

History:

First World War - Lesson 4 (Usefulness and reliability of the evidence)

Overview

A study of First World War evidence – considering whether unreliable sources can still be useful.





Purpose

To investigate First World War evidence which may be biased or inaccurate.

Objectives

To explain how unreliable evidence can still be useful to historians.

Lesson plan

Activity	Time	Resources	Outcomes
Look at sources and find one fact and one opinion about each one.	 15 min	Extracts from Batty Diaries, Extracts from 'Little People's Book of the War', Cigarette cards.	One fact and one opinion recorded for each source.
Questions about which sources are most useful and most reliable.	 15 min	As above.	Completed table.
Answer question 'Can an unreliable source be useful?'	 15 min	As above.	Question answered, with explanation and reference to sources.
Select just one of these sources for a museum display.	 15 min	As above.	Source selected with justification based on assessment of usefulness and reliability.

Additional Activities

For lessons longer than an hour or for extension activities to continue the theme into another lesson or homework, the following ideas may be useful.

Activity 1

Following on from the final activity (above), write a display card to accompany the source in a museum exhibition, explaining the importance of the source and what we can learn from it.

Activity 2

Looking at the extracts from the 'Little People's Book of the War', re-write one of the passages as it might read in a German book for the young people in that country.