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Interacting with Anzac Day Picture Books



Every year schools and communities commemorate Anzac Day on 25 April. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War. Over time the meaning of the day has evolved to include those who lost their lives in all military and peacekeeping operations in which Australia has been involved.

One way to commemorate Anzac Day is through engaging with a range of literature. Before interacting with students, read books several times to decide if they are appropriate for their age and experiences. Consider how you might select a group of books and the sequence to read them in as some will provide background knowledge for other books. A carefully chosen selection may present different reactions to similar experiences or diversity of groups or individuals.

[Explore a list of picture books](#) related to Anzac Day.

Supporting interactions with Anzac Day texts

When interacting with literature related to Anzac Day:

- tap into or provide necessary background or cultural knowledge
- display images or play videos related to the subject matter
- locate Anzac Day on the calendar
- display a large world map and timeline
- discuss the acronym ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps).

Questions for interacting with students and texts

The following questions may be useful when discussing picture books related to Anzac Day. Many of these questions can be posed before, during and/or after reading. Always encourage justification of responses with reference to the text and the experiences of students.

- What is the purpose of the book?
- What age group is the book aimed at?
- When and in which country was the book published?
- What might have motivated the author to write the book?
- What might have motivated the publisher to publish the book?
- Is the book fiction or non-fiction?
- If the book is fiction, is it based on historical facts?
- Does the book contain additional information about its context? If so, what is the effect?
- Are the events based on events that occurred during or after war?

- What is the setting of time and place?
- What is the particular time frame covered by the book, eg. an hour, a day, years etc.? How do you know?
- Are flashbacks used in the book? If so, why?
- Is the book about World War I and Gallipoli or another war?
- Does the author/illustrator have a relationship or connection with characters or events in the book?
- What is the role of words and images in the book? Do they tell the same story throughout?
- How does the author/illustrator want you to feel or respond?
- Does the book connect to remembrance services in the community?
- Whose voice is the story told through?
- Are there any gaps in the book?
- Who is or isn't represented in the book?
- Are any symbols evident throughout the book?
- Can anything be contested or questioned?
- What messages are given about war? Do you agree?
- What connections can you make with other books/texts?
- Who would you recommend the book to and why?



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