

# Veterans' Voices - Mary Sim

## Activities

### 1. Surprises, puzzles, similarities and settings

Before you watch the interview with Mary Sim:

<http://learning.poppyscotland.org.uk/veday75/vv-marysim/>

prepare to take notes. Divide your page into four headings:

**SURPRISES** – In this section note down anything that you find particularly interesting or surprising in Mary's story.

**PUZZLES** – in this section, note down anything you don't understand or doesn't really make sense to you. Do you have any questions about what he has said? Are there any words that you don't understand?

**SIMILARITIES** – does any part of Mary's story remind you of anything? A book or a poem you might have read or a film you might have watched.

**DIFFERENCES** – how does Mary's story differ from other people's stories about the war or from what you have read in books or seen in films?

Once you have watched the film, discuss it with others who watched the film with you.

Note: the transcription of Mary's interview will help you to remember the details of the story she told. The glossary at the bottom of the transcription will help you to understand some of the words she uses.

### 2. Finding out more about Mary's story

Read the Teacher's Notes that provide background information and useful links about the topics Mary mentions in her interview.

How does having background information about the period of history that Mary is talking about, help you to understand her story?

What information did you find most interesting and why?

Why do you think it important is it to record interviews with people who were in the war?

3. **Write a day in Mary's diary**

Select one of the events that Mary describes in her interview and write a diary entry to describe in detail what you imagine happened and how she felt about it.

4. **Write a letter from Mary to her mother.**

From the stories she tells and the way she tells them, what kind of person do you think the young Mary would have been like? What kind of things do you imagine that she would want to tell her mother about her new life in the Forces? What stories would she be able to tell and what would she have to keep secret?

Keeping in mind the kind of person you think Mary was when she was young, write a letter from Mary to her mother and include at least some of the information she mentions in her interview.

If you have access to a video recording or audio recording device, record yourself reading out your letter.

5. **Improvise a monologue or a dialogue**

Improvise a monologue or dialogue for Mary and/or one of the people she mentions in her interview. For example:

Monologue for Mary trying to decide whether or not to volunteer to join up.

Dialogue between Mary and her mother when she tells her family that she has joined up.

Monologue for Mary when she realises that she is not in Bomber Command.

Dialogue between Mary and her friend and/or the wounded soldiers they took out for tea.

Once you have rehearsed your scene, either perform it for your class or video record it.

6. **Celebrate and commemorate VE Day** on the 8 May or **VJ Day** on the 15 August. This could be something as big as a street party or school party or something as simple as making an extra effort to be kind to others.