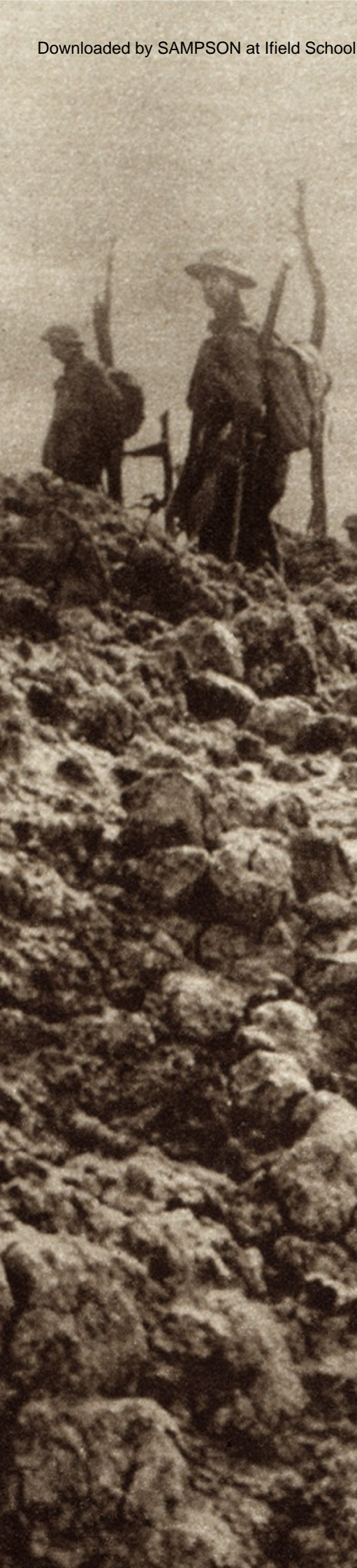


First World War poetry anthology



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In Flanders Fields

John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.



Marching Men

Marjorie Pickthall

Under the level winter sky
I saw a thousand Christs go by.
They sang an idle song and free
As they went up to Calvary.

Careless of eye and coarse of lip,
They marched in holiest fellowship.
That heaven might heal the world, they gave
Their earth-born dreams to deck the grave.

With souls unpurged and steadfast breath
They supped the sacrament of death.
And for each one, far off, apart,
Seven swords have rent a woman's heart.



My Boy Jack

Rudyard Kipling

‘Have you news of my boy Jack?’

Not this tide.

‘When d’you think that he’ll come back?’

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

‘Has any one else had word of him?’

Not this tide.

For what is sunk will hardly swim,

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

‘Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?’

None this tide,

Nor any tide,

Except he did not shame his kind—

Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.

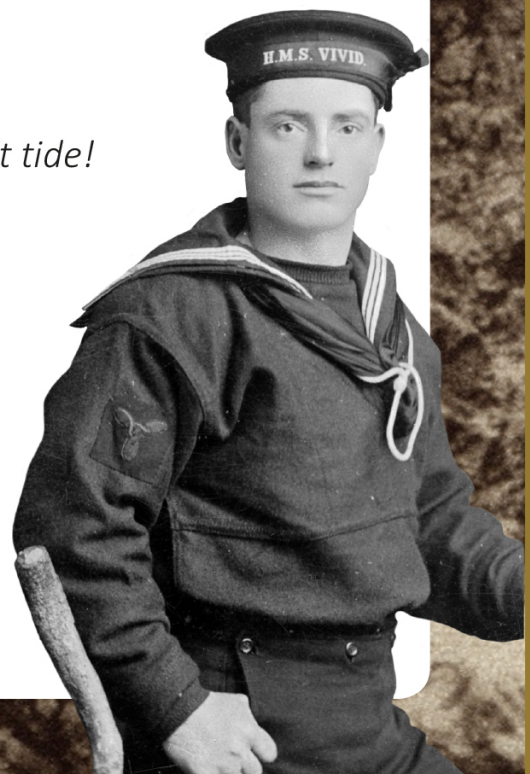
Then hold your head up all the more,

This tide,

And every tide;

Because he was the son you bore,

And gave to that wind blowing and that tide!



Dulce et Decorum Est

Wilfred Owen

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 a 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.*



Perhaps

Vera Brittain

Perhaps some day the sun will shine again,
And I shall see that still the skies are blue,
And feel once more I do not live in vain,
Although bereft of You.

Perhaps the golden meadows at my feet
Will make the sunny hours of spring seem gay,
And I shall find the white May-blossoms sweet,
Though You have passed away.

Perhaps the summer woods will shimmer bright,
And crimson roses once again be fair,
And autumn harvest fields a rich delight,
Although You are not there.

Perhaps some day I shall not shrink in pain
To see the passing of the dying year,
And listen to Christmas songs again,
Although You cannot hear.

But though kind Time may many joys renew,
There is one greatest joy I shall not know
Again, because my heart for loss of You
Was broken, long ago.

First World War poetry anthology Comprehension questions

Choose *one* poem and answer the following questions.

Question
1

Summarise the subject matter of this poem.

1 mark

Question
2

Use a dictionary to find definitions of unfamiliar vocabulary.

2 marks

Question
3

What descriptive language does the author use and what effect does this have on the reader?

2 marks

Question

4

What powerful imagery of war is used?

1 mark

Question

5

What can you learn about war from this poem?

1 mark

Question

6

Is the narrator of the poem for or against the war?
How do you know?

2 marks

Question

7

What are the themes of the poem?

1 mark

Total out of 1

Extension

Learn a section of the poem by heart.

[Blank booklet page]



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