

Using School Journals to support reading across the curriculum

The snapshot tasks below are designed as illustrated examples of planning interactive reading tasks at Level 3 within a Social Sciences inquiry. They are based on the inquiry question: **How do people deal with conflict?**

They are not intended to be sequential tasks, rather they provide a lens on the literacy demands that students need to engage with at a particular level of the curriculum.

How these snapshot tasks might be used?

- Use these as a model to support you as you plan other reading tasks for a particular level across the curriculum
- Adapt these tasks by interchanging texts and adjusting to meet specific learning needs
- Integrate these into your existing unit on the same theme
- Use these to prompt your thinking and planning for a broader social studies unit.

NEW ZEALAND CURRICULUM

LEARNING AREA	Social Sciences
LEVEL	3
FOCUS OF LEARNING/TOPIC	Overcoming differences: Dealing with conflict especially in times of war
CONTEXT	World War 2
VALUES	Integrity and respect for themselves and others
KEY COMPETENCY	Thinking
CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS	Actions are influenced by beliefs, values and experiences
ACHIEVEMENT OBJECTIVES	Belonging and participating in society Understand how people remember and record the past in different ways.
LEARNING PROCESS	Finding and recording information Exploring values and perspectives in particular integrity and respect for themselves and others.
ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT OBJECTIVES	Processes and Strategies: Integrate sources of information, processes, and strategies with developing confidence to identify, form and express ideas. Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across and beyond texts.



RESOURCE

TITLE	Level 3 February 2012. <i>Silas the Stretcher Bearer</i> . Rachel Stedma
STORY SUMMARY	Rachel Stedman reports the war experiences of her Grandfather, a young, conscientious objector during WW1 (pp 25 – 30). Locate, evaluate and integrate, within and across several (2-3) texts
INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate and summarise ideas by identifying key words, topic sentences • Draw on related items of information to infer ideas that are not directly stated • Evaluate – what is useful information in relation to the reading purpose • Integrate – bring ideas and information together, considering how they link to other ideas and use their conclusions.



PLANNING

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

What skills and knowledge do my students bring to the learning?

SUPPORT

What support will my students need to:

- Locate and summarise main ideas
- Use knowledge of text structure – e.g. topic sentences
- Make and justify inferences
- Evaluate and integrate the ideas and information across a small range of texts.

ACTIVITY

GUIDED READING

Teachers may lead separate guided reading sessions for each of the texts, prior to completing the reading tasks.

PRIOR TO READING

Discuss what you know about World War 1 already.

We know _____

This text has a number of specialised words which students will need to be aware of to help them make sense of the text e.g. (conscientious objector, conscription, non-combatant...)

Discuss what sorts of information they will expect to find in a report.

Invite students to consider what questions they hope to have answered by reading this text. Ask them to record their questions.

AFTER THE READING

Were your questions answered? Do you have new questions that you need to answer?

Discuss with a partner the information you have located about Silas. If necessary use these questions as prompts to promote discussion.

Finding information

- How did men join the army?
- What were their choices if they didn't want to fight?
- How did Silas travel to France?
- How long was Silas away from New Zealand?
- What were conditions like on the battlefields?

Exploring values and perspectives

- What did Silas do during the War? Why did he do this?
- How did Silas feel about the War afterwards?
- Do you think he was still a conscientious objector at the end of the war?
- How do you think Rachel felt about her Grandfather?

Students may want to record their information in a graphic organiser. Some ways the chart could be added to, are shown below.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY CHART		
Category heading	Silas experience	General information
Joining the army	Was conscripted.	Initially soldiers volunteered to fight in the war but soon soldiers were drafted.
Beliefs	Believed in the Bible “ thou shalt not kill” He refused to carry a gun.	If men refused to fight they could become non-combatants.
Alternatives to fighting	Was a stretcher bearer and administered first-aid.	Men could opt to work in hospitals, help the wounded on the battlefield or work in the gun factories. Or they were sent to prison.
Travel to war	Trained at Featherston, sailed to England and after further training shipped off to France.	Travelled by boat
Conditions on the battlefield		Food was usually cold. Rats everywhere. Sometimes no food at all.
Dangers on the battlefield	Silas had to run across no-man’s-land to collect the wounded. Carrying soldiers was heavy and difficult work. Silas was wounded and sent to England on a hospital boat.	Many soldiers were killed or wounded.

Some people said that people like Silas were cowards. Students might discuss with a partner whether they think this was the case. Invite them to find clues in the text to explain their thinking. Students may want to record these ideas in their topic book for later reference. Share these in a small group.

After the students have read a small range of texts including the school journal article *Silas the Stretcher Bearer* and a diary of a WW1 soldier and/or picture books such as *Nice Day for a War* by Matt Elliott and illustrated by Chris Slane (Harper Collins Publishers) 2011.

Explore the question

How was the war similar or different for people like Silas and the soldiers fighting on the frontline?

To clarify their thinking students might use a graphic organiser such as the one below to help them integrate the information they have gained from the texts read. The students may need to see this modelled or they may need less support and be able to work through in small groups.

Silas	Soldiers
Similarities	
Conscripted	Some soldiers volunteered others were conscripted
On the front-line	On the front-line
Experienced very poor conditions: poor food	Experienced very poor conditions: poor food
Lived in the trenches: wet, muddy, cold	Lived in the trenches: wet, muddy, cold
Differences	
Held strong beliefs about not killing others and refused to fight	May also have had strong beliefs did fight
Didn't use a gun, acted in a supportive role by crossing into no-mans-land to tend the wounded and stretcher them out	Fought on the front-line

REFLECTION

Discuss findings

After this activity is completed, invite the students to discuss their findings from the chart above. What do they think now?

How was the war similar or different for people like Silas and the soldiers fighting on the frontline?

Draw out the idea that strong beliefs meant that Silas did not fight, equally, he shared many similar experiences and conditions as the soldiers on the front-line.

If necessary revisit these questions explored earlier

To help students build conceptual understandings it may be necessary to revisit these questions explored earlier:

- How do you think Rachel felt about her Grandfather?
- How did Silas feel about the War afterwards? How do you know?
- Do you think he was still a conscientious objector at the end of the war?