



## TEACHERS' NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

The online resource at [www.filmeducation.org/warhorse](http://www.filmeducation.org/warhorse) features a series of curriculum-focused and engaging classroom activities exploring aspects of the Steven Spielberg film. Designed primarily for students of History, English and Media aged 11–14 the resource may also be used in PSHEE and Science teaching with pupils aged 9–11. Activities relating to remembrance of the war dead are suitable for teachers and students of Citizenship.

Offering a range of interactivity based on the film, the novel and from the archives of the National Army Museum, these materials give learners an exciting opportunity to develop skills of close reading and analysis. Activities also build students' awareness of the significance of collective remembrance and help to develop their knowledge and understanding of how primary sources can inform contemporary filmmaking.

“War Horse” has many themes and ideas that are suitable for young people of very different ages and these notes will guide teachers as to which parts of the resource will be most appropriate for the subject area and age group of the children you work with.

### KS2 SCIENCE AND PSHEE

“War Horse” is a film rich in ideas that will engage the minds of upper Primary children. One particular focus of the story that is relevant for KS2 pupils is the needs of the horses. The section of this resource entitled ANIMAL WELFARE provides a range of activities suitable for students learning about life processes, particularly nutrition. The online game acts as a starter for this activity with a more developed research task to follow.

### KS2 HISTORY AND CITIZENSHIP

The LEGACY page within the MAKING HISTORY section of the resource is also relevant for KS2 pupils learning about History or Citizenship. Teachers may wish to use the activities here to develop knowledge and understanding about collective remembrance of those killed in war and the importance of physical memorials. The interactive task to create an animated storyboard in the YOUR RESPONSE pages is designed specifically to fit the KS3 History curriculum, but may nevertheless be an engaging way for upper Primary pupils to present their knowledge and understanding of themes touched upon in the film.



## KS3 ENGLISH AND MEDIA

The novel “War Horse” is taught most often in English at KS3 although strong readers in years 5 or 6 may read it independently. The following sections of the resource are particularly relevant for teachers of English at KS3 and for those young people who have read the novel:

- THE IDEA
- TELLING STORIES

These sections cover a range of learning objectives including:

- Developing close reading and analytical skills in relation to multi-modal texts
- Identifying the differences between different text formats
- Considering narrative perspective and transforming texts from one format to another
- Selecting and analysing visual texts to communicate thematic understanding
- Identifying literary devices in written text and reflecting on their effect
- Reflecting on certain filmic representations of elements from the novel

## KS3 HISTORY AND CITIZENSHIP

Learning about the nature and impact of the First World War is an important aspect of the KS3 History curriculum. Using film to teach about History can enable students to visualise the past in a very powerful and engaging way. This online resource based on “War Horse” can be used to develop students’ skills of critical analysis of secondary and primary sources and to consider how filmmakers interpret sources of information and construct a version of historical events.

Film is far from simple to use in the classroom, as it often covers fiction as well as fact, and the process of analysing film as a historical source is complex. However, this should be why we teach History – to stimulate debate and discussion, and to ask as many questions as we answer. Used effectively, film can be an extremely accessible and engaging way to generate high order thinking from your students.



The MAKING HISTORY section of the resource is particularly relevant for History teachers at KS3. The activities on the LEGACY page within this section are suitable as a Citizenship task for those schools wishing to reflect on the significance of collective remembrance of those killed whilst serving their country. The MAKING HISTORY section covers the following learning objectives:

- Developing understanding of how historians and others form interpretations
- Developing understanding of why historians and others have interpreted events, people and situations in different ways through a range of media
- Identifying, selecting and using a range of historical sources, including textual, visual and oral sources
- Presenting and organising accounts and explanations about the past that are coherent, structured and substantiated, using chronological conventions and historical vocabulary

In addition to the assets available in this resource, History teachers may find the Imperial War Museum's 1914 podcasts a useful primary source to complement their delivery of this topic: <http://www.1914.org/podcasts/>