

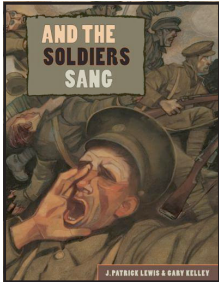


CRUCHLEY'S COLLECTION

Diana Cruchley is an award-winning educator and author, who has taught at elementary and secondary levels. Her workshops are practical, include detailed handouts, and are always enthusiastically received.

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AND THE SOLDIERS SANG

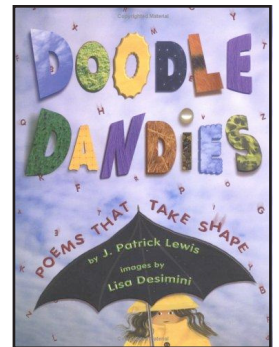
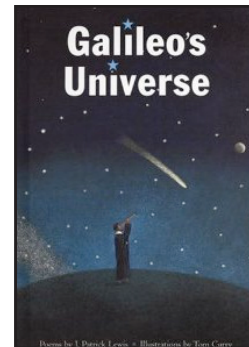
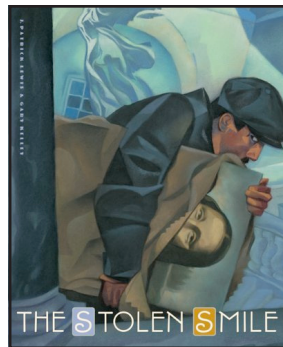


J. Patrick Lewis and
Gary Kelley, Creative
Publications, ©2011,
978-1-56846-220-2

A gorgeous moving story of the Christmas truce during World War I, when both sides left the trenches, sang carols together, exchanged gifts, shook hands, and then went back to killing each other.

PATRICK LEWIS

Patrick Lewis has written over 70 children's books among them *Galileo's World* which is a pop-book of his work and time, *The Stolen Smile* which is a non-fiction book about the actual theft of the Mona Lisa, and *Doodle Dandies* which is a book of clever and simple concrete poems.



LIFE IN THE TRENCHES

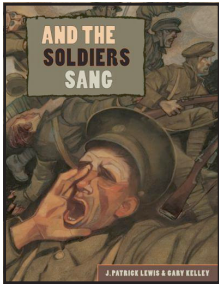
And the Soldiers Sang introduces many of the elements that made trench warfare so ghastly. It includes the mud - where trenches could fill with water and actually drown exhausted troops, the lice, and the continuous noise of the bombing. It doesn't mention the food - which mostly consisted of tinned bully beef, 1 loaf of bread for 10 men, cheese (although that caused constipation), and emergency biscuits. The water was chlorinated and had a dreadful taste - most men tried to collect rain water. That and the diseases - cholera, typhus, dysentery, measles, shell shock, and influenza, plus trench foot (where your foot from being always wet could swell to three times its normal size and perhaps even cause amputation) or gangrene. This creates a wonderful setting for the magic moment when everyone put down their weapons for just a few hours to celebrate Christmas together.

Two things seemed to have started it. One was that the Germans lit candles on trees to create Christmas trees. Then the Germans sang *Stille Nacht (Silent Night)*. Soon everyone left the trenches to celebrate together. In this story, one soldier sings back *Noel* - although that isn't in the history books.

PRINCESS MARY'S GIFT



It's just a few lines in the story of where Princess Mary, the daughter of George V, sent them a box with some supplies in it but the story behind it is very moving. Princess Mary was 17 at the time, and she wanted to send a gift to all the troops at Christmas - she had thought to do it out of her allowance. A campaign for donations was launched which raised about 165,000 pounds - a lot of money then. Each soldier received an embossed brass box. Boxes were tailored for the soldier's needs. Smokers received a lighter, a pipe, 1 oz of tobacco, and 20 cigarettes. Non-smokers received acid tablets and a khaki writing case with a pencil, paper, envelopes, a Christmas card, and a picture of the princess. Gurkhas, Sikhs, and other soldiers from the far flung British Empire received specialized packets as well.



AND THE SOLDIERS SANG, CONT.

WORLD WAR I SONGS

If you Google *World War I Songs* and click *World War One Music and Songs* you can find a really good film portraying the moment shown in this book when the Germans sang *Stille Nacht* and the war stopped. Terrific to show the students.

Other songs of World War I are sung on this website as well. This site is a great resource.

JOURNAL IDEAS

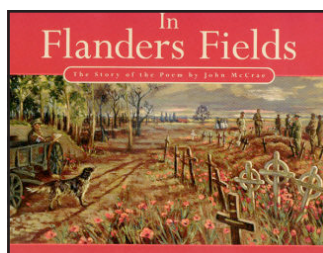
Students have absolutely no experience to draw from that would not be disrespectful of these soldiers and what they went through in this horrific war, slaughtering millions upon millions for absolutely no reason at all - unless we can thank the “military industrial complex” and the “sheer unadulterated criminal and heartless stupidity of command.”

The best poem to come out of the war is undoubtedly *Dulce et Decorum Est* - but perhaps too difficult for intermediate students.

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

Canadian John McRae wrote *In Flanders Fields*. This is a great poem to memorize because it is perhaps the most quoted poem of the war, it is Canadian, and it is a good sample to show how easy it is to memorize a poem. It's very moving, very stirring.

The line I find most difficult is “*Take up our quarrel with the foe.*” From the long viewpoint of history, and indeed of this book, there was no “foe”.



REMEMBRANCE DAY

11th minute, 11th day, 11th month - World War I ended. The War to End All Wars. That is the day that is celebrated in Remembrance Day - although now it has been so changed by remembering the dead of other wars, that most students would not even know why or how the date started. This could be a valuable book to add to your collection of Remembrance Day books.

INFLUENZA

Immediately after the war, there was a world wide influenza epidemic. It probably originated in China but was called the Spanish flu or La Grippe. It was probably spread around the world by troops returning home. Remember that germ theory itself was new, and there were as yet no wonder drugs such as penicillin (1928). As a result, 20 - 40 million people died world wide - more than from The Black Death. Approximately 1 out of every 5 people who got it died.

A macabre skipping song of 1918 was:

I had a little bird
Its name was Enza
I opened the window
And in-flu-enza

TIPS FOR MEMORIZING EFFECTIVELY

- Consider its meaning and structure - you should see it like a movie.
- What is its shape? How many lines? How does it rhyme?
- Create physical movements - act it out.
- Memorize each part separately.
- Involve your senses - write it, shout it, cry it, laugh it, hear it.
- Practise starts AFTER you learn it. Repeat at intervals, up to 11 times.