

## ACTIVITY FOUR: ANALYSING ACCOUNTS

### Learning Objectives

- To learn to distinguish between statements of fact and opinion;
- To consider different accounts of the same event and discuss viewpoints within a text and across more than one text;
- To look at how evidence is used to make historical claims.

### Resources

Download Sheet of Reports of The Battle of Neuve Chapelle:

- British Report of the Battle of Neuve Chapelle 10-13 March 1915 by Count Charles de Souza
- German Report of the Battle of Neuve Chapelle 10-13 March 1915 by Margarete Munsterberg
- Report of The Battle Neuve Chapelle – Weekly Dispatch
- Neuve Chappelle from Heroes of the Great War by G A Leask

### MAIN TASKS

1. Read the different accounts of the 1915 Battle of Neuve Chapelle.
2. Although the language might be hard for some students, discuss the following.
  - a. Summarise the events from the different accounts and compare how well the actual facts match up.
  - b. Analyse the main difference of approach of each of the reports in terms of objectivity, factual information, use of language, for instance:
    - i. Count de Souza is quite factual and relatively objective.
    - ii. Munsterberg uses lots of emotive language about the enemy and is the most biased.
    - iii. The Weekly Dispatch is less formal and draws you into more personal stories.
    - iv. Leask's account is more lavish in description with a slightly more fictional slant.
  - c. How much do the different viewpoints influence you, the reader, in assessing what actually happened?
3. Using these sources and others you research, e.g. Wikipedia, write your own brief account of the battle. Choose a style to do this in, e.g. from the German viewpoint, a soldier/officer who was actually there, a reporter who had information passed on to him, but who heard about it rather than lived through it.

### Review

What have you learnt about the process of analysing different accounts of the same activity?

### Extension Activity

Bring in or look up 5 different newspaper reports of the same current event, ideally something controversial and compare the different accounts. Try and access papers from opposing political viewpoints so the range of reporting is quite varied.