

TOMMY

Teacher Pack

Things Left Behind

History • Evidence • Memory • Choices



A visually rich, ready-to-use resource pack for Upper Key Stage 2 and Lower Key Stage 3. Tommy's own photographs, documents and later recollections are used as starting points for historical enquiry.

PRIMARY FOCUS: HISTORY

WITH ENGLISH + PSHE

INSIDE THIS PACK

- 6 complete lesson plans in a standardised format
- Full-page printable worksheets - not reduced classroom thumbnails
- A4 archive source sheets using genuine family material
- Simplified 1915-16 route map: Ripon, Whitley Bay, Ypres, Delville Wood/The Somme
- Letter-writing template, source-analysis grids and memory/evidence work
- Website + QR-code workflow for Beyond the Story Shelf



THE TEACHING APPROACH

This is not a fixed scheme of work. Use one lesson, a short sequence or all six. The central question running through the pack is: what can a source tell us, what can we reasonably infer, and what should remain uncertain?

SOURCE RULES

- Evidence: what the source directly shows or says.
- Inference: a reasoned conclusion supported by evidence.
- Imagination: a plausible reconstruction used in storytelling.
- Where sources disagree, preserve the difference rather than smoothing it away.

AT A GLANCE

1	Who Was Tommy?	How can family sources help us reconstruct one young person's life?
2	Recruitment, Choices and Peer Pressure	What may have influenced Tommy's decision to enlist in 1915?
3	Tommy's Journey to War	Where did Tommy go, and what changed along the way?
4	Life in the Trenches	What do Tommy's recollections tell us about everyday trench life?
5	The Somme and Delville Wood	How can we teach a violent event without losing sight of the people invo...
6	Memory and Remembrance	How can a memory be valuable even when every detail cannot be checked?

SENSITIVE CONTENT

Chapters covering Delville Wood, injury and battlefield death are deliberately non-graphic, but teachers should preview extracts. Avoid role-play of injury or death. Keep the emphasis on people, evidence, choices, survival and remembrance.

Lesson 1: Who Was Tommy?

60 minutes

Key question **How can family sources help us reconstruct one young person's life?**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify information that a historical source directly provides.
- Distinguish observation from inference.
- Build a short chronological account from more than one source.

CURRICULUM + VOCABULARY

History enquiry | Local history | English: retrieval and explanation

archive • census • primary source • evidence • inference
• chronology

RESOURCES

- Tommy's Story
- Archive photographs
- Verified census image + transcript (when inserted)
- Worksheet 1: Archive Detective

STARTER · 10 min

Show Tommy's portrait without a caption. Pupils record only what they can see. For the first five minutes, no guessing is allowed.

TEACHER INPUT · 10 min Introduce the idea that every source was made for a reason. Model the difference between 'The source says...' and 'This may suggest...'.

MAIN ACTIVITY · 25 min Pairs examine the census source and one photograph. They complete the Archive Detective sheet, then write five evidence-based facts and one clearly-labelled inference.

ASSESS

Look for evidence-linked statements and careful use of inference language.

SUPPORT

Provide highlighted transcript lines and sentence stems. Allow spoken answers or paired scribing.

EXTEND

Write a 100-word museum label introducing Tommy using only evidence that can be sourced.

Lesson 2: Recruitment, Choices and Peer Pressure

60 minutes

Key question

What may have influenced Tommy's decision to enlist in 1915?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Use Tommy's later recollections as evidence about motivation.
- Recognise that choices can have several influences.
- Discuss group influence and peer pressure without assuming a single cause.

CURRICULUM + VOCABULARY

History | PSHE: influence and choices | English: balanced explanation

recruitment • enlist • influence • peer pressure • motivation • propaganda

RESOURCES

- Tommy's oral-history extract
- Worksheet 2: Evidence / Inference / Possibility
- Tommy's Story

STARTER • 10 min

Put this claim on the board: 'Tommy joined because his friends made him.' Ask: can we prove it?

TEACHER INPUT • 10 min

Tommy remembered a recruiting band and display, went with his friend Herbert, and also described himself as adventurous and anxious to see things for himself.

MAIN ACTIVITY • 25 min

Pupils sort statements into Evidence, Reasonable Inference and Cannot Yet Prove. They then write a balanced explanation using words such as may, might and suggests.

ASSESS

Check that pupils do not turn a possibility into a fact.

SUPPORT

Use pre-written sorting cards and sentence stems.

EXTEND

Compare Tommy's recollection with a 1915 recruitment poster or newspaper advertisement.

Lesson 3: Tommy's Journey to War

60 minutes

Key question

Where did Tommy go, and what changed along the way?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Locate key places connected with Tommy's story.
- Sequence places and events chronologically.
- Use geography to support historical understanding.

CURRICULUM + VOCABULARY

History | Geography | English: letter writing

Ripon • Whitley Bay • Ypres • Somme • Delville Wood • Western Front

RESOURCES

- Worksheet 3: Simplified route map
- Worksheet 4: Letter Home
- Tommy's Story

STARTER · 10 min

Give pupils the four place names before showing the map. Which are in Britain, Belgium or France?

TEACHER INPUT · 10 min

Trace Ripon → Whitley Bay → Ypres → Delville Wood/The Somme. Explain that the map is deliberately simplified, not an exact military route.

MAIN ACTIVITY · 25 min

Pupils annotate each location with what happened there. They then choose one stage and write a short letter home using only supported historical facts; feelings may be imaginatively reconstructed.

ASSESS

Check chronology, place knowledge and separation of fact from imaginative voice.

SUPPORT

Provide the labelled map and a word bank. Reduce the letter to three short paragraphs.

EXTEND

Use an atlas or digital map to estimate modern distances between the locations.

Lesson 4: Life in the Trenches

60 minutes

Key question **What do Tommy's recollections tell us about everyday trench life?**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Extract details from oral-history evidence.
- Group evidence into themes such as shelter, food, danger and discomfort.
- Explain the limits of one person's testimony.

CURRICULUM + VOCABULARY

History enquiry | English: explanation

trench • dugout • stand-to • lice • rats • mud • testimony • oral history

RESOURCES

- Tommy's recollections
- Archive/source images
- Worksheet 5: Trench Evidence Grid

STARTER · 10 min

Give four headings: mud, food, animals, routines. Pupils predict what evidence might appear.

TEACHER INPUT · 10 min

Discuss why tiny everyday details — tea, mud, rats, lice, sleeping arrangements — can be historically valuable.

MAIN ACTIVITY · 25 min

Pupils complete the evidence grid: What does Tommy remember? What does it tell us? What question remains? Finish with a paragraph beginning 'Tommy's memories suggest that daily trench life...'.

ASSESS

Look for evidence-linked explanations rather than generic First World War knowledge.

SUPPORT

Use fewer extracts and allow oral recording.

EXTEND

Compare Tommy's recollections with a second soldier's account.

Lesson 5: The Somme and Delville Wood

60 minutes

Key question

How can we teach a violent event without losing sight of the people involved?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Place Delville Wood within Tommy's wartime story.
- Use non-graphic evidence to explore the experience of battle.
- Distinguish what Tommy remembered from what later writers reconstructed.

CURRICULUM + VOCABULARY

History | English: evidence and interpretation | PSHE: respectful discussion

Somme • Delville Wood • No Man's Land • corporal • stretcher • field hospital

RESOURCES

- Tommy's Story, Chapters 11-14
- Later newspaper account
- Worksheet 6: Evidence and Interpretation

STARTER • 10 min

Use the simplified map to locate Delville Wood. Ask pupils what questions they have before reading any battle extract.

TEACHER INPUT • 10 min

Explain that the lesson focuses on evidence, decisions and survival rather than graphic detail. Teachers should preview the selected extracts.

MAIN ACTIVITY • 25 min

Pupils compare a short narrative extract with the later newspaper account. They identify what appears in both, what appears in only one source, and what questions remain unanswered.

ASSESS

Look for careful comparison and acknowledgement of uncertainty.

SUPPORT

Use short, non-graphic extracts only. Pupils may opt out of reading aloud.

EXTEND

Create a source note explaining which parts of the story are strongly evidenced and which require caution.

Lesson 6: Memory and Remembrance

60 minutes

Key question **How can a memory be valuable even when every detail cannot be checked?**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Compare later recollection with photographs and written sources.
- Understand that memory can preserve experience while details may shift.
- Explain why individual stories matter in remembrance.

CURRICULUM + VOCABULARY

History enquiry | English: comparison | PSHE: remembrance and empathy

memory • recollection • corroborate • retrospective • remembrance • testimony

RESOURCES

- Older Tommy photographs
- Newspaper report
- Oral-history extract
- Worksheet 7: Memory and Evidence

STARTER • 10 min

Ask pupils to describe the same recent school event independently. Compare small differences.

TEACHER INPUT • 10 min Explain that Tommy spoke about the war many decades later. Later memory is valuable for language, experience and meaning, while dates and numbers may need checking.

MAIN ACTIVITY • 25 min Pupils select two memories. For each they record what Tommy remembered, what other source might check it, and what the memory still tells us even if one detail is uncertain.

ASSESS

Look for nuanced understanding rather than a simple reliable/unreliable judgement.

SUPPORT

Use sentence stems and paired discussion before writing.

EXTEND

Investigate one recollection using an independent archive or regimental source.

Use one photograph or document. Start with what you can prove before you infer.

WHAT CAN I SEE OR READ DIRECTLY?

WHAT CAN I REASONABLY INFER?

WHAT CAN I NOT KNOW FROM THIS SOURCE ALONE?

WHAT QUESTION WOULD I ASK NEXT?

Worksheet 2: Evidence, Inference or Possibility?

Recruitment and choices

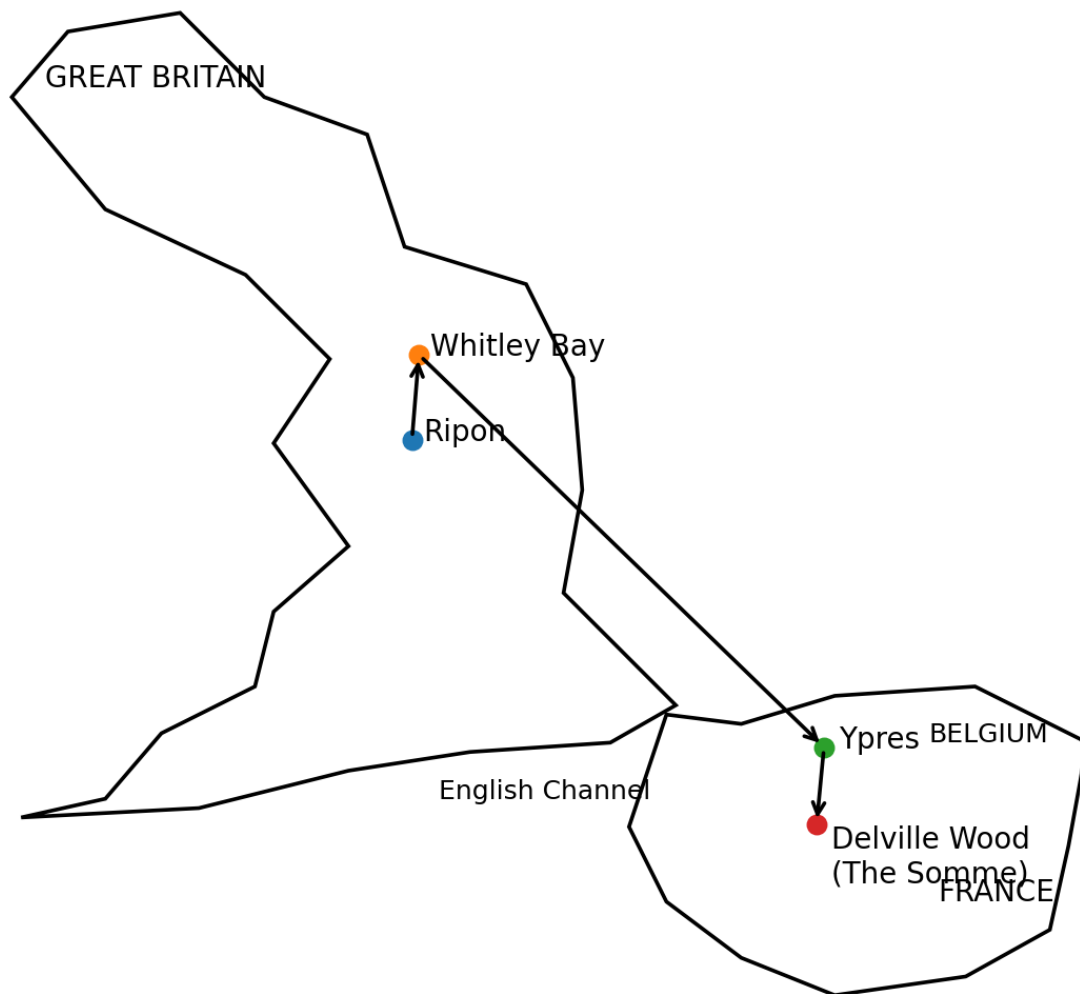
Sort each statement into the correct column. Then choose one and explain why you placed it there.

EVIDENCE	REASONABLE INFERENCE	CANNOT YET PROVE

USEFUL SENTENCE STEMS

- The source directly says...
- This may suggest...
- Another possible influence was...
- We cannot prove this because...

Tommy's Journey, 1915-1916 Simplified classroom map - not to scale



YOUR TASK

- Number the locations in the order Tommy encountered them.
- Add a short note beside each place: what happened there?
- Why is a simplified map useful - and what can it not tell us?

Worksheet 4: Letter Home

Evidence-led creative writing

Choose one stage of Tommy's journey. Historical facts must come from the story or sources. Feelings may be imagined, but they must be plausible.

Place: _____ Date: _____

Dear _____,

From,

Worksheet 5: Trench Evidence Grid

Everyday life in the trenches

Use Tommy's recollections or a source extract. Record only what the source supports.

TOMMY REMEMBERS...	THEME	WHAT THIS SUGGESTS	QUESTION STILL UNANSWERED

Compare a narrative extract with a later source. The aim is careful comparison, not graphic reconstruction.

WHAT APPEARS IN BOTH SOURCES?

WHAT APPEARS IN ONLY ONE?

WHAT QUESTION REMAINS UNANSWERED?

Worksheet 7: Memory and Evidence

Later recollection and remembrance

A later memory can be valuable even when every small detail cannot be independently checked.

MEMORY / CLAIM	WHAT COULD CHECK IT?	WHAT IF A DETAIL DIFFERS?	WHAT DOES IT STILL TELL US?

FINISH THE SENTENCE

A memory does not have to be perfect to be useful because...

Worksheet 8: Reading and Reflection

Use after reading Tommy's Story

1

What do the earliest sources tell us about Tommy's childhood and family?

2

What factors may have influenced Tommy's decision to enlist?

3

Why is it important not to say that peer pressure was definitely the only reason?

4

What does Tommy's route from Ripon to the Western Front show about the scale of change in his life?

5

Which details of trench life come from Tommy's own later recollections?

6

Why might a later newspaper report and a children's narrative tell the same event differently?

7

What can we learn from Tommy's return to France many years later?

8

What question would you most like to ask Tommy - and why?



SOURCE NOTE

A genuine family photograph of young Tommy in uniform. Use observation before interpretation.

QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS

- What details can you observe?
- What can clothing tell us - and what can it not tell us?
- What extra source would you want beside this photograph?



SOURCE NOTE

Family archive photograph. Use for comparison of uniform, pose and group identity.

QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS

- What is similar about the men?
- What is different?
- What might the formal pose tell us about the purpose of the photograph?



SOURCE NOTE

Family archive photograph connected with wartime recovery. Avoid assuming details that the photograph itself cannot prove.

QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS

- What can you see directly?
- Which details need another source to explain?
- How could this photograph support work on recovery and medical care?

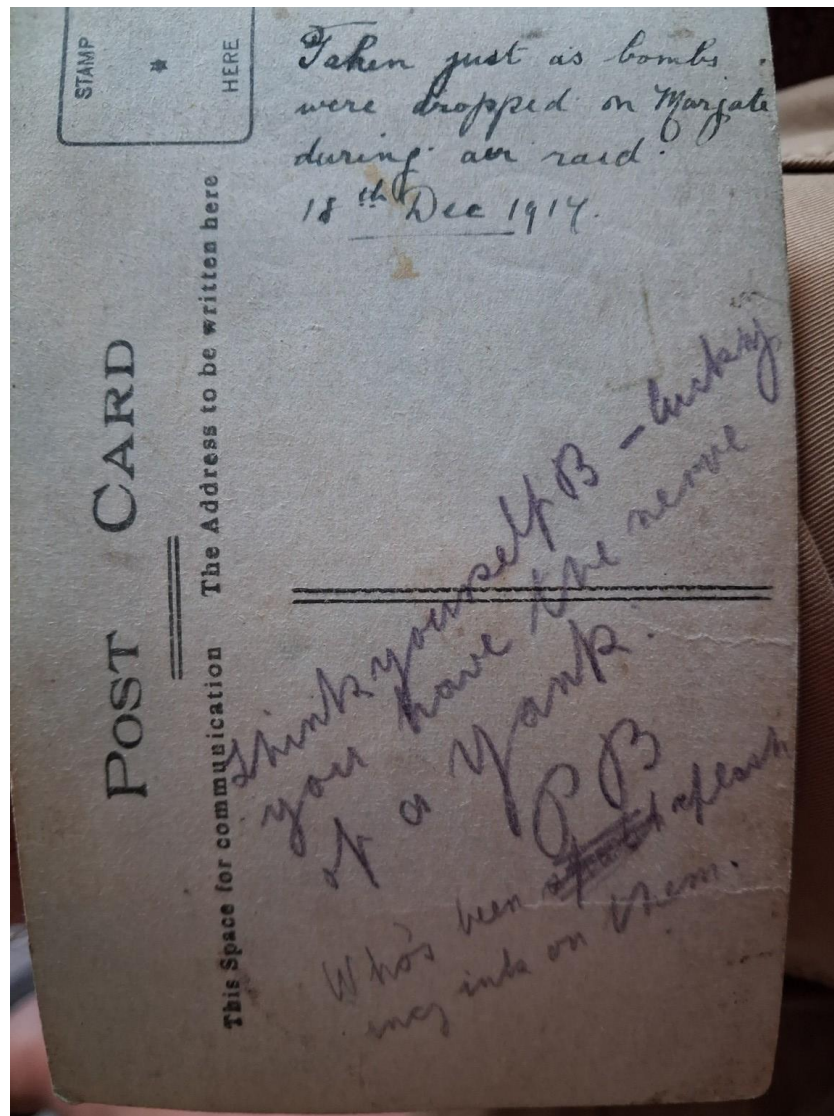


SOURCE NOTE

Family archive photograph of Tommy with his sister Alice.

QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS

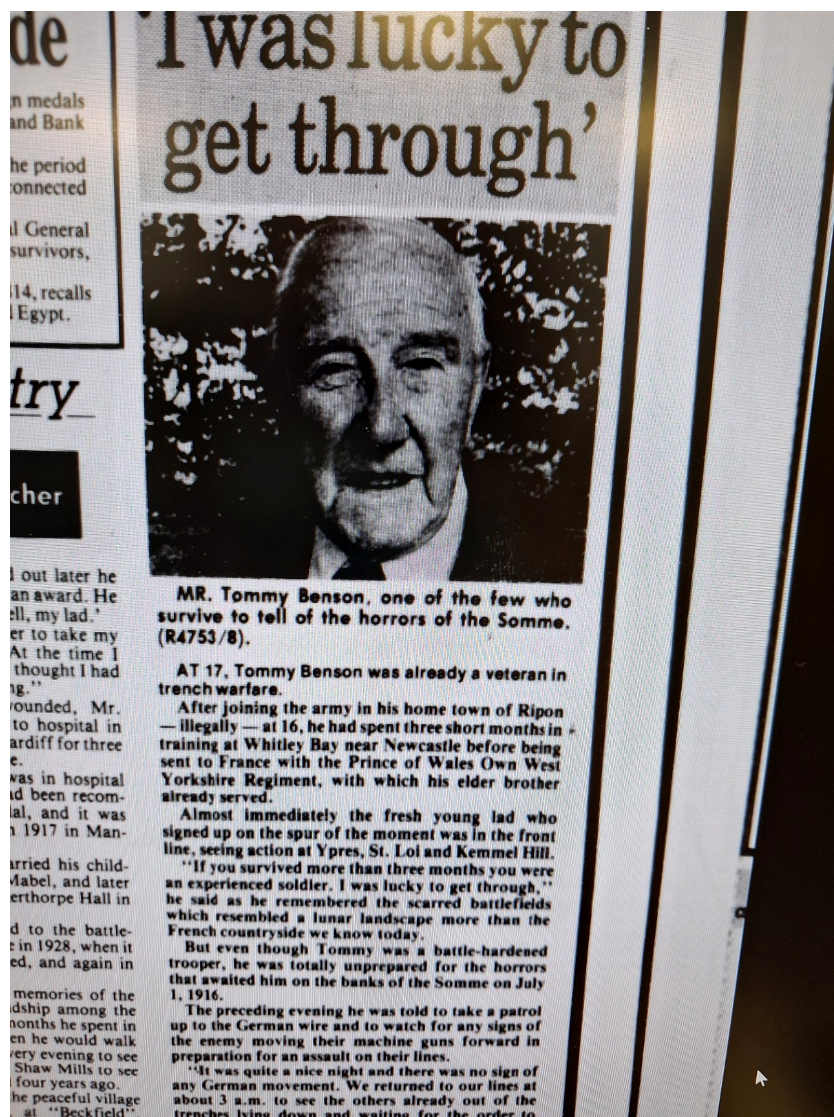
- What does this source tell us about family relationships?
- What cannot a photograph tell us about what they were thinking or feeling?
- How might the date of the photograph matter?

**SOURCE NOTE**

Genuine family postcard. The handwritten note is partly difficult to read; use the transcription as a best-effort aid, not as certainty.

QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS

- Which words are clear?
- Which parts are uncertain?
- Why should a historian mark uncertainty rather than silently guess?



SOURCE NOTE

A later newspaper report in which Tommy's wartime experiences are remembered many decades afterwards.

QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS

- Which claims could be checked against other records?
- What does Tommy's language tell us about memory?
- How might a newspaper shape a recollection for readers?



SOURCE NOTE

A later family photograph. Exact setting/date should be verified from the family archive before using it as evidence for a specific event.

QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS

- What changes when we compare young and older Tommy?
- What can a later portrait add to a study of remembrance?
- What information would a caption need to be useful?



Postcard
transcription
(best effort)

*Taken just as bombs
were dropped on Margate
during air raid.
1st Dec 1914.*

Address and pencil notes are partly illegible.

HISTORIAN'S CAUTION

The wording shown is a best-effort reading of difficult handwriting. In classroom work, pupils should be encouraged to mark uncertain words rather than treat a transcription as infallible.

VERIFIED CENSUS SOURCE

Insert the genuine census scan here
with its checked line-by-line transcript.

WHY THIS PAGE IS DELIBERATELY BLANK

The exact census image is not currently available in the working files. No simulated census has been created. Once the genuine scan is supplied, this page can be replaced without changing the rest of the pack.

1

Create a permanent landing page

Use a stable page such as Things Left Behind → Tommy Teacher Pack.

2

Upload the teacher-pack PDF

Add one large button: Download the Tommy Teacher Pack (PDF).

3

Offer separate printables

Upload the worksheet pack and archive source pack as separate A4 downloads.

4

Point the QR to the landing page

Do not point the printed QR straight to the PDF. A landing page can be updated later without changing the QR in the book.

5

Generate and test the QR

Use the final page address. Test on two phones and in a private/incognito browser.

RECOMMENDED TEXT BESIDE THE QR

*Scan for the free Tommy Teacher Pack,
archive sources and classroom resources.*