

# Teacher Resources

## War Mascots:

Many students will be familiar with the use of mascots by sports teams, but they may be surprised to learn that mascots have also been used in wars. This text describes mascots used by soldiers in during the First World War. Students may have some awareness of the War and the role of ANZACs through history classes, with this focus being on animals will be engaging.

## What is a Mascot

The word mascot originates from the French term *mascotte*, which means lucky charm such as an animal, person or thing adopted by a group as its representative symbol.

Teacher Notes	Curriculum
Some words or phrases that are ambiguous or unfamiliar to the students, the meaning of which is supported by the context or clarified by photographs, illustrations, diagrams, and/ or written explanations	<b>SOCIAL SCIENCES:</b> Understand how cultural practices reflect and express people’s customs, traditions, and values.  <b>ENGLISH: Reading–</b> Structure: Show some understanding of text structures.

## Why did Soldiers have Mascots

They offer wellbeing and companionship — a friend who'll stand by you at all times, regardless of what's exploding around you." But these battlefield dogs have one massive advantage over other tools used by soldiers: the emotional support they offer is crucial in easing the stress of combat.

Students	
<p>Possible reading purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To locate information and increase understanding about a significant event in US history.</li> <li>• To explore and discuss the relationships between humans and animals</li> <li>• To make connections with a distant event through a shared interest in animals.</li> </ul>	<p>Possible writing purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To describe the ways humans have relied on animals in the past and the present</li> <li>• To argue for or against the use of animals in war</li> <li>• To describe the use of mascots</li> <li>• To research and write about another aspect of the First World War.</li> </ul>

**Specific knowledge required:**

- Awareness of ANZAC involvement in the First World War
- Awareness of the lives of soldiers, including the time spent away from home and its impact on their families.
- Geographical awareness of the places where the war was fought
- Awareness of the fighting conditions of war, especially trench warfare
- Awareness of mascots and how they are used.

Possible supporting strategies Before reading, build prior knowledge by providing resources and opportunities for discussion. Use a world map to show the countries mentioned in the text, emphasising their distance from their home countries and the time required for travel when using ships rather than planes. Use historical photographs to show how war was waged in the past (using horses, rifles, trenches, and so on) and how that differs from modern warfare. Ask students to share their knowledge of mascots, for example, by bringing to class a team or club mascot and describing the way it is regarded and used.

Thousands of New Zealanders took part in the war. They were a long way from home and living in terrible conditions. A mascot gave them something positive to think about. It was a reminder of home and normal life. Many New Zealanders were killed and injured in the war. Some people probably hoped that their mascot would bring them good luck and keep them safe.

## Students

locate and use information from the text, the photos, and their own prior knowledge to make inferences about how a mascot might be good for the soldiers. They make connections with their own experiences of being away from home and in difficult situations. They ask and answers questions about the risks to the soldiers as they develop an understanding of the impact of mascots.

## Teacher:

The students to work in pairs or small groups to unpack and discuss this extract. You could start the discussion by modelling your thinking about the first question and prompting the students to identify the three issues.

- What are the main issues for the soldiers? (Far from home, terrible conditions, possible injury or death)
- Think about what makes you feel better when you are far from home.
- Use your knowledge of having a mascot or a special toy to help you to understand the role of a mascot for the soldiers.

Most of the mascots were not allowed to return to New Zealand after the war because of quarantine rules. However, some were probably brought back secretly. There are stories of soldiers hiding mascots under their clothing or in their luggage. Soldiers and animals had been through a lot together, and the soldiers couldn't bear to leave their animal friends behind.

The students make connections between this extract and what they have learnt about the war to infer the meaning of "been through a lot together". They visualise soldiers bringing the mascots back secretly and draw on their own feelings of attachment to a special animal or toy to infer the meaning of "couldn't bear to leave their animal friends behind".

## Teacher

Ask questions: to help the students clarify meaning.

- Why didn't all the mascots come back to NZ?
- Why did quarantine rules prevent some from returning to NZ?
- What does the phrase "been through a lot" mean? Why would being through a lot together make the soldiers want to keep their mascots?
- When have you felt you "couldn't bear" to be parted from an animal or special toy?
- What do you understand now about the roles of animals as mascots in the First World War? Share your thoughts with a fellow student.

## Metacognition

What guided your thinking as you planned the structure of your writing? How did this planning help your research? How did it help you as you wrote the first draft?

- Show me a place where feedback from your writing partner helped you make a change in your writing. What made you change this part?
- How hard or easy was it to find the information you needed? Would a slightly different topic (such as a narrower focus) have made the research and writing easier?