

ACTIVITY FIVE: CREEPY CRAWLIES**Learning Objectives:**

ALL: Students will know about some of the infestations faced by soldiers in the trenches.

MOST: Students will be able to state the seven living processes and give an example of an organism that meets them.

SOME: Students will be able to discuss why the trenches were very effective as habitats for these organisms and how the soldiers try to get rid of them.

HSW:

Possible: Using IT to research organisms common in the trenches

Resources:

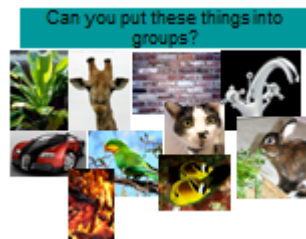
Information sheets/information hunt sheet/IT resources for research.

Paper and colours for fact-file at the end

STARTER

Put up pictures of different animals, insects, plants and non-living objects that students will be familiar with and ask them to group into different groups. Do not specify groupings unless they need an example.

E.g.;

**INTRODUCTION:**

If students have not classified between living and non-living try to use some questions to prompt them to discuss the differences between two easy examples e.g. the table they are sitting at and the person they are sitting near.

Introduce the seven living processes using a mnemonic (e.g. MRS GREN)

Movement

Respiration

Sensitivity

Growth

Reproduction

Excretion

Nutrition

Define each one and use a common example of a living organism (eg a common pet/pot plant you have to hand)

MAIN TASKS

Link to trenches with infestations of other living organisms:

Start with an easier example such as rats (some students may even have them as pets so may be very knowledgeable):

How do we know they are living organisms?

Refer back to MRS GREN with images if possible.

Extension: Students could start to be focussed about the trenches as a habitat (*a place which provides a food source and shelter*) for rats. What do rats eat? How did the trenches provide shelter for rats as well as humans?

Once the students are clear on this sort of example provide them with examples of smaller organisms that infested the trenches (could be in the form of *information sheets, an information hunt spread around the room or just the names and research using the internet*)

Example 1:

Lice – enlarged pictures are often good ways to show students quite how ‘alien’ these sorts of organisms can appear to us but they are living organisms as they follow the seven living processes.

Extension: Ask students why the numbers of lice could grow so large so quickly in the habitat of the trenches? Give some hints about how well they are suited to living in damp, warm conditions and their life span.

Example 2:

Micro-organisms: such as the bacterium [*Salmonella enterica*](#) that caused outbreaks of typhoid fever. If showing pictures of this bacterium it is useful to discuss how big they are (100 times smaller than a human hair) to get across quite how many there could be on a badly washed spoon.

Extension: (warning common spread is through bacterium from faeces transmitting into infected food) Inform students of method of transmission and ask students to think about what could be used to prevent this spread such as soap, boiling, separating water supplies etc.

REVIEW:

Students to complete a fact-file on one of the examples of organism explaining how we can prove that they are alive using MRS GREN (could use IT to find some really good pictures for this task)

Extension: Students should also include why the trenches were such a good habitat for this organism and how the soldiers tried to make it more difficult for them to survive.