

They Shall Not Grow Old Activities

B2

Activity 1

You have decided to review Peter Jackson's "They Shall Not Grow Old" on a cultural blog. In your review make sure you explain:

- what the film consists of
- how it was put together – technical aspects
- Peter Jackson's intent and motives for getting involved in this project
- how you felt when you saw those pictures
- why you liked and would recommend it... or not.

Activity 2

A. Read the text your group has been assigned to and listen to its audio version.

B. 1. The poem you were assigned: supports the war. condemns the war.

2. Get ready to use some elements of literary analysis to support your answer:

- identify the general tone (epic, heroic, pathetic, elegiac, tragic, realistic...)
- identify and comment on lexical fields
- identify some figures of speech (similes, metaphors, anaphoras, allegories...) and comment on them
- try to comment on the rhythm

C. Decide which biographical note is more likely to correspond to your poem.

- The poem was written in the trenches in 1917 and was published in 1920 posthumously. The poet, a soldier himself, died in 1918 during one of the last offensives of the war.
- The poem was written and published in *The Times* in September 1914, just a few weeks after the outbreak of the First World War. During these weeks the British Expeditionary Force had suffered casualties following its first encounter with the Imperial German Army. The poet, too old to enlist, managed to join the Red Cross in 1915 to support the war effort working as a volunteer in with wounded soldiers.

Activity 3

Present your poem to your partner.

- Give a brief account of the poem in one or two sentences.
- Say whether it sounds pro- or anti-war.
- Support your view with elements of literary analysis (tone, lexical fields, figures of speech...)

B. Discuss together which poem best corresponds to Peter Jackson's project and get ready to explain why.

For the Fallen” by Robert Laurence Binyon– Group A

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

Activity 2 – Group B

“*Dulce et decorum est*” by Wilfred Owen – Group B

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time;
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime...
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues, —
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*
Pro patria mori.