

## Pre-Visit Activity: The Black Watch

### Key words: 'REGIMENT' and 'BATTALION'

Ask your class to imagine that all of the schools in Britain are an army. Each school is like a *regiment*; it has a specific catchment area so most of the pupils come from the same area, and they can be all different sizes. Regiments recruit from their regimental area, which for The Black Watch is Angus, Dundee, Fife and Perthshire.

Every regiment is made up of *battalions*. One *battalion* has about 1000 men in it. A regiment might be just one *battalion*, or it might have loads of *battalions*. At the beginning of the First World War, The Black Watch had seven *battalions*; at certain points during the War it had as many as twenty-five *battalions*.

### Understanding Rank

Every Regiment has Officers and Privates. Officers are in charge of other soldiers; the highest ranking officers are in charge of thousands of men, while the lower ranking officers might be in charge of a few dozen men. Privates are not in charge of other soldiers; they must follow the orders of their officers. This 5-minute activity will help pupils to understand the concept of rank.

1. Divide the class into groups of 3 pupils.
2. Have each group designate one person to be the Commanding Officer, one person to be a mid-ranking officer, and one person to be a Private.
3. For two minutes, the Commanding Officers in each group will pass their orders to the mid-ranking officer, who will pass them to the Private, who MUST obey. (COs might order the Privates to stack chairs or do start jumps – encourage pupils to give appropriate orders)
4. At the end of the two minutes, have the groups change the roles around and do the activity again.
5. Discuss with the pupils what it was like being the Commanding Officer, the mid-ranking officer and the Private.

### The Badge: 300 Years of History

British regiments are very proud of their history. Black Watch history goes back nearly 300 years to 1725. They have fought in nearly every major conflict since that time. Much of the history and identity of the Regiment is found in the badge of The Black Watch.

#### The Black Watch Castle & Museum

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1. Print off copies of the badge of The Black Watch (Appendix A) for all pupils, or put the image up on the screen for everyone to look at together.
2. Ask the pupils to pick out the different elements of the badge. Can they identify the following?
  - a. St Andrew
  - b. Saltire
  - c. Thistles
  - d. Crown
  - e. Sphinx
  - f. Motto
3. Ask the pupils to jot down what things they associate with each of the elements of the badge.
4. Discuss each element and what it tells us about the Regiment's history and identity.
  - a. St Andrew
    - i. Patron saint of Scotland. The Black Watch are a Scottish regiment.
  - b. Saltire
    - i. Flag of Scotland, associated with St Andrews. The Black Watch are a Scottish regiment.
  - c. Thistles
    - i. Scottish plant badge. The Black Watch are a Scottish regiment, and proud of it judging by the number of elements associated with Scotland.
  - d. Crown
    - i. Associated with royalty. The Black Watch are a royal regiment and have been since 1758.
  - e. Sphinx
    - i. Associated with Egypt. Granted to The Black Watch as part of their badge after they fought so well at the battle of Alexandria against Napoleon in 1801.
  - f. Motto
    - i. 'Nemo me impune lacessit'; 'no one strikes me with impunity' (aka 'You hit me I'll hit you back'). Motto for the Order of the Thistle, a Scottish chivalric order (originally associated with knights), and also on the Scottish royal coat of arms. The Black Watch is both a Scottish regiment and a royal regiment.

## **Pre-Visit Activity: Thinking about Museums**

### **Guiding Questions**

Discuss the following questions as a class:

1. What is a Museum? Who has been to one before?
2. Why is it important to study the First World War?
3. What do Museums have that you can't get online or in a book?
4. How will visiting a Museum help us learn about the First World War?
5. What questions might you like to ask during your visit to The Black Watch Museum?

## **Pre-Visit Activity: The First World War**

### ***The First World War: Introduction***

We strongly recommend that your class has a solid introduction to the First World War before their visit to The Black Watch Castle and Museum. The activities we will lead at the Museum will focus on the objects in the collection and the experience of Black Watch soldiers. Pupils will benefit much more if they already have a basic understanding of the War.

### **Maps**

This activity will help pupils become familiar with where Black Watch soldiers were fighting during the First World War.

1. Find classroom or on-line maps of Europe and Asia during the First World War
2. Identify the Western Front, Mesopotamia and Salonika. These were the three fronts The Black Watch was fighting in.

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**APPENDIX A: The Badge of The Black Watch**

