

Topic 6: Life on the home front

Work Sheet 6C: Using 'Anzac': Source Study

These three sources are from World War II. They will help you to understand the impact of the war on people on the home front and the early development of the Anzac legend.

The following source has been downloaded from: www.anzacsite.gov.au/1landing/bartlett.html. It has been reprinted from *The Town and Country Journal*, 12 May 1915.

Source 1: The Australians' Splendid Beginning



Collection of the State Library of NSW

Mr Ashmead-Bartlett's graphic account of the glorious deeds of Australians in the Gallipoli Peninsula has sent a thrill of pride throughout the whole Commonwealth. It was a great achievement to land in the dark on a coast where the enemy's strength was unknown, and, having driven the Turks back, to hold the country firmly, while reinforcements followed. Every one of those who are taking part in the action against the Turks will appreciate the words of General Birdwood, who said he could not sufficiently praise their courage, endurance, and soldierly qualities. Though the list of casualties has brought grief to many homes, there is consolation in the thought that all our men at the front are fighting gloriously for the defence of the Empire. Many more thousands of young men are giving their services, and in course of time will join their comrades in the battle line. And in the coming years the memory of all those who fought in the greatest war the world has ever seen, and in the severest crisis through which the Empire has ever passed, will be handed down from generation to generation with pardonable pride.

Questions

- 1 What roles did Ashmead-Bartlett and General Birdwood play in the Gallipoli campaign?
- 2 Do you think this is an accurate account of the soldiers' 'achievements' in the first weeks of the Gallipoli campaign?
- 3 What aspects of the fighting/soldiers' experiences of battle, are not mentioned in this article? Suggest reasons why they are not mentioned.
- 4 What qualities of the soldiers are mentioned that have come to be associated with the word 'Anzac'?
- 5 What are the feelings and thoughts that the article is intended to arouse in Australians at home reading it? Underline the words and phrases that you think are most likely to stir the readers' emotions.
- 6 Do you think the prediction about the significance of the fighting at Gallipoli has been proved true in the 90 years since the Gallipoli campaign?
- 7 How might the ideas expressed in this article have inspired the writer of the article in *Source 2*?

Source 2: Anzac Christmas Card



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This Christmas card was designed during 1916.

Questions

- 1 Who is the seated female figure on the left intended to represent?
- 2 Who does the male figure represent?
- 3 What is the woman doing? What is the significance of her action?
- 4 What message about 'Anzac' does the card convey?
- 5 How does the message in this card illustrate the ideas presented in the journal article in *Source 1*?
- 6 What does the card reveal about the significance of the word 'Anzac' in 1916?

Source 3: 'A National Heirloom'

In this undated newspaper article a member of the public expresses their concern about the use of the word 'Anzac'. Read the article and discuss your answers to the questions that follow.

DAY BY DAY.

The Acting Attorney-General, Mr. Mahon, has done the right thing in reserving the word "Anzac" as a national heirloom by refusing applications to register it for trade purposes. We do not want the Anzac Hotel in every town of the Commonwealth, where its sign board would inevitably arise but for the Minister's prohibition. The Anzac Liver Pill would have been a sordid certainty, and the Anzac brand of tea would rise up and perpetuate the referendum fight with Anzac whisky. Fortunately we are to be spared all this vulgar bill posting on the monument "more durable than brass" that Australian valor has raised at such awful cost. But the naming of children is another question. Unfortunately, the persons who will have to bear the name of Anzac have no say in the matter. A question has already arisen as to whether Anzac is a more appropriate name for a girl or a boy, and probably both sexes will have to bear the burden of it. This the Government need not interfere with, but it has power to refuse registration of the name as a trade mark or sign of any kind, and by exercising that power the enterprising salesman who might otherwise secure a monopoly of the use of the word will be very properly blocked. The word Anzac is coined out of material more precious than gold, and it is a coinage which no one should be allowed to debase.

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Questions

- 1 What is an 'heirloom'? Why does the writer refer to the word 'Anzac' as a 'national heirloom'?
- 2 Why does the writer agree that Mr Mahon 'has done the right thing' in refusing applications to use the word 'Anzac'?
- 3 Give two examples the writer uses to show how the word 'Anzac' might be exploited for trade purposes.
- 4 What is 'the monument more durable than brass' to which the writer refers?
- 5 What event of World War I might the writer be referring to in speaking of the 'awful cost' that has raised this monument?
- 6 Why does the writer not object to the use of the word 'Anzac' for naming children?
- 7 Explain the meaning of the last sentence in your own words. Do you think the image of the coin is an appropriate one?
- 8 This letter from the World War I period has no date. In what year do you think it was most likely to have been written?
- 9 Would most Australians today support the sentiments (ideas and feelings) expressed in this article? Give a reason for your answer.
- 10 Can you think of other examples of national heirlooms that are important to Australians today?

Glossary

heirloom – a family possession passed down from generation to generation

prohibition – a law banning certain activities

vulgar – in poor taste

durable – long lasting

valor (also valour) – courage

enterprising – bold or energetic in carrying out new projects

monopoly – exclusive right to conduct a trade or service

debase – to reduce in quality or value