

TAKE A VIEW ON THE ARMY

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EDUCATION RESOURCES

to develop critical thinking about the
role of the British Army in society



TEACHER NOTES



WELCOME TO TAKE A VIEW ON THE ARMY

Take a view on the Army is an engaging, topical and relevant Citizenship-based education programme that helps develop critical thinking about the role of the British Army and the impact it has on society both in Britain and the wider world.

Aimed at 11-14 year old students, the centrepiece is a thought-provoking film to trigger discussion, followed by debate and extended writing ideas to promote learning.



Why incorporate it into your teaching?

Today, Britain has a professional Army in times of peace as well as war. Parliament might alter its size or even what it does, but the principle that the Army is a tool of the people does not change. The government we elect regulates the Army according to varying social and political needs, decisions about international security and our own safety.

But the UK doesn't have to have an Army. There are more than 20 countries in the world who choose not to have one. Or it doesn't have to have the type of Army that it has. For example, countries with no formal militaries may still have some form of security service to deal with internal threats. Others may have trained teams or units that participate in international peacekeeping missions.

So should we have an Army and, if so, what should it be doing? Before we can question something completely, it needs to be interrogated and understood. The Army is no exception and that's where Take a view on the Army fits in. From a neutral and balanced standpoint, it provides engaging film content and debate ideas to help students form and deconstruct their own opinions and those of others.

HOW DOES IT SUPPORT THE CURRICULUM?



Take a view on the Army has a strong Citizenship and PSHE focus, however, its citizenship dimensions can also be delivered through other subjects such as History and English or as part of a suspended day of learning.

The topical and relevant nature of the content aims to capture students' interest, stimulating them to explore social and political issues critically, weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments.



HOW CAN I USE THE RESOURCES?

1: Play the film

The centrepiece is a short thought-provoking film, which can be played out in full or by chapter.



Play the film

Chapter 1: Take a view on the Army's role

Explores what the Army does and why, from fighting in sometimes contentious conflicts to the specialist support and skills it can provide.

Chapter 2: Take a view on soldiers

Takes a look at the real people performing a soldier's tasks, their reasons for joining and the lasting impact it can have on their lives.

Chapter 3: Take a view on society's relationship with the Army

Considers society's opinions of the Army, its operations and the soldiers who serve in it, and how and why society's attitudes fluctuate.

Paintings, photos, oral histories, film and other items of historical significance from the National Army Museum's collection bring the subject matter to life.





2: Set the debate question

Questions for debate have been provided by chapter.

For example:

Chapter: Take a view on society's relationship with the Army



Set the debate

Suggested questions for debate:

- 1 Poppy with pride or poppy with pressure?
- 2 Given that soldiers know what they are getting into when they join the Army, should they get preferential treatment from the government and society?

Each question is detailed and supported by a short PowerPoint presentation that introduces the debate and provides further background information to supplement the content covered in the film. You can adapt the slides as necessary.

You can opt to run your classroom debates using the questions provided or you may choose to select others that appear within the film. There's no right or wrong way – the idea is to decide on the ones that best suit your learning outcomes, your class, or that you are simply most comfortable with.

On pages 4-6 we have provided an overarching framework that can be used for your debates that includes:

Lesson 1: Planning for the debate

Lesson 2: The debate

If you prefer, the questions can be set as extended writing exercises with students making reasoned arguments through their written work instead.

In other words, you can incorporate Take a view on the Army into your plans in a way that suits you and your students best.

IT'S A FLEXIBLE PROGRAMME...



You may choose, for example, to:

- ➔ Play the film in full and run one debate across two lessons
- ➔ Run a debate relevant to each chapter of the film and deliver it as a whole scheme of work over a six-week block
- ➔ Set a question as an extended writing task
- ➔ Write your own debate question that integrates a current event or news story
- ➔ Select your own approach



HOW COULD I RUN MY CLASSROOM DEBATES?

We have provided a two lesson framework that can be used to help organise your classroom debates. However, debates are adaptable, therefore use the suggested framework as guidance rather than feeling restricted by it in any way.

Lesson 1: Planning for the debate

Play the film - either in full, or the selected chapter(s).

Kick-start the discussion by capturing students' reactions to the film

- What are their immediate thoughts/reactions/opinions?
- Why do they think that?
- Can they elaborate further?
- What might be the opposite opinion to the one they have?
- Do they know anyone who has served/serves in the Army?
- If yes, what do they know about their experiences?
- What questions do they still have?

Introduce the question for debate and to keep students focussed on the task, encourage them to use a simple continuum line during their preparation for on-going self-assessment purposes.



Learning

I know nothing of this topic

I believe I know a great deal about this topic



By asking them to feedback, as a class, at certain times of their debate preparation, you will be able to gauge understanding and re-direct those who are struggling or in need of extension tasks.

Take a vote before any debate work takes place. Will the debates change their mind?



HOW COULD I RUN MY CLASSROOM DEBATES?



Use the PowerPoint slides to provide further context around the debate topic.

Split the class into groups. Every debate has at least two sides so divide the groups to allow for half to argue one side, and the other to take on the opposing view. Alternatively, students could choose their own stance and groups could be formed in that way.

Group brainstorms take place to develop arguments for their position.

Key ideas are captured by each group. They should aim to have 3-6 important points. For each, they should:

- State the main idea or argument
- Explain why they feel their idea or argument is correct
- Provide an example/scenario to illustrate the point further.

Students could visit the Online Collection of the National Army Museum - nam.ac.uk - to find relevant examples that support their position.



A debate sheet has been provided to help groups capture their main ideas and structure their speeches.

Speakers are assigned. Each group agrees on two main speakers who divide up the main points. A third speaker can be responsible for summarising their position. If you would like everyone to have the chance to be a speaker, each student in the group could be asked to take one point (if there are enough to be shared in this way). Alternatively, if you are planning to run more than one debate, those who aren't speakers can be allotted the role next time around.



Homework

Homework should be set for group members to do any further research and work to strengthen their arguments and prepare speeches. The Online Collection at nam.ac.uk could again help with this.



HOW COULD I RUN MY CLASSROOM DEBATES?



Lesson 2: Running the debate

Students regroup after doing further research to fine-tune their points and polish up their speeches.

Debate Dos

Develop a list of Debate Dos

with the class. They could include:

- Be polite and courteous
- Listen attentively
- Be respectful and supportive of peers
- Avoid inappropriate noises
- Allow others to express their opinions
- Do not monopolise the debate
- Speak clearly, slowly and loud enough to be heard by the audience
- Speak with passion and excitement



Suggested debate format:

Speakers can take it in turns to present arguments, and respond the other side.

For example, the following debate format could be used:

FOR: Opening statements by Speaker 1

AGAINST: Opening statements by Speaker 1

FOR: Speaker 2 expands on their group's ideas

AGAINST: Speaker 2 expands on their group's ideas

Questions and rebuttals for all to participate

FOR: Speaker 3 summarises their position

AGAINST: Speaker 3 summarises their position

Take the vote again and see if the debates have changed anybody's mind and why.

It's time to review and evaluate now the debate is over. As homework, students can express their reactions to the debate in a medium of their choice. Some suggestions have been provided here.

Writing

They summarise the debate in a social media post, blog or newspaper report.

Design

They create a poster or cartoon that represents their opinion.

Performance

They present a TV news piece or devise a song in a style of their choice.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

The National Army Museum tells the story of the British Army and the personal experiences of the soldiers who have served in it. We aim to inspire, challenge and educate through our learning resources and website, or a visit to the Museum itself. We know that many different people will interpret the information that we provide in diverse ways. We recognise that while many people in Britain and beyond will support some of the actions of the British Army in the past, today, and in the future, others will disagree with these actions. Our aim is to provide material that may help others form their own opinions.



We would love to hear from you

We understand you are busy but if you can spare a few minutes we would love to hear what you think about Take a view on the Army. How have you used the resources with your students and what could we do to improve them in the future?

Send us a message to learning@nam.ac.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.



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DEBATE SHEET

Opinion

State your main idea or argument:

Explain why you feel your idea or argument is correct and provide an example to illustrate the point further

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