

2.Silence

**Remember those who died,
Fear for those who cried,
For its Remembrance Day,
Time to stand not play.**

**The cenotaph stands proud,
Bodies start to crowd,
Impatience in the air,
Do they really care?**

**I see my granddad's name,
Now he has the fame,
His rightful place is here,
Where I feel him near.**

**His smile will shine down bright,
Through his pledge and plight,
He fought so bloody hard,
Ending truly scarred.**

**Men who fought so bravely,
Speak their words so gravely,
I listen calm and still,
Huddled by the chill.**

**I step away and walk,
People start to talk,
My throat is lodged with pain,
They all died in vain.**

**Lauren Willoughby
SC6**

3. Is this how they are remembered?

A thousand graves all in a row,
In the gaps the poppies grow,
Sullen stones and mossy cracks,
Is this how they're remembered?

The smell of death is in the air,
A lonely soldier in despair,
The bloody corpses piled on the ground,
Is this what soldiers remember?

A batch of soldiers return from war,
A woman is told her boyfriend lives no more,
A little boy is crying on the corner,
Is this what families remember?

A siren scream pierces the night,
German bombers in mid-flight,
London's ravaged by the bombs,
Is this what Londoners remember?

A soldier screams out but it is too late,
Hellish gas is his fate,
Fellow soldiers watch in horror,
Is this what comrades remember?

An engine slowly roars to life,
The pilot would never see his wife,
His metallic bird rushed to meet the ground,
Is this what pilots remember?

Sailors wait anxiously on board,
Little did they know of the submarine hoard,
Torpedoes out of nowhere destroy the ship,
Is this what sailors remember?

Heroic veterans all in a row,
In their shirts the poppies grow,
Proud flags and bunches of flowers,
This is how they're remembered.

Michael Phillips
8C11

4. My Poppy

Through a field of daisies, white as snow,
A single flower with nowhere to go,
Red as the blood of a thirsty hound,
Seeds as black as the death queen's gown,
The flower's stem snaps and is snatched by a hand,
By a little girl playing on the lush, green land,
She thinks to the caw of a coal black crow,
As the wind sways the trees to and fro.
The little girl's mind is way too small,
What is this flower? Can she think at all?
She runs through the field to Grandad's house,
Like a small disillusioned, lost dormouse.
The granddad sits in his armchair, watching the news,
The cat sits by the fireplace and quietly mews,
The girl bursts in and startles the cat,
Scattering small dark seeds all over the mat
The granddad sees the poppy and suddenly, CRASH!
He jumps up so fast that his teacup gets smashed,
"My dear, that flower marks part of my life!
The day I was to return to my dear, loving wife!"
"The seeds are black with the pain of death,
The moment a soldier took his last breath,
The leaves are red from the blood soaked ground,
The field's silent, not a sound.
We spent days in the trenches, cold and damp
Living in pitch black, no candle, no lamp,
We clutched our bayonets and prayed for peace,
Hoping the fighting will eventually cease.
We shared bully beef and biscuits like rock,
Whilst lice scurried in my old woollen socks,
The rats begged for a share of our meagre feast,
But we learned to tolerate these filthy beasts.
When gunshots were heard we shivered with fear,
The death and destruction are coming near,
I lay down and aimed at the enemy's men,
I killed a man, once again.
I lost count of the days I lived in that place,
I longed for my wife, and my own living space,
Little did I know that later that week,
Something would happen which was quite unique.
On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day,
On the eleventh month war washed away,
We all dropped our guns and beamed with hope,
Everybody smiled and ceased to mope,
Soon after the end we all were shocked,
Thousands of flowers began to flock,

We all looked over the crowded land,
And then we all joined by the hand.
The war was over and my heart was complete,
I looked forward to warmth and rich, cooked meats,
I was finally back in my warming home,
No longer scared, lost or alone.
And I am still here now, aged eighty two,
And my darling daughter blessed me with you,
Oh, how could I forget? The flower's name...
The beauty of it puts others to shame,
The name to you is very near,
And that is why you're called Poppy, my dear"

Sophie Osbourne

Aged 14

9C5

6. Death by Numbers

'The armistice was signed at five o'clock this morning with
Hostilities to cease... at 11 am today'
So I ask you, what happened in the intervening hours -
The time between when words were signed and bullets packed away?

In those precious six hours, between the push of precious pens
Around the precious piece of paper in the carriage in Rethondes,
And the last breath of the last death - one last tragic error
Of allied men who learned too late the true state of détente -

In those six cruel hours, as politicians prepared speeches
Two thousand, seven hundred, seven hundred and thirty-eight lost their lives
Two thousand and thirty-eight whose mothers -
Or daughters or sisters, or mistaken, rejoicing wives -

Heard the voice of their leader and thought their lives protected
From the tragedy that haunted the broken world around;
Yet for those few hours between armistice and announcement
Two thousand, seven hundred lie buried in foreign ground.

Yet add to these six hours the twenty-four of yesterday:
The death toll of the days and weeks and months and years before
And the deaths between that armistice and the next conflict -
The enemy a new one, the bereavement just as raw.

For fresh conflict will break out as the last is signed away,
As if the world's addicted to the tragedy of war,
Yet we worship the flame of each armistice, rejoicing
In the new peace which we seek; in the heroes we adore.

Perhaps, one day, the peace we praise in Flanders fields will spread
To the battlefields of Iraq; Iran; Afghanistan;
Perhaps we'll wear purple poppies where now we wear the red
And learn about the heroes, and remember those who passed on.

Perhaps there'll be more like Harry patch, living past 100
A symbol of survival; of Britain's prowess abroad;

Or perhaps there will be more like Tring's own David Barnsdale,
Fighting bravely to an early end at just twenty-four.
'Hostilities to cease...at 11 am today' -
In the centuries thereafter for two minutes we'll cease
In respect to the fallen; the bereaved; those yet to fall
And keep signing those armistices, and keep praying for peace.

Abbi Brown
13C11

10. Lost on the Way

On the 11th November, a cold, cold day
The warmth of news keeps the chill at bay;
Shouts and cheers echo on the street
Like jack-in boxes they rise from their streets.
Mr. Norris switches on the radio transmitter,
Like joyous birds their voices twitter,
'Our war has ended at just before noon'
Another man comments 'not a moment too soon.'

A knock on the door on Armistice Day,
We've received a telegram, what will it say?
We regret to inform Mr and Mrs Norris,
Your son was shot in Thiepval forest.
The pen-stained bombshell drops to the floor,
Is this what they meant by an end to the war?
Opening the curtains without sense or sight,
The smiling masses just a faint blur of white.

'Do they not know our son is dead?'
Then the husband replies with a heavy head.
'Did the Germans know, right from the start?
When they fought with our son, they fought with our hearts.'
'Those German scum they deserve to die'
The wife says, through tear-stroked eyes.
The husband coughs, thinks long and hard,
Replying, staring, face all scarred.

'Though our son was killed, was shot,
By a German, in hell, whose soul will rot,
In Bremen, Berlin, or Hambourg sits,
A couple like us who've lost their fritz.
They curse the day the English came,
And killed their son in that big game.
Who's to blame, us or they?
Or did the human race get lost on the way?

Sophie Paton
11H6

11. For We Shall Not Forget

The western Front boomed loud with rage,
As the two men battled through.
Both prepared to go over the top,
Shook hands and said,
"I'll remember you."
Now let us show respect,
Dear friend, for we shall not forget.

All over! All over!
They scrambled into the night.
Rifles at the ready.
"Lord, see us through this fight."
Now let us show respect,
Dear friend, for we shall not forget.

*The rush of frightened, aimless men.
Shells lit up the sky,
Then the shadow fell beside me,
As I turned to see him die.
You shall get respect,
I whispered, I will not forget.*

Then from the ground where the private lay,
Bullet to his chest,
The young man picked a poppy,
And raised it to his breast.
"I shall show respect,
Dear friend, for I will not forget,"

Silence spread throughout the land,
Two minutes, counting down,
And in the old man's ears
Rang that fatal gun-shot sound.
"I shall show respect,
Dear friend, for I will not forget."

And now the candles flicker,
And as they've raised above the crowds,
And that poppy on the old man's breast
Shines bright and sings aloud.
Let us show respect,
Dear friend, for we shall not forget.

13. Lest we forget

On that first stroke of eleven,
Conjured a moment so beautiful,
That the most talkative person,
Ceased to let,
another word cross their lips.

The trees looked away in agony,
The wind wailed in pain,
The smoke rose from the ground
And in its awe
Wept in the eye of the sun

The world had halted to standstill,
The factories had frozen in time
Everything seemed to disappear,
It was if
The world had stopped spinning.

Men took off their hats and bowed,
Women shook with anxiety,
Children held hand in hand, and they sang,
A song of sorrow and grief.

And as they placed me beneath,
The almighty cenotaph,
I stared at the monster of stone.
And it said,
"The world will smile again."

Samantha Williams
8A3

14. The Land of the Poppy

I'm only quite small, but boast much meaning
Burdened with memories, when men stopped breathing.
I go for a penny, or maybe a pound,
I'm the main attention, of two without sound.

As I lay in the field, with many alike,
I cushion those fallen, retaining each strike.
Do you know what I am? You're one of the few.
Generations forget and their lesson is due.

It's time you remembered, it's time I stood tall
Why can't you be silent? Two minutes is small.
The blood that was spilt, it covered us through
That's why we blaze crimson, to remind me and you.

The field is a ghost town, just us who inhabit
With tension so great, that one man could grab it.
If you don't believe me, then why do you copy?
Just follow me home, to the land of the poppy.

Arian Moossavi
C12

15. Remembrance

Remember remember
Brave men with young eyes
Going over the top
Sacrificing their lives...
For king and country

Crackling machine guns
Shells screeching overhead
Minds filled with dreams
Of home; a warm bed

Remember remember
Brave men with young eyes

They arrived here with pals
Now they are long gone
But still keep up morale
With a laugh and a song

Remember remember
Brave men with young eyes

“We’ll be home before Christmas”
The lies repeated once more
In letters to loved ones
On a far, distant shore

Remember remember
Brave men with young eyes

“The Big Push is coming”
Spread in whispers each day
While deep in the trenches
Knelt in mud, they did pray

Remember remember
Brave men with young eyes

Lying, dying, crying
The blood, of fallen heroes spilled
Husbands, sons, and Fathers
Row upon row are killed

Remember remember
Brave men with young eyes

No worry, no praying
No gunfire, no violence
No singing, no laughing
No crying, just silence

Remember remember
Brave men with young eyes

Wars but a distant memory
Our brave boys lay dead
For now they sleep peacefully
In the foreign fields of red

Laura Hartfield
W8

16. Remember

To the brave soldiers of present and past,
From the smaller wars to those that were vast,
I pick up this poppy which blossoms of red,
So I may remember those who are dead,
The men who fought through the troublesome rain,
And those who were suffering through terrible pain,
The parents at home with their boys in the fight,
They toss and they turn through their long sleepless nights,
The millions of people who died over these years,
Through thoughtless wars that have ended in tears,
So everyone remember what the poppy stands for,
Those brave men who fought and died in the war.

Charlie Shillingford
C14

18. What could have been

Eleven strong the church clock strikes
Almost half a day has gone by
Remember those, who lost the chance
To make it to the other half.

A story cut short, no real end
Unfinished letter, never sent
Half finished line
Of words that they
So desperately had wished to say

God had a plan, laid out their lives
Doctors, lawyers, husbands, wives
They were to live they were to be
The forebears of their families

But man's hate spurred a trumpet call
Whose hellish melody called to all
"Come join the fun, who's for the game?"
In fear of feathers many came

He would have been papa you see
The foolish boy who went to see
What war was all about; green eyes
That would have passed on to his child

Yet this man earned a different fate
The eleventh hour came too late
That soldier who had hopes and dreams
He never saw past twenty-three

He never returned home from Ypres
Never got the chance to meet
The girl whom he would love; green eyes
Were never passed on to that child

It was not just the men that we
Lost in trenches, on land, in battle, at sea
We lost their futures, their children, their dreams
A generation of people that might have been

They were the songs we would have sung
The wedding bells that would have rung
The late night strolls, the walks in parks
Forgotten gifts and birthday cards

They were the cures we never found
The justice that was not laid down
The difference that was never made
The loving vows never exchanged

Upon this day, upon this hour
Let silence fall on poppy flowers
And hear them whisper upon the stroke,
The wave of life that never broke

So little girl with empty eyes
Who never heard their desperate cries
Attends the service plays the game
But cannot put a face to name

If you could only understand
How much they wanted what you have
They are the thousands of souls displayed
By sweat and blood by fear and hate

Jessica Harvey
11W5

20. War Fields

We are the bitter memories,
Of battles lost and won,
We hold the echoes of men who died,
We're the fields of World War One

Legions of feet tramped over us,
From their deaths they could not run,
Mown down and killed in their thousands,
We're the fields of World War One.

Frozen bodies in the snow,
Deep in a sleep they'd never awake from,
Pointless bloodshed, pain and loss
We're the fields of World War One

Scarred by shell holes and trenches,
What had the world begun?
Forever full of terror and death,
We are the fields of World War One

Blown to pieces, or shot in the chest,
They'll stay forever young,
They lie in our embrace for eternity,
We're the fields of World War One

British, French and German
What's done cannot be undone,
United in death, now part of our Earth
We're the fields of World War One

The ones who fell, a memory
Friends, husbands and sons,
Grainy photos in silver frames
We're the fields of World War One

An eerie quiet now remains,
The fighting and war long gone,
Gun fire and shells fallen silent
We're the fields of World War One

All for a dispute, land, oil
It wasn't worth it, in the long run,
But yet it could happen over again,
We're the fields of World War One

The war in Iraq, Pakistan,
Why can't we all get along?
And live in peace and harmony
We're the fields of World War One

The death toll, the horror, the suffering,
Think of your friends, your loved ones.
We're begging you to keep the peace,
We're the fields of World War One.

Manon Burbidge
H6

22. To My Son

A box, in front of me, brown and worn.
The miles it's travelled are clear.
Inside a letter, yellow and old.
I look and can't help but shed a tear.

The box lid creaks as it opens,
I pull out the letter inside.
Smooth out the creases, blow off the dust,
What secrets does this paper hide?

I unfold the letter so carefully,
And peer at the first faded line.
'Dear Mrs Smith' the haunting text reads,
The words that got lost in time.

The words I read again and again
Just to make sure they were real.
My son, my world, my life, my hope.
Suffered wounds that were never to heal.

I remember him in the summer,
As a boy, a lad, as a man.
And then on the front line as a fighter,
Falling, face first in the sand.

There were lots of reports, we were told,
Of the needless death on the beach.
The enemy trenches, the end of the line,
Were just too far out of reach.

The guns, how they whistled past them,
And the bombs, they were crashing behind.
The men, they raced ever forward.
Not knowing they would run out of time.

He died on that beach, with all of those men,
For I was not the only who lost.
Their husband, their son or their brother
All of the lives that the war had cost.

And we should always remember them,
When they united as one.
Their shiny boots, their big brave souls,
Fighting until this war was one.

But as I sit here in the attic,
Reading the letter they sent to me.
I know they did it only for us,
They did so would be free.

Hannah Evans
10H14