

ANZAC DAY

What does it mean to you today?

It is Friday, 25 April 2003. Anzac Day.

Some of you are already on school holidays; for others, it's the start of a long weekend.

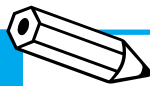
You know that it is a special day. Every newspaper, radio station and TV station is telling you that.



- Why is it special?
- What is the focus and meaning of the day?
- Who has contributed to that day over time?
- Anzac Day happened nearly 100 years ago, so does it still have anything to do with you today?

These are some key questions that this article wants to explore.

First, however, brainstorm to make a list of what you think Anzac Day means and why it is or is not important to you. Record your main ideas here.



TO ME ANZAC DAY MEANS ...

ANZAC DAY

This article is part of a program **Defence 2020 – Protecting Australia's People and Place**

being sponsored by the Department of Defence in 2003.

LOOK OUT for the multimedia kit *Defence 2020 – Protecting Australia's People and Place* to be sent to every secondary school in Australia in May 2003.

Look out also for the Defence 2020 Youth Challenges to be held in every state and territory of Australia between May and August 2003. You can find a list of dates and places at www.ryebuck.com.au

Work through the various ideas presented in this article on the following pages, then come back to this list at the end of the article and see if you would add to or amend anything.

The Landing at Gallipoli

'Anzac Day' refers to the anniversary of the landing of Australian and New Zealand troops at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915.

Australia had only been a nation since 1 January 1901. Its population was mainly Australian-born (77%) with a British background. Of those who had been born overseas, most were from Great Britain.

In 1914 when Britain declared war against Germany for its invasion of Belgium, Australia, as a Dominion within the British Empire, regarded itself automatically also at war. Most Australians supported involvement in the war and there was a rush by many men to enlist.

The volunteer army that was quickly formed was sent to train in Egypt. At dawn on 25 April 1915 approximately 75 000 soldiers from twelve countries landed under fire at Gallipoli in Turkey, seeking to drive through to Istanbul, and take Turkey out of the war while also providing supplies to Russia in its fight against Germany. Four to five thousand of these men were Australian and New Zealand soldiers.

The invading troops failed to reach their objective on the first day and for the next eight months they clung to the land they had secured, before withdrawing.

They left behind 43 000 dead, including 8 141 Australians and 2 431 New Zealanders. The Turkish soldiers, successfully defending their country against this invasion, had an estimated 86 500 dead. (Statistics from Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au)

This event is not celebrated in Turkish, British or Indian history, but it is commemorated in Australia and New Zealand as a very special event. Why?

Look at these documents and see if you can find reasons.

SOURCE 1 Extracts from an account of the landing by British war correspondent Ellis Ashmead Bartlett

Australians knew by 30 April that their troops had landed, but they had no details. They only knew that they were involved in a major action at Gallipoli. The first detailed report was printed in the daily newspapers on 8 May. It was written by the experienced British official war correspondent, Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. Here are some extracts from it. As you read it, try to imagine how Australian people, knowing that their men had been involved in a battle but having no details about it, would have responded to it.

The Australians rose to the occasion. Not waiting for orders, or for the boats to reach the beach, they sprang into the sea, and, forming a sort of rough line, rushed at the enemy's trenches.

The Australians found themselves facing an almost perpendicular cliff of loose sandstone, covered with thick shrubbery. Somewhere, half-way up, the enemy had a second trench strongly held, from which they poured a terrible fire on the troops below.

They stopped for a few minutes to pull themselves together, got rid of their packs, and recharged their magazines.

Then this race of athletes proceeded to scale the cliffs without responding to the enemy's fire. They lost some men, but did not worry.

But then the Australasians, whose blood was up, instead of entrenching, rushed northwards and eastwards, searching for fresh enemies to bayonet. It was difficult country in which to entrench. Therefore they preferred to advance ...

There has been no finer feat in this war than this sudden landing in the dark and the storming of the heights, above all holding on whilst the reinforcements were landing.

Melbourne Argus, 8 May 1915



Frank Crozier, *The Beach at Anzac Cove*, 25 April 1915 AWM ART 02161

- 1 What, according to the newspaper account, had happened at Gallipoli?
- 2 What is the image of the Australian soldier that emerges from this account?
- 3 How does the language of the article get this impression across? Select four examples and comment on them.
- 4 How do you think people reading this account would have responded to this event?

SOURCE 2 Extracts from 1916 Anzac Day anniversary newspaper editorials

A It was there that our young and untried troops ... given as their baptism of blood a task before which veteran soldiers might well have blanched, [ac]quitted themselves as men, and gained the plaudits of the world. They might have done equally valiant work, almost unnoticed, amidst the vast armies in Belgium or France; but Gallipoli provided a conspicuous theatre for their achievement, and focussed [on them] the attention of the world.

B 1915. Australia's entry into the Company of nation – no finer entry into history ... to have leapt into Nationhood, Brotherhood and Sacrifice at one bound ... what a year: never can Australia see its like again.

C The price of nationhood must be paid in blood and tears. ... Before the Anzacs astonished the watching nations, ... we were Australian in name, and we had a flag, but ... generally speaking, it was assumed that Australia only lived by the grace of England. ... Anzac Day has changed all that ... [and] we are at last a nation, with one heart, one soul ... There is mourning in our homes and grief in our hearts, and the flower of our youth will not return to us ... [but] the spirit of our dead heroes has come home across the seas ... to whisper that we have taken our place among the nations.

(Argus 25 April 1916, Sydney Morning Herald 25 April 1916, Freeman's Journal April 1916)

- 5 List the different possible reasons for what you find in these accounts. For example, one source might stress 'national identity' for the first time; another might stress 'passing a test' as a nation, and so on.
- 6 What would you say is the reason why 25 April was first seen as a significant day by Australians?
- 7 Is it a day that still has this meaning for you? Go back to your brainstorm and add to or make any changes to your ideas there.

2 Understanding Anzac Day and...

The Gallipoli Campaign

The Australian involvement in the Gallipoli campaign did not end on 25 April 1915; it continued until December of that year. So, do we commemorate Anzac Day for other actions that occurred at Gallipoli? Look at these four brief accounts of significant men and events at Gallipoli.

SOURCE 1 Four events at Gallipoli

A Simpson and his donkeys

Englishman John Simpson Kirkpatrick enlisted as John Simpson (he had deserted from a British ship for which he was a crew member in 1910 when it landed in Australia, so had to change his name in case he was arrested for this).

Using donkeys, he helped rescue dozens of wounded soldiers and bring them to the safety of the beach, where they could be medically treated. During one trip he died after being shot.

Simpson, the man with the donkey, has since 1915 been celebrated as an outstanding Australian because of his bravery.



B Albert Jacka, VC

Albert Jacka was the first of the 64 Australians to be awarded the Victoria Cross during World War I. He was one of a number of men who showed extraordinary bravery in holding a line of trenches against attacking Turks.

He later showed equal bravery on several occasions on the Western Front and many believed that he should have been awarded two more VCs because of his actions.

C Lone Pine

During this terrible engagement seven Australians were awarded the Victoria Cross for their efforts in attacking and then defending trenches against the Turks. They all showed great bravery in facing almost-certain death.

D The Nek

This incident was popularised in the 1980 film *Gallipoli*. Three successive waves of Australian Light Horsemen charged the enemy on orders, despite it being clear that all would be mown down as soon as they emerged from their trench. Their action illustrates the almost unbelievable personal courage shown by ordinary soldiers during war.

- 1 What do these four incidents suggest about qualities common to the men involved?
- 2 Without the war we would probably never have heard of these men. Why is war so significant in Australia's sense of its national identity?
- 3 Are the qualities that were shown here part of what we commemorate on Anzac Day? List some arguments that you could use if you wanted to pursue this line. For example, you might argue that the behaviour of these people is stressed as things Australians can achieve, so we are proud of them. The Gallipoli campaign showed the best qualities that Australians had.
- 4 Are these events and the qualities they show part of what Anzac Day means to you? Review your brainstorm and make any changes needed.

War can bring out the best and noblest in people, but it can also bring out immoral, cowardly, mean and despicable behaviour.

Not all Australian soldiers in World War I showed the extraordinary bravery of Simpson and Jacka. Some hid when it was time to face the enemy, or deserted the firing lines, or even shot themselves so that they did not have to be part of the horror of the war any longer.



Some others behaved in a way that would be judged as appalling. Look at these examples from the Gallipoli campaign of how some Australian soldiers behaved.

SOURCE 2 Some extracts from soldiers' diaries and letters

The Turks started to run ... those that did stop flung down their guns and cried mercy but the boys were not that way inclined and killed them all ... we captured some German officers who got a short shift [...] One of them ... shouted good old Australia ... a lad pushed his rifle up to his head and blew it nearly off.

(Private W. J. Gray, jockey. Letter to his mother 27 May 1915. Died of disease 30 May 1915 aged 27)

... up the hill ... we swarm ... the lust to kill is on us, we see red. Into one trench, out of it, and into another. Oh! The bloody gorgeousness of feeling your bayonet go into soft yielding flesh – they run, we after them, no thrust one and parry, in goes the bayonet the handiest way.

(L/Cpl W. Francis, surveyor. Letter 25 April 1915)

.... a soldier had 8 turks (wounded) to guard he was placing them along in a row he said I am only going to bandage them up, finis Turk.

(Sgt H. B. Macarty, electrician. Notes)

(Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1974, pp 96–97)

- 5 Do these extracts surprise you? Explain your reasons.
- 6 How do you explain the fact that bravery and savagery can apparently exist on a World War 1 battlefield at the same time?
- 7 Should this awareness and knowledge be part of our Anzac memories?

Some Australian soldiers at Gallipoli were probably neither exceptionally brave nor savage. Take Jim Martin. He arrived at Gallipoli in August, well after the first landing. He quickly became ill in the conditions – probably never having fired his rifle at the enemy. He was taken to a hospital ship, where he soon died. Jim was 14.

Most soldiers behaved in between these extremes. They were *courageous* enough to do their job in spite of their justifiable fears of the dangers of war, and showed personal **bravery***, but did not actively put themselves in situations that involved **valour***.

- 8 Is this what we commemorate on Anzac Day – the realisation and understanding that thousands of Australians accepted what they saw as their responsibility in a time of great danger and carried on regardless of their fears, because it was the right thing to do? Discuss this idea, and go back to your brainstorm and add to or make any changes to your ideas there.



Courage is the quality of facing up to a situation personally. A person with spinal damage might show courage in their determination to walk again; a nurse might show courage in treating a horribly disfigured patient; a child might show courage by not running away from a fearsome-looking spider.

Bravery involves acting in a way that exposes yourself to extreme danger to protect or help others. A woman might risk a strong rip to rescue people trapped in the sea; a soldier might charge the enemy and draw fire to rescue a comrade. (The VC is actually awarded not for 'bravery', but for '**valour**' – which is specifically extreme bravery in war.)

Does Anzac Day only refer to Gallipoli? About 50 000 Australians served at Gallipoli – out of a total of over 330 000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and nurses who served overseas in World War I. Most of these served on the Western Front (France and Belgium). Over 8 000 Australians died at Gallipoli – but a total of over 61 000 died during the war. Australians fought for eight months at Gallipoli – and for 30 months on the Western Front and in Palestine.

- 1 Do these statistics suggest that Anzac Day refers to the whole World War 1 experience, or was the Gallipoli campaign more significant and special than other campaigns?

Look at these inscriptions on headstones in war cemeteries.

- 2 What different ideas about why Australians were fighting are expressed in these inscriptions?
- 3 Who would have been expressing these ideas?

SOURCE 1 Inscriptions on the graves of Australian soldiers in overseas war cemeteries

**IN ANSWER TO THE CALL
HE FOUGHT AND HELPED TO SHOW
AUSTRALIA'S MIGHT**

(Private A.C. Powell, 28.6.1918, aged 35, Villers Bretonneux Cemetery, France)

**HE FOUGHT AND DIED
FOR HIS WIFE AND LITTLE SON
AND TO SAVE HIS COUNTRY**

(Private C.H. Dunstan, 12th Battalion, 17.4.1918, (?), France)

**I GAVE MY SON
HE GAVE ALL HIS LIFE
FOR AUSTRALIA AND EMPIRE**

(Private I.D. Hart, 60th Battalion, 27.11.1916, aged 30, France)

FOR GOD, FOR KING, FOR COUNTRY

(Corporal H.G. Rourke, 56th Battalion, 20.7.1916, aged 33, France)

A DINKUM AUSSIE

(L-Cpl G.P. Cameron, 12.7.1915, aged 24, Shrapnel Valley Cemetery Gallipoli, Turkey)

**HE DIED FOR AUSTRALIA
HIS NATIVE LAND.**

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

(Private E.A. Newton 2.4.1917, aged 21, Noreuil Australian Cemetery, France)

**MY ONLY CHILD DIES
THE EMPIRE LIVES**

A LONELY MOTHER MOURNS

(Private W. H. Hicks, 53rd Battalion, 8.12.1916, (?), France)

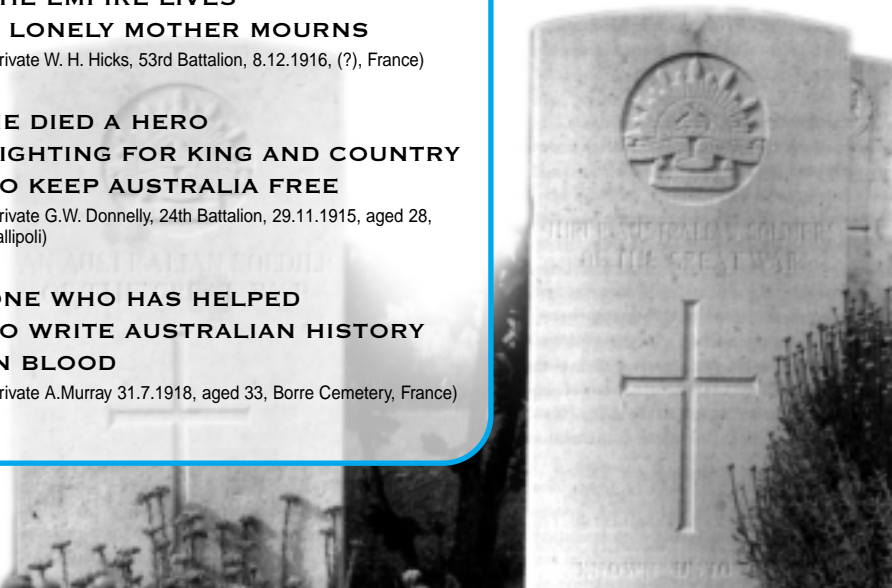
**HE DIED A HERO
FIGHTING FOR KING AND COUNTRY
TO KEEP AUSTRALIA FREE**

(Private G.W. Donnelly, 24th Battalion, 29.11.1915, aged 28, Gallipoli)

**ONE WHO HAS HELPED
TO WRITE AUSTRALIAN HISTORY
IN BLOOD**

(Private A. Murray 31.7.1918, aged 33, Borre Cemetery, France)

- 4 Do these ideas influence your ideas about the meaning of Anzac Day? Explain your reasons. You may need to review your original brainstorm ideas.



The Australian Defence Force in other conflicts

Australia has been involved in many armed conflicts as a nation since 1901.

Look at these statistics of Australian involvement in some of these:

SOURCE 1 Statistics of Australian involvement in wars 1899–present*

Conflict	Date	Participation	Casualties		
			Deaths	Prisoners of War	Prisoners of War deaths
Boer War	1899–1902	16 463 (Most troops were from the colonies, then some were sent as Commonwealth troops after Federation in 1901)	606	100	Not available
WWI	1914–1918	416 809 (324 000 served overseas)	61 919	4044	397
WWII	1939–1945	993 000 (691 400 men and 35 800 women in Army, 45 800 men and 3 100 women in Navy, 189 700 men and 27 200 women in Air Force)	39 366	30 560 (8 184 against Germany 22 376 against Japan)	8 031
Korean War	1950–1953	17 164 (10 657 Army, 4 507 Navy, 2 000 approx Air Force)	339	29	1
Malayan Emergency	1950–1960	7 000+ (7 000 Army, Navy and Air Force not available)	36	Nil	Nil
Indonesian Confrontation	1963–1966	3 500+ (3 500 Army, Navy and Air Force not available)	15	Nil	Nil
Vietnam War	1962–1973	49 968 (42 700 Army, 2 858 Navy, 4 443 Air Force)	520	Nil	Nil
Gulf War**	1990–1991	1 800+	Nil	Nil	Nil
International Coalition Against Terrorism (ICAT) (Afghanistan and Gulf)***	2001–present	1 500+	1	Nil	Nil

* Figures for 1899–Vietnam – Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au/research/infosheets/war_casualties.asp

** Figures for Gulf War – Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/gulf.htm

*** Figures for ICAT – Department of Defence information sheet www.defence.gov.au/terrorism/

- Has war been a significant experience for large numbers of Australians over time?
- Do you think that the importance of Anzac Day would have changed over time if subsequent wars had not occurred? Why?
- All soldiers in the Boer War, World War I, and most in World War II, were volunteers. In other conflicts Australian soldiers have been mainly regular soldiers (with conscripted men also in Vietnam). People who join the Australian Defence Force know that they may be required to put their lives at risk for the sake of defending the nation. Is this an idea that is part of your Anzac Day awareness?

Statistics are not the only measure of Australian involvement in wars. Some people have argued that we should not have been involved in some of these wars, that they were 'other people's wars', or that they were fought for reasons that we should not have supported. Therefore, they say, we should not see them as part of our identity – as they do not reflect on us well as a nation. Others have argued that involvement was justified, that there were matters of principle and international citizenship involved.

- Here is a brief outline of the broad causes of different wars. Divide them among groups in class, research, and report on whether you think Australia was right to have been involved in each case.

WWI German invasion of Belgium; a result of international rivalries and tensions between the great powers of the day.

WWII (Europe) German invasion of Poland; a result of German territorial expansion.

WWII (Pacific) Japanese invasion of Thailand and Malaya and attack on USA (Pearl Harbor).

Korea North Korean invasion of South Korea; a result of the desire to unify Korea under a communist order.

Malaya Guerrilla warfare by communist Malays; seeking to overthrow the existing pro-British government.

Indonesia Indonesian incursions into border areas of the new Malaysian State; seeking to destabilise the government and replace it with one that was less pro-western.

Vietnam North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam; to unify the nation under a communist regime.

Gulf Iraqi invasion of Kuwait; seeking to seize Kuwaiti oil wells.

International coalition against terrorism (Afghanistan) United Nations sanctioned invasion of Afghanistan; to remove the Taliban government, identified as a supporter of organised international terrorist groups, e.g. al-Qa'ida.

- After all research reports have been presented, decide if the reasons for involvement are relevant to your understanding of Anzac Day.

Survivors and their families

War is not only about the battlefield. What happens to soldiers after wars? And to their families? Is this something that you ought to consider on Anzac Day?

Many service men and women return after a war and lead normal productive lives as good individuals, family members and citizens. However, some continue to suffer from their experiences.

Look at these examples from different conflicts of how individuals have continued to be badly affected by their war experience.

SOURCE 1 A writer remembers her family after World War I

We children of the nineteen-twenties and thirties ... were the generation whose fathers, uncles, and sometimes elder brothers were either dead, or 'returned' men ... We grew up in a ... world of proud April days when we wore our fathers' medals to school ... a world where men were called 'Hoppy', 'Wingy', 'Shifty', 'Gunner', 'Stumpy', 'Deafy', 'Hooky', according to whether they lost a leg, an arm (or part of one), an eye, their hearing, or had a disfigured face drawn by rough surgery into a leer

And we listened ... when our parents came home from visiting a 'returned' uncle in hospital: 'I can't stand it. I can't go again.' It is mother. Your father's voice comes, strangled, like hers. 'You'll be alright.' 'No, but the smell. When he coughs ... and breathes out ... it's ... oh, I'm going to be sick.' But she goes back next Sunday and the next until the day you go to school with a black rosette on your lapel, and the flag is flying half-mast for your Uncle Dick who was gassed.

You are small ... when you are visiting Grandmother and she, that fierce little old lady, is kneeling on the floor, her face turned up to the family portrait taken in 1914, and you know

she is praying for Jack, the beautiful boy, and Stephen, the laughing roly-poly, her sons, who were 'missing' at Lone Pine, August 1915, although she never mentions it to a living soul. (Except the night World War 2 was declared and she suddenly says, 'Wouldn't it be funny if they found the boys wandering round – and they got their memories back!' And none of us look at her.)

You are sent to take soup to a family down on their luck during the depression. You hate going: once you saw the husband's leg being 'aired' when you entered without their hearing your knock, and you tried to avoid him ever after, and sometimes took the soup home and lied to your mother, 'they were not home', rather than smell that smell again. And the hook instead of a hand, the 'Stumpy' in a wheel chair; one man even skating along on a little trolley, his hands taking the place of his absent legs; the man who shook and trembled and the other one who stuttered from 'shell shock' and regularly had to be 'put away'.

They were the flotsam and jetsam of war but no one told you.

(Patsy Adam-Smith, *The Anzacs*, Nelson, Melbourne, 1978 pp 2-4)



- 1 In what different ways do these documents show how people continue to suffer the consequences of involvement in wars in the past?

SOURCE 2 Some memories from World War II

A Dorothy Hewitt

I think one of the things that happened during the war was that women became the head of the family. They'd taken over all the responsibility of handling the money, handling the disciplinary problems, handling what would happen to the children, making day-to-day decisions. That was an enormous change. And when the husbands came back the children in many cases had never seen their fathers, they'd never lived in the same house with them, they didn't know who they were. They were strangers, and I think many of those children never related to those fathers again – nor the father to the children.

B Queenie Shepherd

He did change, my husband. When he came back, you couldn't scratch, you couldn't do nothing as would make a noise, he used to be that irritable. We had an open fireplace and Rex, my son, was sitting there one night eating his tea and the old man came in, in a frightful mood, and Rex said something and he went over and give him a boot, kicked him in the fire, all his tea and all went, he got his hands burned. Another night he picked up a knife and threw it at him – things he never done before he went away. He couldn't work, and eventually he finished up getting a TPI (Totally and Permanently Incapacitated) pension. But he was that irritable you couldn't bear him home, he'd have to go back into a hospital or a home, whatever'd take him.

C Dorothy Hewitt

Many marriages broke-down because the women just couldn't take this man coming back and telling them what to do, as he'd always done in the past. It was a whole social upheaval which lasted a long time – probably forever.

(Joanne Penglase and David Horner, *When the War Came to Australia*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney 1992 page 242)

SOURCE 3 Vietnam War Veterans' Studies

A Veteran Validation Study Confirms Earlier Findings

The Validation Study of the Vietnam Veterans Morbidity (Health) Study was released today by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Bruce Scott.

The study found that Vietnam veterans and their children are more likely to have some adverse health conditions than the general population. Mr Scott said the Government was now seeking to establish the most effective additional measures it could take to provide suitable health care for veterans and their families ...

The results show that, compared to the general community, a significantly larger number of Vietnam veterans suffer from melanoma and prostate cancer while in their children there is a significantly higher prevalence than expected of spina bifida manifesta and cleft lip/palate ...

Importantly, the results also show that the prevalence of many of the conditions checked is no higher in veterans and their children than in the general community.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs press release 135/99 3 December 1999
http://minister.dva.gov.au/media_releases/1999/dec99/study.htm

B Government Committed to Reducing Suicide Risk for Veterans' Children

The Federal Government was committed to strategies to reduce the risk of suicide among children of Vietnam veterans, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Bruce Scott, said today. Mr Scott was releasing a new report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare into the death by suicide of children of Vietnam veterans.

'Suicide is one of the most difficult issues facing not only the Vietnam veteran community but all Australian families,' he said ...

'What we must address is the fact that within this group there are some children of Vietnam veterans who face additional pressures that increase the risk of suicide. Mr Scott said.

He said the Government's response to the health study, announced in the 2000 Federal Budget, included a series of initiatives designed to support Vietnam veterans' children.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs press release 7 August 2000
http://minister.dva.gov.au/media_releases/2000/august/suicide.htm

C Female Vietnam Veterans Health Study Released

The first study of the health of female Australian Vietnam veterans was released by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Bruce Scott, today ...

The study found female veterans were less likely than Australian women of the same age to rate their overall health as excellent or very good. However, the majority of female Vietnam veterans reported that their health was good or very good and, overall, they reported better health than male Vietnam veterans.

'Significantly, the report on female veterans lists some 16 conditions the occurrence of which is statistically higher than in the general community,' the Minister said.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs press release 160/98 7 December 1998
http://minister.dva.gov.au/media_releases/1998/dec98/female_veterans.htm

- 2 Why might the soldiers and nurses in Vietnam, and their children, suffer some medical problems more than those who were not involved in the war?
- 3 What sort of help and services would these people need?
- 4 Most Australians who have been involved in conflicts have not been killed or wounded. Some have been psychologically damaged. What responsibility, if any, does the nation have for the care and treatment of these people? Discuss your ideas.
- 5 How important is it for all people marching on Anzac Day to see the support of the community?
- 6 The care of veterans is the responsibility of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Go to their web site at www.dva.gov.au and prepare a brief report on the range of services available.
- 7 Go back to your brainstorm. Is any of this something that you would associate with Anzac Day?

Is Anzac Day only associated with war? Thousands of Australians have been active as international Peacekeepers since 1945. Is Peacekeeping by the Australian Defence Force an element you consider to be part of Anzac Day? Look at these ideas.

SOURCE 1 Interview with Major-General Peter Cosgrove, head of the INTERFET force, February 2000

Today, as a result of the INTERFET activities, the vast majority of East Timorese can get about their lives rehabilitating their homes, sending their kids back to school, planting their crops, getting medical treatment and generally trying to rebuild after great devastation. They'll bounce back. They need help, but they'll bounce back.

I've also discovered that the Spirit of Anzac lives on. It is one that permeates all Australians and not just ones in uniform. It's the innate Australian quality of wishing that everybody could get a fair go. That everybody would have a chance to live their lives pretty much as they should; that nobody should be allowed to be bullied around by somebody who uses violence or oppression against them. That and the innate mateship and loyalty which has always characterised Australians. I have seen these fine men and women look their adversary in the eye and get on with their job. I have seen them reach out a helping hand to Timorese of all ages and to extend that hand of friendship with a smile – 'come on mate, I'll give you a hand'. This has won for us a tremendous reputation amongst these people as professional soldiers and sailors and airmen and women who've got a big heart.

I think young Australians today as a generation still have those Anzac qualities, that Anzac Spirit in abundance. These young people here who are representative of the thousands of younger people in Australia who might not be serving are nonetheless typical Australians and I think we will find that spirit is there in our young Australians be they young or of military age.

My pride in them knows no bounds. They are magnificent young Australians and I think we are very lucky in Australia for the quality of our people. The Army, Navy and the Air Force will be in safe hands when an older guy like me retires!

(Interview with Major-General Peter Cosgrove February 2000)



SOURCE 2 Interview with Australian Peacekeeping artist, George Gittoes



That's the Teacher–Peacekeeper–Soldier. It's my friend Jonathon Church who is a paramedic SAS, and in Rwanda Jonathon and I at night would hear the children crying for their dead mothers and so we decided to get up early every morning and go and collect babies. One day we were both being shot at, I got down to a little baby

about 18 months old who was looking after a newborn baby. And I picked up the fat newborn baby and I said Jonathon you get the other one. And then we got heavily shot at, he grabbed the other one. We ran back and got the babies to safety, then I looked and discovered he picked up a different baby. And we still left a baby behind but we could never get back. Later in that day we were prevented from getting any babies and I wondered why Jonathon was so intense and didn't want to talk when we were going past the Rwandan guards that were doing the killing, turned out he'd hidden a baby in his satchel. And he was hoping it wouldn't cry and give it away or the baby would've been killed.

He found that because he was a triathlete and he was also a male nurse, that in the special forces he could extend himself completely. And he was extraordinary, the number of lives that he saved. Jonathon he'd see little babies with their mothers dead and the babies still trying to get mother's milk out of their mother's breasts. And Jonathon'd take them and start getting fluids into them and save them very quickly. And it was quite amazing how when we were doing this thing of saving the children, mothers who lost their children or become dislocated from their families immediately started looking after the babies that we saved and then someone else managed to get a truck, this is in a complete war zone disaster, and all the babies we saved went off to the Mother Teresa orphanage. We had the satisfaction of seeing the Mother Teresa nuns with them, the kids getting fat and finding their ways into loving homes. So this is one of the beautiful things about Peacekeeping, you can be surrounded by horror and danger and extend yourself as we did to save those kids, and that's rewarding for the rest of your life.

Unfortunately Jonathon was one of the casualties of the Black Hawk crash (on June 12 1996) and his mother wrote to me and she said: 'You know George, if you hadn't worked with Jonathon and collected babies I don't think I could live with his death, but to know that the two of you were able to save so many lives makes me feel that as a mother his life was worth bringing into the world'. And so he's a truly great person.

(Interview September 2002)

- 1 What attitudes and values do these interviews suggest are associated with Australian Peacekeeping?
- 2 How are these part of the 'Anzac tradition' or spirit?
- 3 These are both military examples – the Spirit of Anzac has been created in the military experience of Australia, but does it only exist there? Is it shown by the volunteer bushfire fighters in NSW, ACT, Victoria and elsewhere who recently risked their own safety to help their fellow Australians? Or the 18-year old woman who risked

treacherous rips in Victoria to save three young men who had been washed away from shore and were close to drowning? Perhaps you might see it in examples of individuals or groups in your own community. List any possibilities.

- 4 Are Peacekeeping activities by the Australian Defence Force, and volunteer activities in your community, all part of what Anzac Day means to you? Review your original brainstorm if necessary.

ANZAC DAY

7 Understanding Anzac Day and...

Changes over time

Anzac Day has not always been observed with reverence. It has at times been the subject of ridicule and hostility. At other times Anzac Day has been seen as a particularly important part of Australian identity.

Look at this list of events and factors that have influenced the way Anzac Day has been seen and commemorated over time.

- 1 Put the events into chronological order by numbering each circle.

In 1927 all States accepted Anzac Day as a uniform national day.

In 1990 there were huge crowds at Gallipoli and at marches in Australia on the 75th anniversary of the landing.

In 1960 the popular play *The One Day of the Year* depicted the diggers as drunken oafs.

1993 the Unknown Australian Soldier was interred in the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial.

In 1987 Vietnam veterans marched in the 'Welcome Home' parade in Sydney, before huge and cheering crowds.

In the 1920s almost every town and suburb in Australia erected its World War 1 memorial.

The 1980 film *Breaker Morant* depicted the Australians in the Boer War as heroic, and as scapegoats of the British.

In 1965 Australians commemorated the 50th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli as a nation divided over Australia's military commitment in Vietnam.

Australian Defence personnel participate in the successful East Timor peacekeeping activity which receives wide public support in Australia, especially during 1999–2001.

In 1916, the first commemoration of Anzac Day took place.

The 1980s and 1990s saw a huge resurgence of interest in genealogy, and in finding an Anzac ancestor.

Alec Campbell, the last Gallipoli veteran, died in May 2002.

In October 2002 the Bali bombing shocked Australians and influenced their view of the need for the International campaign against terrorism.

In the 1960s and early 1970s many Australians opposed the Vietnam War and conscription.

In World War 2 most people believed Australia might be invaded.

The 1981 film *Gallipoli* showed the diggers as heroes, and criticised the British handling of the situation.

The 1980s and 1990s saw a massive increase in the number of schools studying World War 1.

- 2 Discuss whether each is likely to have enhanced or diminished the power and relevance of Anzac Day in Australia.
- 3 Are there any current events that you think might influence the way Anzac Day is viewed by people? Discuss any suggestions you come up with.
- 4 Review your brainstorm of ideas about the meaning of Anzac Day, and make any changes required.



What happens on the day

What will you see on Anzac Day? Probably a solemn Dawn Service, and some form of march or ceremony. If you look at your local war memorial, you will see flowers and wreaths for remembrance of those who died.

1 Imagine that you were an outsider, a visitor to Australia, here during an Anzac Day. You have to try and understand what it is about, and what 'messages' about Australia it gives. Does Anzac Day now apply to all Australians – to men, women, children, people of different ethnic origins, recent migrants? Is it an all-encompassing day? Carry out a survey of the day. Consider such things as:

- Who is actively involved
- Who watches
- What symbols are present
- Where events are focused
- What music is associated with the day
- What words are used about them
- How it is commented on by the media
- What ideas are associated with it.

Australia has other national days – such as Australia Day and the Queen's Birthday. Some have suggested that we should celebrate other days – such as Mabo Day and Federation Day.

2 In groups look at these existing and proposed days, and present a report on why each might be considered a desirable and appropriate national day. Do any of them galvanise the community in the same way that Anzac Day does? Are they possible substitutes? Is there something special about Anzac Day?

3 Review your original brainstorm.



What people say about it

Here are some comments and ideas about aspects of Anzac Day. Look at them, then see if any influence your own ideas.

A Traditional qualities that Australians still value today, even in the face of our increasingly industrialised, diverse and multicultural society, were perhaps no more apparent than during war time. Gallipoli is an excellent example of how being an ordinary young Australian demonstrated these qualities of courage, determination, sacrifice and mateship, by a willingness to give their lives in a cause they knew little about.

(An extract from a student essay on Gallipoli and Anzac Day by Brittanie Lee Erwin, St Margaret's School, Berwick, In *Agora* vol 34 no 4 1999 page 34)

C The memory of what those men did has faded, but what they stand for has widened. Returned soldiers have become symbols. They reflect times and attitudes gone, conveying something of what it is to be Australian.

The tradition of Anzac will outlive those who made it, because it is no longer simply about them. It is about us.

(Bill Gammage, author of *The Broken Years*, a study of the Australian soldiers' experience in World War 1 as revealed through diaries and letters, *The Australian* 17 May 2002)

D It really came home to you to see all those names on the wall and to also think they're not just names, they're like someone's brother or someone's husband or you know, someone's friend and walking through the graves also, they were like just my age or a bit older, bit younger, and that really was quite emotional and moving too. Like there was just grave after grave was 17, 18, 21, 22 and their life was over and you know ours is just sort of beginning.

(Young woman, Justine Liddell, at the Dawn Service at Gallipoli 25 April 2000, quoted in *Australians At War* documentary, episode 8)

B I think that as we've moved into this new century, that continually going back to the First World War and certainly the digger himself as being typically Australian – I mean, it's inherently masculine, it's an aggressive figure and I suspect it doesn't hold that much relevance to a lot of people in our current society today.

(Dale Blair, historian, author of *Dinkum Diggers*, a study of the war experience of one Australian battalion during WW1, *Lateline*, 24 April 2001)

E It is fitting and moving that this generation of young Australians is the first that really seems to understand the reality of what we asked our Gallipoli veterans to do on our behalf. More and more of them are making the pilgrimage to Anzac Cove in Turkey for the dawn service. As they look at the steep scrubby cliffs and try to imagine how they'd cope climbing them into saturation Turkish fire, and as they sleep among the row upon row of headstones, young Australians are saddened and moved in a way their more jingoistic parents and grandparents were not.

The legacy Gallipoli has left them is a legacy of pride, but not the sort of pride that relies on puffed-up stereotypes of the 'Bronzed Hellenic Warriors'. It's the pride of being descendants of men who endured what no one should ever be asked to endure, and who did it because they felt they had no choice.

Lest we forget.

(David Williamson, playwright and writer of the screenplay for the 1981 film *Gallipoli*, *The Australian* 17 May 2002)

F Three students' opinions:

Roberto Raphael, 11, Grade 6

It's just a day that I remember for the soldiers that gave their lives for us. I don't know much about the history. I just remember them because it would have been very scary.

Ewen Bramble, 17, Year 12

To me Anzac Day seems more of a celebration of Australian nationalism as much as a day to devote to people that have done service for Australia.

Chris Burdon, 11, Grade 6

So many Australian people died for us. I don't know too much about the history but I want to thank them.

(*Herald Sun* 18 May 2002)

G Gallipoli is sometimes said to mark the true birth of the Australian nation ...

It is more accurate to say that Australia became a nation at Federation and that the events at Gallipoli built national pride and confidence and marked a turning point in the relationship with Britain ...

Its commemoration over 87 years shows that it, unlike Federation, touches deep chords in the nation's psyche ...

Sir William Deane, the former governor-general, tried to find the words: 'Anzac is ... about courage, and endurance, and duty, and mateship, and good humour, and the survival of a sense of self-worth: the sum of those human and national values which our pioneers found in the raw bush of a new world and tested in the old world for the first time at Gallipoli.

'It is about the spirit, the depth, the very essence of our nation. And it is about sadness and grief for young lives cut short and dreams left unfulfilled. And the horror and carnage of war.' ...

(Tony Stephens, journalist, *The Age* 17 May 2002)

H But I wonder about the March. Groups never allowed to march when there were enough returned men – people who served in wartime Australia, defence force personnel, peacekeepers, police, cadets, scouts, marching girls, community service groups – are now a growing majority of marchers. They lack the veterans' symbolic power, their evocation of tradition. The March is replacing men proud to march as civilians with people in uniform. The result is something approaching Moomba, or what might lead a circus into a country town, or, most damning of all, what might happen on Australia Day. Once too few veterans remain to inspire the March, I doubt whether it will – or should – continue.

(Bill Gammage, *The Australian* 17 May 2002)

I "The ex-service community is ageing, and the once great strength of the RSL is diminishing. The RSL sees it as vital that the tradition of Anzac Day as a day of remembrance continues to be carried on appropriately. To this end, legislation is essential to cement this day in our national calendar and preserve its commemorative character."

(Submission by RSL to Parliamentary Review of Anzac Day Laws Chapter 4 – Policy Considerations)

J Ever since April 1916, when the first anniversary of the landings was commemorated, the story of Gallipoli has been used by conservative forces to buttress their power and ideology ...

On its creation, it was welcomed by Australians because it seemed to confirm their martial prowess as a race ...

Even though it occurred a world away, Gallipoli finally gave Australians a battle to celebrate, with the overblown reports of the fighting being lapped up by newspaper readers ...

Anzac Day ... risks becoming an almost Moomba-like procession that increasingly tends to celebrate and romanticise war ...

Just as the youth before World War 1 were imbued with notions of the glory to be won on behalf of the empire, modern day Australian youths are being imbued each Anzac Day with romantic visions of the glory to be won on distant battlefields. It is time to rethink the way that we commemorate the sacrifices that were made back then without neglecting to question whether all of them were necessary or in Australia's interests. The march should be transformed in tone so that it works as a warning against war rather than a celebration of it. If children are to replace their dead fathers and grandfathers in the march, how about not only scouring the cupboards for grandad's medals but also getting under the house and locating the souvenired body parts that some grandads seem to have brought back from the war, such as the Turkish skull that was discovered recently on a Victorian farm? Let the children march with those to emphasise the horrors and waste of war.

(David Day, *The Australian* 7 June 2002)

K Federation is worthy of greater glory than Gallipoli

It is heretical, I know. But, Australia's nationhood was not forged at Gallipoli. Neither was Australia's identity. It was not a coming of age. Neither was it a baptism. Nor any of the other cliches we hear repeated at this time of the year.

There is no single identity for Australians. There never was, even in the pre-multicultural days. Longstanding Australian customs include the celebration of Anzac Day, but they include much more besides and can never be summed up in a single myth ... The only enduring identity all Australians share is that provided by our commitment to a democratic constitutional framework for resolving our differences. This was set down in 1901.

To honour the memory of those who have died in the service of their country is a good thing. But it is another thing to say that this defines us as a nation. It is a myth that excludes many, not just women but all who are not personally nourished by its imagery. It is a myth that reinforces the regrettable view that law and democratic politics are not noble alternatives to war.

(Helen Irving, author of the Federation book *To Constitute a Nation*, *Weekend Australian*, April 27, 2001)

L We do not know this Australian's name, and we never will. We do not know where he was born, or precisely how and where he died. We do not know his age, or whether he was from the city or the bush, what occupation he left to become a soldier, what religion, if he had a religion, if he was married or single. We do not know who loved him, or whom he loved. If he had children we do not know who they are. His family is lost to us as he was lost to them. We will never know who this Australian was.

Yet he has always been among those we have honoured. We know that he was one of the 45 000 Australians who died on the Western Front. One of the 416 000 Australians who volunteered for service in the First World War. One of the 100 000 Australians who have died in wars this century.

He is all of them. And he is one of us.

This Unknown Australian is not interred here to glorify war over peace; or to assert a soldier's character above a civilian's; or one race or one nation or one religion above another; or men above women; or the war in which he fought and died above any other war; or of one generation above any that has or will come later.

The Unknown Soldier honours the memory of all those men and women who laid down their lives for Australia.

His tomb is a reminder of what we have lost in war and what we have gained.

We have lost more than 100 000 lives, and with them all their love of this country and all their hope and energy.

We have gained a legend; a story of bravery and sacrifice and with it a deeper faith in ourselves and our democracy, and a deeper understanding of what it means to be Australian.

(Paul Keating, extracts from a speech at the entombment of the Unknown Australian Soldier, 1993)

M

THOSE HEROES THAT SHED THEIR BLOOD
AND LOST THEIR LIVES ...
YOU ARE NOW LYING IN THE SOIL OF A FRIENDLY COUNTRY.
THEREFORE REST IN PEACE.

THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE JOHNNIES
AND THE MEHMETTS TO US WHERE THEY LIE SIDE BY SIDE
HERE IN THIS COUNTRY OF OURS. ... YOU, THE MOTHERS,
WHO SENT THEIR SONS FROM FAR AWAY COUNTRIES
WIPE AWAY YOUR TEARS.

YOUR SONS ARE NOW LYING IN OUR BOSOM
AND ARE IN PEACE.

AFTER HAVING LOST THEIR LIVES ON THIS LAND THEY HAVE
BECOME OUR SONS AS WELL.

(Words on the Turkish Memorial on Anzac Beach, the landing place, erected in 1934)

- 1 Why do you think such a wide range of ideas about Anzac Day exists?
- 2 Some critics say Anzac Day glorifies war. Do you agree? Explain your views.
- 3 Some of these commentators see changes occurring to Anzac Day. Discuss these possible changes, then speculate on what you think might happen in the future.
- 4 Review your original brainstorm and make any changes necessary.

ANZAC DAY

10

Understanding Anzac Day and...

'I'm from a military family – my uncles were in the services, so was my grandfather. So I've grown up with a service heritage. I think it's a very proud tradition.'

'Being in the Defence Force means I can make a difference. It's not just about maybe going to war, it's about helping others ... like after a natural disaster. It's part of citizenship, I think. Being ready to do something for others when they really need it.'

'I know I've saved lives when deployed as a peacekeeper overseas ... and that's important to me. Sometimes you just have to intervene and help people who otherwise would be oppressed or murdered. I know that means I place myself in danger but sometimes you have to be prepared to stand up for what we believe is right.'

'It's about having the chance to do something for my country. It makes me proud to know that my mates and I will defend her for all its worth to protect our way of life. We don't think we're going to be Anzac legends, but it's important to uphold their values.'

'Anzac Day is the best day to be in the Defence Force. To meet with old diggers and hear their stories ... and think that one day, a young person [in the Defence Force] will be there to listen to mine.'

Statements during discussions with young Australian Defence Force personnel, September 2002

Your own opinion

The young people who made these statements are all serving personnel in the Australian Defence Force. For them, Anzac Day has a special meaning, because they are part of the living military tradition associated with the day.

But what about you? Is this tradition a part of your life?

You have now seen a range of evidence, and a variety of points of view about Anzac Day and what it means. You have considered and refined your own ideas about it.

Prepare a short talk that you might give to a school assembly, or a brief article that you might include in a student text book about the meaning of Anzac Day. What do you stress to your fellow students about its meanings and significance? What do you say about the variety of attitudes that exist about it? What do you think Anzac Day will mean to young people in the future?

