Title of the Lesson: Picturing WWI Poetry, Great War Lesson II

Authors: Ryan Kaden, Nancy Ohmart, and Janet Parker

Grade Level: Middle School

Resources: Selected poems and photograph website **http://www.gwpda.org/photos/coppermine/index.php**

Lesson Summary: In this lesson, students analyze poems written by World War I soldiers and find WWI photographs that match the imagery of their selected poems. Students must do a great deal of thinking to successfully complete the assignment. They must identify and explain what the author's main ideas were. Then, students must locate primary source images that illustrate what the author was writing about. They must be able to defend their choice of images. Finally, they gain practice in written and oral presentation.

Common Core Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1  
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2  
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4  
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.6  
Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7  
Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Historical Background and Anticipatory Set: From 1914 to 1918, the world engaged in a war whose causes are still debated today. Germany, Austria, and their allies fought France, Britain, Russia, the US, and their allies. After a flurry of activity in 1914, the war quickly became a stalemate as each side constructed lines of trenches. The experience of the soldiers can be seen in their own poems and through photographs of the war. This lesson looks at both.

Do Now Activity: Have students read your example poem upon entering class. Read the poem to the class. Discuss author's central idea/meaning. Compare that meaning to the title. Do they seem to match? Have nine WWI images grouped into sets of three. Project each set of images onto your smart board. Ask students which image from the group of three best represents the poem. Do the same for the next two sets of images. HERE would be a great place to show the YouTube video over the Flanders Field Song (there are numerous ones to go through to find the best which fights your own diversified classroom).

Procedures: After modeling in the Do Now Activity, divide students into small groups. Allow students to read through the collection of poems. Encourage groups to select two poems that interest them. Additionally, be sure to end up with a variety of poems that have been selected. Have students read through the poems, one at a time, and complete the title evaluation paragraph. Then, guide students to the photograph website and allow them to begin selecting appropriate images. Remind them to explain their choices.

**Choose two poems from the attached collection. One poem should be long and one short. Read the poems one at a time. Underline any words you don't know--grab a computer or dictionary and look them up. Then, reread the poem. Perhaps even read it again. After you get a feel for what the poem is talking about, evaluate the title. Does the title fit with what the poem is talking about? Is it ironic, sarcastic, factual, or something else? Explain in a paragraph.**

**Short Poem's Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Next, you will look through the collection of World War I photographs found at http://www.gwpda.org/photos/coppermine/index.phpYou need to find 3-4 pictures that illustrate your short poem. You will need 7-9 pictures that illustrate your long poem. Put them into a PowerPoint. You and your partner will make two presentations but will present only one poem of your choice. One of you will read the poem--with feeling--while the other advances the pictures at the appropriate times. You should practice this. Pay attention to the example I show you in class. Additionally, include a "vocab slide" that lists unfamiliar words and their meanings in the poem. Show this at the beginning of your slideshow.**

**As you select your pictures, fill out the sheet below to explain why you think each picture fits with your poem.**

**Pic 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 4 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Choose two poems from the attached collection. One poem should be long and one short. Read the poems one at a time. Underline any words you don't know--grab a computer or dictionary and look them up. Then, reread the poem. Perhaps even read it again. After you get a feel for what the poem is talking about, evaluate the title. Does the title fit with what the poem is talking about? Is it ironic, sarcastic, factual, or something else? Explain in a paragraph.**

**Long Poem's Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Next, you will look through the collection of World War I photographs found at http://www.gwpda.org/photos/coppermine/index.phpYou need to find 3-4 pictures that illustrate your short poem. You will need 7-9 pictures that illustrate your long poem. Put them into a PowerPoint. You and your partner will make two presentations but will present only one poem of your choice. One of you will read the poem--with feeling--while the other advances the pictures at the appropriate times. You should practice this. Pay attention to the example I show you in class. Additionally, include a "vocab slide" that lists unfamiliar words and their meanings in the poem. Show this at the beginning of your slideshow.**

**As you select your pictures, fill out the sheet below to explain why you think each picture fits with your poem.**

**Pic 1 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 2 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 4 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 5 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Pic 6 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 7 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 8 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Pic 9 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Does it Matter?**

**by *Siegfried Sassoon***

Does it matter?—losing your legs?...

For people will always be kind,

And you need not show that you mind

When the others come in after hunting

To gobble their muffins and eggs.

Does it matter ?—losing your sight?...

There's such splendid work for the blind;

And people will always be kind,

As you sit on the terrace remembering

And turning your face to the light.

Do they matter?—those dreams from the pit?...

You can drink and forget and be glad,

And people won't say that you're mad;

For they'll know you've fought for your country

And no one will worry a bit.

**Wilfred Gipson**

**"Back"**

They ask me where I've been,  
And what I've done and seen.  
But what can I reply  
Who know it wasn't I,  
But someone just like me,  
Who went across the sea  
And with my head and hands  
Killed men in foreign lands...  
Though I must bear the blame,  
Because he bore my name.

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
| No Man’s Land | |
|  | |
| By James H. Knight-Adkin | |
|  | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | |  | | No Man’s Land is an eerie sight |  | | At early dawn in the pale gray light. |  | | Never a house and never a hedge |  | | In No Man’s Land from edge to edge, |  | | And never a living soul walks there | *5* | | To taste the fresh of the morning air;— |  | | Only some lumps of rotting clay, |  | | That were friends or foemen yesterday. |  | |  |  | | What are the bounds of No Man’s Land? |  | | You can see them clearly on either hand, | *10* | | A mound of rag-bags gray in the sun, |  | | Or a furrow of brown where the earthworks run |  | | From the eastern hills to the western sea, |  | | Through field or forest o’er river and lea; |  | | No man may pass them, but aim you well | *15* | | And Death rides across on the bullet or shell. |  | |  |  | | But No Man’s Land is a goblin sight |  | | When patrols crawl over at dead o’ night; |  | | Boche or British, Belgian or French, |  | | You dice with death when you cross the trench. | *20* | | When the “rapid,” like fireflies in the dark, |  | | Flits down the parapet spark by spark, |  | | And you drop for cover to keep your head |  | | With your face on the breast of the four months’ dead. |  | |  |  | | The man who ranges in No Man’s Land | *25* | | Is dogged by the shadows on either hand |  | | When the star-shell’s flare, as it bursts o’erhead, |  | | Scares the gray rats that feed on the dead, |  | | And the bursting bomb or the bayonet-snatch |  | | May answer the click of your safety-catch, | *30* | | For the lone patrol, with his life in his hand, |  | | Is hunting for blood in No Man’s Land. |  | |

Wilfred Owen **"Dulce et Decorum Est "**

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 I 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.*

**MACHINE GUN FIRE: CAMBRIN**

**by ROBERT GRAVES**

The torn line wavers, breaks, and falls.

'Get up, come on!' the captain calls

'Get up, the Welsh, and on we go!'

(Christ, that my lads should fail me so!)

A dying boy grinned up and said:

'The whole damned company, sir; it's dead.'

'Come on! Cowards!' bawled the captain, then

Fell killed, among his writhing men.

**Herbert Read   
"The Happy Warrior"**

His wild heart beats with painful sobs,  
His strin'd hands clench an ice-cold rifle,  
His aching jaws grip a hot parch'd tongue,  
His wide eyes search unconsciously.  
  
He cannot shriek.  
  
Bloody saliva  
Dribbles down his shapeless jacket.  
  
I saw him stab  
And stab again  
A well-killed Boche.  
  
This is the happy warrior,

This is he...

**W.N.Hodgson   
"Before Action"**

By all the glories of the day  
  And the cool evening's benison,  
By that last sunset touch that lay  
  Upon the hills where day was done,  
By beauty lavisghly outpoured  
  And blessings carelessly received,  
By all the days that I have lived  
  Make me a soldier, Lord.  
By all of man's hopes and fears,  
  And all the wonders poets sing,  
The laughter of unclouded years,  
  And every sad and lovely thing;  
By the romantic ages stored  
  With high endeavor that was his,  
By all his mad catastrophes  
  Make me a man, O Lord.  
I, that on my familiar hill  
  Saw with uncomprehending eyes  
A hundred of Thy sunsets spill  
  Their fresh and sanguine sacrifice,  
Ere the sun swings his noonday sword  
  Must say goodbye to all of this;--  
By all delights that I shall miss,  
  Help me to die, O Lord.

**Siegfried Sassoon: *Attack***

At dawn the ridge emerges massed and dun   
In the wild purple of the glow'ring sun,   
Smouldering through spouts of drifting smoke that shroud   
The menacing scarred slope; and, one by one,   
Tanks creep and topple forward to the wire.   
The barrage roars and lifts. Then, clumsily bowed   
With bombs and guns and shovels and battle-gear,   
Men jostle and climb to, meet the bristling fire.   
Lines of grey, muttering faces, masked with fear,   
They leave their trenches, going over the top,   
While time ticks blank and busy on their wrists,   
And hope, with furtive eyes and grappling fists,   
Flounders in mud. O Jesus, make it stop!

**Siegfried Sassoon: Counter-Attack**

We'd gained our first objective hours before  
While dawn broke like a face with blinking eyes,  
Pallid, unshaved and thirsty, blind with smoke.  
Things seemed all right at first. We held their line,  
With bombers posted, Lewis guns well placed,  
And clink of shovels deepening the shallow trench.  
The place was rotten with dead; green clumsy legs  
High-booted, sprawled and grovelled along the saps  
And trunks, face downward, in the sucking mud,  
Wallowed like trodden sand-bags loosely filled;  
And naked sodden buttocks, mats of hair,  
Bulged, clotted heads slept in the plastering slime.  
And then the rain began,- the jolly old rain!

A yawning soldier knelt against the bank,  
Staring across the morning blear with fog;  
He wondered when the Allemands would get busy;  
And then, of course, they started with five-nines  
Traversing, sure as fate, and never a dud.  
Mute in the clamour of shells he watched them burst  
Spouting dark earth and wire with gusts from hell,  
While posturing giants dissolved in drifts of smoke.  
He crouched and flinched, dizzy with galloping fear,  
Sick for escape,- loathing the strangled horror  
And butchered, frantic gestures of the dead.

An officer came blundering down the trench:  
'Stand-to and man the fire-step! 'On he went...  
Gasping and bawling, 'Fire- step...counter-attack!'  
Then the haze lifted. Bombing on the right  
Down the old sap: machine- guns on the left;  
And stumbling figures looming out in front.  
'O Christ, they're coming at us!' Bullets spat,  
And he remembered his rifle...rapid fire...  
And started blazing wildly...then a bang  
Crumpled and spun him sideways, knocked him out

To grunt and wriggle: none heeded him; he choked  
And fought the flapping veils of smothering gloom,  
Lost in a blurred confusion of yells and groans...  
Down, and down, and down, he sank and drowned,  
Bleeding to death. The counter-attack had failed.

**The Messages**

“I CANNOT quite remember…. There were five

Dropt dead beside me in the trench—and three

Whispered their dying messages to me….”

Back from the trenches, more dead than alive,

Stone-deaf and dazed, and with a broken knee,

He hobbled slowly, muttering vacantly:

“I cannot quite remember…. There were five

Dropt dead beside me in the trench, and three

Whispered their dying messages to me….

“Their friends are waiting, wondering how they thrive—

Waiting a word in silence patiently….

But what they said, or who their friends may be

“I cannot quite remember…. There were five

Dropt dead beside me in the trench—and three

Whispered their dying messages to me….”