

# The Iraq War play challenge

## Teachers notes

### The big question

How do conflicts affect communities?

### Level

Second and Third

### Significant aspect of learning

Develop useful skills for learning, life and work. **SOC**

Talking. **LIT**

### Experiences and outcomes

My learning in, through and about the expressive arts, allows me to develop skills and techniques that are relevant to specific art forms and across the four capacities. **EXA OA**

I have experimented with a range of media and technologies to create images and objects, using my understanding of their properties. **EXA 3-02a**

Having developed ideas from a range of stimuli, I can contribute to devising, rehearsing and presenting drama or scripts. **EXA 3-14a**

I can use my voice, musical instruments or music technology to improvise or compose with melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre and structure. **EXA 3-17a**

Using what I know about the features of different types of texts, I can select ideas and relevant information from a variety of sources, organise these in an appropriate way for my purpose and use suitable vocabulary for my audience. **LIT 2-06a, LIT 2-14a & LIT 2-26a**

I can:

- discuss and evaluate the structure, characterisation and/or setting using some supporting evidence;
- identify the main theme of the text and recognise the relevance this has to my own and others' experiences;
- identify and comment on aspects of the writer's style and other features appropriate to genre using some relevant evidence.

**ENG 3-19a**

Having explored the elements which writers use, I can create texts in different genres by:

- integrating the conventions of my chosen genre successfully and/or
- using convincing and appropriate structures and/or
- creating interesting and convincing characters and/or
- building convincing settings which come to life.

**ENG 3-31a**

I enhance my learning by applying my ICT skills in different learning contexts across the curriculum. **TCH 3-04a**

## The Iraq War play challenge

By using problem-solving strategies and showing creativity in a design challenge, I can plan, develop, make and evaluate food or textile items or the production of an item, which meet needs at home or in the world of work. **TCH 3-11a & TCH 3 -14a**

Learning in the social studies will enable me to learn how to locate, explore and link periods, people and events in time and place. **SOC OA**

Through researching, I can identify possible causes of a past conflict and report on the impact it has had on the lives of people at that time. **SOC 3-06b**

Having considered responses to a recent international crisis, I can contribute to a discussion of the effectiveness of the responses. **SOC 3-19b**

### **Additional resources**

The National Theatre of Scotland's 'Black Watch' by Gregory Burke (2007).

# The Iraq War play challenge

## Introduction

Drama, English and History departments have always forged close links in schools. In schools where no drama department exists English and History teachers often bridge the gap. This activity gives students the chance to explore recent events, emotions and exploration in a drama-based setting. It also allows for a number of other subjects to become involved in such a production.

This challenge can be used as a small scale event which is produced and staged in the classroom or the event can be part of a much larger challenge which culminates in a school production.

## Sources of information

Soldiers of the First World War and Second World War left many letters which act as a starting point for historians and researchers. However, more modern conflicts have seen many servicemen and women take on a more modern approach to recording their experiences. Internet blogs and YouTube have a number of such recordings and are worth looking at with students (teacher guidance in this area is useful and refers to local authority internet access guidelines).

## Cross-curricular

This activity also allows for a number of subjects to become involved.

Some examples:

- Art - background, props, costume design;
- Craft, Design and Technology – props;
- IT/Computing - research, lighting;
- Music - vital to this play;
- History/English - research, writing of scripts;
- English - a study of Black Watch and other war literature and plays with a comparison between them. Themes that emerge from plays;
- Modern Studies - issues of The Iraq War are ongoing today. Examine another country – Iraq;
- Geography - location of Gulf. Examine another country – Iraq;
- Mathematics - maths in the logistics of The Iraq War. Maths in the production of a theatre production - profits/expenditure;
- Home Economics - catering for pre and post theatre events (in Black Watch there was no break however your production may wish to have a break as an enterprising hospitality event).

## Your challenge

In 2007 the National Theatre of Scotland launched a play about Scottish soldiers in the Iraq War. The play is set in a Scottish bar, in the back of a Warrior Armoured Personal Carrier, and at a British Army camp in Iraq. Since its launch, Black Watch (the play) has been a huge success and has toured all over the world.

# The Iraq War play challenge

Your task is to write and stage a play about soldiers from your area who fought in The Iraq War.

- Think about characters.
- Think about the balance of scenes between battle front and home front. The play should be split exactly half and half. It should also look at how The Iraq War is affecting Scottish communities.
- Think about settings.
- Think about plots/stories from The Iraq War.
- Work in groups of no more than six.
- Produce a play with props, script and settings.
- Allocate jobs (researchers, script writers, prop makers, actors/actresses).

## **Make use of the following resources:**

- The school library;
- Adults in the school and at home;
- The media;
- Veterans in your local community;
- The internet (your teacher will give you list of good sites).

## **Rules**

- Everyone participates in the production.
- Work within the timescales provided.
- Meet the product criteria - have you done what you were asked to do?

# The Iraq War play challenge

## Notes, poetry and quotes about The Iraq War

### Helpful websites & clips

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-21849016](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-21849016)

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/4665620.stm>

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-36714221](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-36714221)

[www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/culturenews/8455677/Modern-war-poetry-British-soldiers-explore-Afghanistan-and-Iraq-wars-in-verse.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/culturenews/8455677/Modern-war-poetry-British-soldiers-explore-Afghanistan-and-Iraq-wars-in-verse.html)

### Background

The Iraq War began in 2003. It was a war fought by the United States, the United Kingdom and many other countries against Iraq, to end the rule of Saddam Hussein.

The main reason that the war started was because the British and American governments believed that Iraq had dangerous weapons of mass destruction (such as chemical or nuclear weapons) that could be used against other countries.

Another reason for the start of the war was that many people thought that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, one of the leaders of al-Qaeda, was hiding in Iraq after the September 11, 2001 attacks. Though Saddam Hussein was not involved in the planning of the September 11 attacks, many people accused him of giving al-Qaeda a safe place to hide from the United States.

4,734 NATO soldiers were killed in Iraq war including 4,416 U.S. servicemen, 179 UK servicemen and 139 Other NATO soldiers. 31,882 U.S. servicemen and over 3,600 UK servicemen were wounded in Iraq. More than 100,000 Iraqi civilians who were not soldiers were also killed.

### Modern soldiers

Colin Mitchell, from Liverpool, is a Corporal who joined the King's Regiment in 1990. The regiment became the 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's in 2006. His career has seen him on numerous tours of Northern Ireland and two tours of Iraq.

Speaking in the Telegraph newspaper on 11th April 2011, Corporate Colin Mitchell gives his thoughts on serving in Iraq:

"The reason I wrote... was because it was my way of coping with the situation at the time. I was in Iraq on Operation Telic 9 in 2006 and it was a very difficult tour at that time in Basra. Some people kept diaries but for some reason I started to write the poems, which I had not done since school a long time ago." Corporal Colin Mitchell.

In the same article in the Telegraph newspaper, 11th April 2011, other soldiers offer their accounts of serving in the British army:

### John Sinclair

John Sinclair, from Aberdeen, is a Warrant Officer in the 7 Scots Unit of the Territorial Army. He volunteered for a tour of Afghanistan and also served in Northern Ireland. He is married with three children.

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"I just felt I wanted to come out here and help. I wanted to do my bit. I felt we could make a difference and I think we have. I write a bit and Afghanistan has certainly given me lots of material. There have been some quite harrowing things out here. But I also remember other moments, like when we did a "road move". Everywhere we stopped the children would come out and ask us for sweets." WO John Sinclair

### **Nathan Gunapalan**

Private Nathan Gunapalan has served with the Territorial Army for three years. He lives with his family in St Albans. Nathan completed a six-month tour of duty in Afghanistan in 2010, attached to The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

*"I hadn't experienced everything in war. I was on R&R [rest and recuperation] at Camp Bastion and one of the guys in the platoon had died. We had to go to his ceremony where his coffin was lifted onto a Hercules. I saw the reality of the situation, what actually happened. It hit me hard, seeing the way they lifted him onto the aircraft, seeing it fly off. Private Nathan Gunapalan.*

# The Iraq War play challenge

## Script planning sheet

Where will our play be set?

--

How many characters will there be?

--

What will happen in our short play?  
How will it start?

--

What will happen in the middle?

--

How will it end?

--

What props will we need?

--

Who will play each character?

--

**Now go ahead and write your script!**

# The Iraq War play challenge

## What progress have I made today?

Talking **SAL LIT**

### 2<sup>nd</sup> level

I can make and organise notes using my own words and headings to develop my own thinking and create new texts.

For example...

### 3<sup>rd</sup> level

I can make and organise notes using my own words and use these to develop my own thinking, explore other issues and create new texts.

For example...

### 4<sup>th</sup> level

I can make and organise notes using my own words and uses these to develop thinking, synthesise ideas and create new texts.

For example...

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## Peer marking exercise / self-assessment

### Tick all that apply

- I have experimented with a range of media and technologies to create images and objects, using my understanding of their properties. **EXA 3-02a**
- Having developed ideas from a range of stimuli, I can contribute to devising, rehearsing and presenting drama or scripts. **EXA 3-14a**
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- I enhance my learning by applying my ICT skills in different learning contexts across the curriculum. **CH 3-04a**
- By using problem-solving strategies and showing creativity in a design challenge, I can plan, develop, make and evaluate food or textile items or the production of an item, which meet needs at home or in the world of work. **TCH 3-11a & TCH 3-14a**
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