

**National Service Remembered**

**English**

**National Curriculum KS2**



# Overview

Below is a suggested lesson plan to support National Curriculum learning for English using our 'National Service Remembered' resource pack.

The PowerPoint presentation introduces students to National Service, beginning with an overview of what National Service was and the kind of experiences that all conscripts shared. Following this, a trailer for the entire project provides a more visual introduction to National Service.

The PowerPoint also contains an excerpt from one of the conscripts we have interviewed, which gives further context to the period. Including clear written text, alongside oral history segments within first person narrative, this offers pupils two different styles of language to reflect on.

## SUGGESTED LESSON PLAN

### Slide 1 to 5 (Introduction)

We suggest that these slides be read to the class by the teacher.

### Slide 3

"The term 'National Service' comes from the United Kingdom's National Service (Armed Forces) Act from 1939. National Service means that you have to sign up to government service, usually within the military. Signing up for National Service is also known as 'conscript'."

"After the Second World War, the young men of Britain were needed. In 1947, the National Service Act was brought into force. This Act meant that all healthy men from 17 to 30 years old were required to serve in the armed forces for 18 months, and remain on the reserve list for 4 years. Men were only exempt from National Service if they worked in one of the three 'essential services', or if they had health issues."

### Slide 4

"All National Service conscripts were asked to attend medical assessments, after which they were sent for 6 weeks of basic training in the British Army. Once the conscripts arrived at their training base, they were issued with their uniform and equipment, and training could begin."

After basic training, National Service conscripts served in a variety of roles across the Armed Forces and, as well as serving at home, many Servicemen were posted to one of Britain's many garrisons around the world. An overseas posting also often meant that the conscripts saw active service."

## Slide 5

The trailer for the 'National Service Remembered' project can now be played.

## Slide 6 (Task)

National Service learning:

### SPEAKING

1. WARM UP 1: What is National Service? Think of two things you know about it and tell your desk partner.
2. WARM UP 2: Fun Tongue Twister (*Repeat until it becomes gibberish!*)

*"Sister Susie's sewing socks for soldiers. How many socks does sister Susie sew?"*

### LISTENING

#### Retrieval/writing

The teacher will re-read the first text slowly to the class without the PowerPoint aid. The pupils will then note down three things they know about National Service.

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Task: Note down three things that you know about National Service. Don't forget to write them out neatly!

## Slide 7 (Task)

### READING

Students could take turns to read the excerpt from Miles Anderson aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

*Miles Anderson – ‘It was 66 years ago that I went down to Cardington with my government supplied rail ticket in September 1954, I was to serve my National Service in the RAF. On arrival at Cardington, we were kitted out, issued with all the necessary equipment and after a brief touching base were bussed to out ‘Square Bashing’ camps.*

*We were billeted in a hut with probably 18/20 young men, each allocated a bed, bedding, a small cupboard and small wardrobe or place where uniforms could be hung out of sight. There were two solid stoves, one at each end of the hut to provide warmth.*

*From then on it was all spit and polish, discipline, regimentation and drill. Our mornings, after breakfast, were a succession of drill, physical exercise, weapon training and lectures. At each occasion we had to change from one set of clothes into another one, and all ‘at the double’ of course, and everything back in the billet had to be left in immaculate order. I learnt discipline, to fit in and get on with people who came from a wide variety of backgrounds, and how to keep a low profile when necessary.’*

### SPEAKING & UNDERSTANDING

1. Teacher to review and explain any new words and discuss meaning in context. Students can check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.
2. Students should look through the text with the teacher and consider the following things:
  - a) Was this an easy or difficult text to understand?
  - b) Which did you enjoy listening to more: the factual summary of National Service or the testimonial account of a conscripts experience?

## Slide 8 (Task)

### UNDERSTANDING & WRITING (task)

We have suggested two writing tasks, one factual and one creative:

1) Write a postcard home

Remember to first think about where you are writing from, maybe your first Army Barracks? What is it like? How are you feeling?

Students could use our postcards as inspiration for their own.

2) Write a summary piece

Note three reasons to do National Service and three reasons not to do National Service.

## Slides 9 to 13 (Finish)

### NATIONAL SERVICE MEDIA

Chose a video and a song to share with the class. We have added two of each for you to choose from. Please see times for each item below to help you plan.

Michael Wilkinson Video: 12 minutes 37 seconds

John Creswell Video: 7 minutes 49 seconds

'This is the Army, Mr Jones': 2 minutes 15 seconds

'If I give my heart to you' 2 minutes 47 seconds

Finally, there is also a great video that was created by Blue Peter and features Matt Baker from the One Show. This video is 8 minutes 45 seconds.