



## History trip review :

Overall, I think that the history trip and workshop was great. It was really insightful and a great recap of the 'medicine on the western front' unit. Also, the different sectors were all really engaging and interesting.

We were divided into groups and then rotated around the workshop, allowing us to experience lots of different presentations and displays. The movement allowed for a more exciting approach and most of the displays were extremely interactive allowing almost everyone to get involved with learning.

### Part 1 Graveyard:

Going to the graveyard was really eye opening and exciting. The groups were taken by Mr Cripps to Rayleigh Cemetery for a hands-on experience at looking at the real impact of WW1. This rotation was great. In lesson we get to read about stories and the impact of war, however here we got the chance to see first-hand the impact it had. It made our learning much more personal and memorable as we got to read about real people from Rayleigh who were unfortunate victims of the war.

When we arrived, we were given a basic overview of the graveyard and were reminded on the importance of showing respect while there.



One of the first things we were shown were the WW1 graves, we identified them by their smooth shape and curved top. These graves tell us a lot about the person: name, age, rank/job, age off death, etc. they are really special as no matter what rank you were, you were still all given the same grave, so you could be one of the highest ranking officers and still have the same grave as a low ranking soldier, this is very significant as it symbolises that the whole army is equal and every job is as important as the other.

After listening to some of the stories and facts about the graves, we were then split into smaller groups to go off independently and complete some given tasks. We got the chance to have a look around the graveyard which was really interesting. In my group we were sent off to find people who weren't soldiers but were still victims of the war. We looked at a mother and daughter, who shared a grave, they were victims off the Rayleigh bombings - when Germans would drop spare bombs over near by towns. While other groups went off to look at other WW1 grave and research about different soldiers.

Then we were given some sources to read aloud to the group. One of the sources was a diary passage from a young girl who went to Fitzwimarc school. She spoke about the alarms that went off throughout the day and how they had to take cover in the school's bomb shelters. They also had to bring gas masks into school. This text was extremely eye-opening as it shows the struggles that people our age had to go through and just how different our lives were. It also makes you appreciate things much more and have much more empathy when hearing about the tragedy and victims of WW1.

At the end of our rotation we wrote out a message and paid our respects to the graves we looked at. We wrote our message off a piece of paper and then put it into a plastic envelope. After that we gathered round a selected grave and Mr. Cripps read out a passage of gratitude and respect. Finally we placed the wreath down besides the grave and all said Amen.



## Part 2

In the next activity we got to watch an interactive display of what life was like as a soldier. We were shown a wide range of equipment, food, clothing etc and the display was extremely engaging and fun to watch. We even got the chance to try on clothing or gas masks, which made the experience very memorable.

When we arrived, we all sat down in a crescent placing around the display and introduced to Corporal who would be presenting to us. The presentation started with us being shown some of the uniform that soldiers wore, we even got to try some of it on. It was explained what each part of the uniform was for, and it showed just how heavy and harsh the conditions were for the soldiers. While looking at the uniform we were shown all the heavy equipment that the soldiers had to carry, for example they had to carry a large gun with them at all times.



These guns needed lots of ammo, which the soldiers would also carry around with them, on top of that the guns also had a sharp spear like knife that could be attached to the end for close range fighting called a bayonet

We were also told about lice and the illness that comes alongside the infestations. They would live in the soldier's hair and clothes and constantly bite them, which could then lead to trench fever. We were told that the men would have to sit and tediously pick the lice out from their clothes or burn them out, which made a popping sound. The men would often sit

and do this together and talk while popping the lice and this is where the term chatting comes from.

We then looked at food and the way soldiers would eat and cook. Behind the trenches there would be hot food cooking, however by the time it got to the soldiers on the front line it had gone cold, thus it was very rare to get a hot meal. Corporal showed us the soldiers rations and where they kept them. It was really interesting and helped to better understand the soldiers' lifestyle and overall conditions. We were shown tins, which soldiers would eat from and this then led us onto the next section.

Hygiene; we heard about how little hygiene there was on the western front, which definitely gave us a better understanding of disease and infection. Here we also learnt about how little resources the soldiers had as pretty much everything they owned, they had to carry.

After that we moved on to look at new forms of weapons, gas, and how the soldiers defended themselves against them. We got to come up and try on gas masks which was quite funny. The gas masks also had to be carried round with them.



The gas masks weren't fully affective, however they did prevent the gas from entering your lungs or eyes which is a good thing, as most gasses targeted places with moisture.

As you can see we were also told that even horses were given their own gas masks and were to participate in gas procedures and training.



Overall I think this display and presentation was really great. It was super interactive and fun to engage in. Also, it was very memorable and interesting and overall helped to get a better understanding and reminder of the lifestyle and conditions faced on the Western front.



### Part 3

In this part we were given a presentation on injuries, comfort and Chaplains. I think this presentation was also really great. I learnt about lots of new things and got to participate in the interactive activities.

When we first went in, we were introduced and began to briefly talk about the trenches and how they impacted the emergency route out (because they were so zig-zagged and curvy it

made it hard and painful to get soldiers out on the stretchers). We went through the impact on the soldiers, how painful evacuation would have been. It was very impactful to listen to and helped to understand more about the effect of trench structure and evacuation routes.

During this part of the presentation we were also allowed to come up and as a team lift the stretcher.



We got to lift the stretcher and have a go at moving the 'patient' as they would have done in WW1. It was very heavy and again, made us better understand how brutal the conditions were and how hard and time consuming it would be to have to evacuate someone.

After that we discussed different types of injuries and how they were dealt with. In this part we got to recap our knowledge on the Thomas Splint and also got taught how they would comfort the injured (giving them sweets, reassurance, cigarettes etc). This then led us on to the final part off the presentation.

Here we spoke all about Chaplains and prayer on the battlefield. This was very interesting as it was all new knowledge to us. We learnt all about there roles and purpose along with examples. For example, Chaplains would be sent out onto the battlefield to perform morning speeches. These were very important,t as it gave the soldiers a lot of comfort and helped them to feel more secure and protected.

As seen in the image there is a Chaplain giving out his daily speech to the soldiers. On top of this they would also have the role of sending off the dead and even performing funerals at times, they would be there for men in their final moments and make sure they were buried with a cross and with prayer as almost all men were Christian

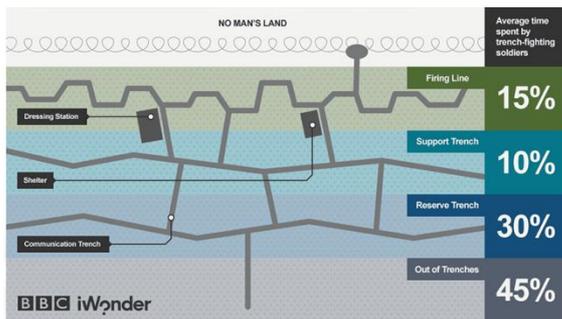


### Part 3

In this final part of our rotation, we were shown a presentation all about the evacuation route, trenches, and ambulances etc.

It was the last activity of the day, however it was still extremely interesting and a great recap of our previous knowledge.

We were shown a few slide shows to jog our memory on what the trenches were like, and this again bettered our understanding of the conditions in the trenches, following that we looked at the structure of the trenches and the advantages and disadvantages.



Here you can see the very zig zag-like pattern of the trenches -which allows for more protection and safety from bombs and shells, however is harder to move around in or evacuate injured.

After that we discussed some tactics for example, we learnt about the gas used by the Germans and how that would have been treated or avoided. Again, this was a really great way to recap our knowledge.

Overall, I think this presentation was really great. It was an extremely beneficial way for us to recap and further understand the Western Front. It also gave a more memorable experience towards it.

Overall, I think the trip as a whole was really great. We learnt a lot of new things, whilst also getting to recap our previously learnt knowledge. On top of that, the rotations were all very interactive and thus very interesting and memorable. We got to learn about the personal victims of the war and learn more about the general town's history which was super interesting.