent or collaborative learning (a mixture of approaches is recommended to maximise engagement and depth)
- student-centred; teacher facilitated
- engagement and motivation through competition (students see the score other students are on)
- differentiation / targeted teaching (use of Learning Checklist and constant feedback processes)
- interpretation of questions
- confidence with own work
- better retention of content knowledge because it is taught as a first-person narrative and students remember narratives
- Game elements promote engagement, motivation and allow for easier constructive feedback because
  - students are used to choice, clear contextual situation, problem-solving, learn-as-you progress and score-checks, and responding to positive and to constructive feedback on how to improve from gaming and digital mediums many students are fluent and comfortable with.

## How to run the learning adventure

- Simply get students to read through the booklet
- they will have choices along the way, but the adventure has been designed so that they will all learn the same historical skills and core WW1 content knowledge no matter what choices they make
- each time a student completes an activity, they come and show the teacher bringing their learning checklist
  - if it has been done correctly, they put a '1' in the appropriate cell in the scoring spreadsheet
  - if it has been done incorrectly, reteach that skill to just that one student
- there are 26 unique sections in the learning adventure
  - there are 37 in total because some have had to be repeated, based on the choices students make.

## Using the score sheet

- If you want to add a little friendly competition into the learning adventure (which is very motivating for students), use the score sheet spreadsheet and project the results on a projector as you play
1. Type or paste in student names and/or student IDs
  2. every time a student completes an activity, look at which section it is from. Put a "1" in that cell in the spreadsheet
  3. It will then automatically give the student XP (experience points) and converts it into a level.
  4. Scores:
    1. 100 XP for Level 1 skills
    2. 200 XP for Level 2 skills
    3. 400 XP for Level 3 skills
    4. 800 XP for Level 4 skills

XP	Level
0	1
100	2
200	3
400	4
800	5
1,000	6

1,500	7
2,500	8
4,500	9
7,500	10

## Map

- look at the map of the learning adventure. It shows the content knowledge that will be learned in each section and the skill
  - the skill learned is linked to the rubric below, with the code “S1” meaning the first level on the source analysis skill, “Lists specific features of source”.

## Rubric used

C4: Categorise knowledge	T4: Explains concepts	Q4: Recognises questions that help answer overall question	S4: Uses source to help explain external events / developments	P4: Compares two historical perspectives
C3: Explains knowledge	T3: Uses concepts	Q3: Asks specific, open historical question	S3: Uses outside knowledge to help explain source	P3: Explains what a historical perspective means
C2: Summarises knowledge	T2: Explains keywords	Q2: Asks open historical question	S2: Identifies patterns or themes in source	P2: Summarises a perspective
C1: Remembers knowledge	T1: Uses keywords	Q1: Asks historical question	S1: Lists specific features of source	P1: Recognises a perspective
<b>Content knowledge</b>	<b>Terms and concepts</b>	<b>Questioning</b>	<b>Source analysis</b>	<b>Perspectives</b>

- If a student completes the learning adventure, they will have completed activities for all of these levels.

## Defining Moments

- The learning adventure incorporates 13 of the defining moments in Australian History from the National Museum of Australia:
  - 1901 Inauguration of the Commonwealth of Australia
  - 1906 Australia takes control of Papua as an ‘external territory’
  - 1907 Justice HB Higgins hands down ‘Harvester Judgement’
  - 1908 Legislation introducing national age and invalid pensions
  - 1911 Douglas Mawson leads Australasian expedition to Antarctica
  - 1912 Australian government introduces a maternity allowance
  - 1913 Foundation of Canberra as the national capital
  - 1913 The newly created ‘fleet unit’ sails into Sydney Harbour
  - 1915 Australian troops land at Gallipoli
  - 1915 NSW Government gains power to remove Aboriginal children from their families
  - 1916 Federal-state agreement for soldier settlement
  - 1916-17 Conscription for military service overseas defeated in two referenda
  - 1919 Influenza pandemic reaches Australia
- Other defining moments in Australian history can be found at: <http://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/defining-moments-timeline>

The National Museum of Australia and Digital Classroom Team are adding on average 3-4 new Australian History and Society defining moments, interactives games and more to their sites monthly, so it is intended that this map and unit approach can be continued with your class, and with others.

The National Museum Digital Classroom Team would love to hear or see how you have used this unit with your class, and/or how it has inspired you to use the approach, defining moments and museum's digital resources in other units. Teachers and leaders can contact us on email [david.arnold@nma.gov.au](mailto:david.arnold@nma.gov.au)

## **Support**

- [www.lawlesslearning.com/learningadventures](http://www.lawlesslearning.com/learningadventures)
- <http://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/defining-moments-timeline>
- <http://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/defining-moments-timeline#showMoment>
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