

A Soldier, A Dog and A Boy

By Libby Hathorn & Illustrated by Phil Lesnie

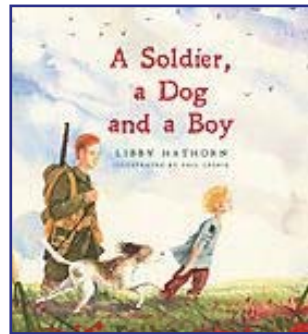
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**PICTURE BOOK OF
THE MONTH**

A moving story, told completely in dialogue, about a young Australian soldier in the battle of the Somme. Walking through the fields away from the front, he finds what he thinks is a stray dog, and decides to adopt it as a mascot for his company. Then he meets Jacques, the homeless orphan boy who owns the dog. The soldier realises that Jacques needs the dog more - and perhaps needs his help as well. With stunning illustrations from Phil Lesnie, this is a deeply moving celebration of friendship in times of war. *A Soldier, A Dog and A Boy* was inspired by Libby Hathorn's months of research on her uncle, who survived Gallipoli but went on to fight at the Battle of the Somme and was killed there in 1917 at just twenty years old.



Teacher notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher, Hachette.

Themes:

- World War One
- Animals in War

Discussion Points and activities:

- After reading the story, have the students complete the attached quiz.
- The cover of a book is an important part of its message. What does this cover suggest to you about the book's content and emotional impact?
- Research World War One and in particular, the Battle of the Somme and the other battles fought on the Western Front.
- Discuss propaganda during war and how slogans were developed to encourage men and women to enlist.
- Research how the red poppy found at Flanders Fields has become a symbolic remembrance of war.
- There are several true stories about children who were adopted by troops during WWI. Study stories about these children and how they fared.
- Research and discuss the roles of animals in war as mascots, guides, sources of comfort, sentries and messengers. What other roles have animals or birds played in war?
- Discuss war in the context of Australia's history and society. What effect did World War One have on our nation's development?
- World War One claimed many lives and also much of the land where these battles were fought. How long did it take for the environment to recover?
- Study what role women played in World War One.
- Invite students to draw, paint or collage their own responses to this book and create a classroom mural using all the images.
- Make a red poppy. You may like to look at www.kidspot.com.au/things-to-do/activities/make-a-red-poppy

BM 2 QUIZ

These questions can each be answered by reading or interpreting the text of this picture book.

1. What is the soldier's name?

2. Why does the soldier want the dog?

3. What role does the soldier play in his company?

4. Where else has the soldier fought apart from at the Somme?

5. What name has the boy given the dog?

6. What does 'Bonne chance' mean?

7. Why is the boy alone?



8. How long has the war been going on for when the soldier meets the boy?

9. The hat worn by the soldier is typical of the uniform worn by the ANZACs. What is the colloquial name for the hat?

10. The fields in this book are covered with flowers. What sort of flowers are they and what do they symbolise?



Answers: 1. Albert. 2. His men need a mascot. 3. A mule driver. 4. Gallipoli. 5. Victoire. 6. Good luck. 7. He has been orphaned in war, and is afraid to go to an orphanage as they will not allow him to keep his dog there. 8. Three years. 9. Slouch hat. 10. The red poppy is symbolic of remembrance.

