



# Dogs in War

**For 7-11 year olds**

**History | PSHE | English**

**[learnwithdogstrust.org.uk](https://learnwithdogstrust.org.uk)**

# Teacher's notes



## About this activity

This resource comprises a range of activities to explore the role of dogs in the military and encourages pupils to develop their historical enquiry skills.

**Age range:** 7-11 years

**Subjects:** History, English and PSHE

### You will need:

-  Military dogs and their jobs in World War I and World War II
  - Activity 1 information sheet and worksheets for each pupil
  - Activity 2 letter writing worksheet
  
-  How do the military meet a dog's welfare needs?
  - Activity 3 information sheet and welfare needs worksheets
  - Activity 4 information sheet and animal needs worksheet

# How to use this activity

## **Military dogs and their jobs in World War I and World War II**

Activity 1 involves pupils exploring four different jobs dogs had during the world wars, why they were chosen for these jobs, and whether we should have expected them to do these jobs.

In activity 2, pupils are asked to respond to the government's war office request to lend their family dog to the British Army, by writing a letter to Dog World magazine.

## **How do the military meet a dog's welfare needs?**

In these tasks, pupils explore the five welfare needs and how the military make sure that military dogs' needs are met.

In activity 3, pupils sort statements into their correct welfare need, and in activity 4 pupils use source information to identify how the military look after their dogs in a training facility in Jordan.



# Teacher's notes

## Activity 1 answers

|                        | <b>Why were dogs chosen for this job instead of humans? Give at least two reasons.</b>  |
|------------------------|---|
| Search and rescue dogs | Amazing sense of smell, either in the air or on the ground.<br>Their strength and endurance   |
| Sniffer dogs           | Amazing sense of smell. Dogs can smell substances untraceable to humans such as gas and other toxic substances.<br>Are trained to work in any environment, including busy and crowded places. |
| Sentry / scout dogs    | Having dogs decreased the likelihood of an ambush.<br>The dogs were silent and harder to detect.<br>The dogs had an amazing sense of smell and hearing ability compared to humans.            |
| Messenger dogs         | Dogs were faster than humans and had more endurance.<br>They were a smaller target.   |



# Teacher's notes

## Activity 3 answers

| <b>A suitable diet</b>   | <b>A suitable environment</b>   | <b>Protection from pain, injury and disease</b>                                    | <b>Allow them to express normal behaviour</b>                                 | <b>Provide them with companionship by housing them with, or apart from, others</b> |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Provide the correct type and amount of food for your dog.                  | Provide your dog with the right-sized bed, ensuring they are in good condition with dry, clean bedding. | Prevent illness by vaccination and by speedy and appropriate veterinary treatment. | Ensure your dog gets daily outdoor exercise for a suitable amount of time.    | Provide companionship and mental stimulation.                                      |
| Serve the food hygienically and at the right consistency to suit your dog. | Make sure your dog's accommodation is large enough for the dog to move around easily                    | Provide clean, hygienic conditions to live in.                                     | Allow natural behaviour, particularly opportunities to sniff the environment. |  |
| Make sure your dog has access to fresh water at all times.                 | Protect your dog from situations which could cause stress and mental suffering.                         | Provide a safe environment, free from objects that could cause injury              |   |  |

# Teacher's notes

## Activity 4 possible answers

| <b>A suitable diet</b>  | <b>A suitable environment</b>  | <b>Protection from pain, injury and disease</b>                | <b>Allow them to express normal behaviour</b>   | <b>Provide them with companionship by housing them with, or apart from, others</b> |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| Fed twice a day. Fed a specific amount of food depending on their size and exercise levels. | They have their own kennel.  | Vet checked at the airport and when they arrive off the plane. | Swim in the plunge pool.  | They have their own kennel.  |
| Fed a complete diet with all the nutrients, fats and minerals they need.                    | They have a bed, toys and water. Classical music and audio books are played to relax the dogs. | Regular vet check-ups.   | Play and socialise with other dogs.   | They have the chance to run around and interact with other dogs.                   |
|   |  | Given PPE; boots, goggles and ear defenders.                   | Walked every day. Meet new and interesting things and get the chance for mental enrichment. |  |

# Military dogs and their jobs in WW1 and WW2

## Activity 1 information sheet

**During World War 1 and World War 2, over 20,000 dogs were sent to help with the war effort. Many of these dogs saved and protected people, but many also lost their own lives.**

### Search and rescue dogs

Many dogs were trained to become 'search and rescue dogs'. These dogs provided assistance in British cities where homes had been destroyed by air raids, and on battlefields, where soldiers might be injured.



The dogs were used because of their amazing sense of smell. This is because dogs have up to 300 million scent receptors in their noses (humans only have 5 million) so they can locate things far more quickly than us, and from further away. Not only that, they use each nostril independently, which helps them find out what direction a smell might be coming from.



These dogs saved hundreds of people's lives. Here is Rip, a stray dog who was adopted by the Poplar ARP (Air Raid Precautions) in east London during the Second World War. During the Blitz, he became the service's first search and rescue dog. He helped save and locate over 100 people!

The search and rescue dogs on the battlefields were called 'casualty dogs'. They carried medical aid to injured soldiers to prevent their injuries from getting worse.

Here you can see a British soldier being provided with some bandages from a casualty dog.



These dogs also had a secondary purpose. If a soldier's injuries were very serious, and it was unlikely the dog could help, they sat with the soldiers until they died. These dogs were called 'mercy dogs' and provided comfort to injured soldiers.



## Sniffer dogs

Many dogs were specially trained to sniff out dangerous items, making it safer for the soldiers to move around. Here is a dog called Rex, whose job was to sniff out and find wooden mines. He even helped to protect the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, as he made sure there were no mines in a forest that the Prime Minister was visiting that day. These dogs saved countless lives!





## Sentry dogs

Many dogs were trained to become 'sentry dogs' or 'scout dogs' to protect the soldiers in WW1 and WW2. These dogs were expected to listen out for any potential dangers, and alert nearby soldiers with a clear signal.

They were used because of their amazing sense of hearing. Dogs can hear things from further away than humans can, and can hear noises more loudly than us.

This meant they could hear an enemy coming from further away than the soldiers would have been able to. This important role saved many soldiers' lives.



## Messenger dogs

Dogs were also used, alongside pigeons, to send messages. In WW1 they didn't have the technology we have now like radios and phones, so needed to get important messages to other soldiers as quickly as possible.

Dogs were specially trained to do this job, not just because of their amazing sense of hearing and smell, but because of their speed and agility. Dogs can generally run very fast and can get under and over obstacles much quicker than we can. Many dogs can also jump higher and further than humans and can squeeze into small spaces.

These dogs had messages attached to their collars that were written in code. Their job was to deliver the messages to soldiers as quickly as possible. As you can imagine, they needed lots of training to make sure their messages arrived with the correct person.

**Activity 1: Read the information about four of the different jobs that dogs had during World War 1 and World War 2 and then complete the table below.**

|                        | <b>Why were dogs chosen for this job instead of humans? Give at least two reasons.</b> | <b>Do you think that we should have expected dogs to do this job for us? Explain your reasons.</b> |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Search and rescue dogs |  |  |
| Sniffer dogs           |  |  |
| Sentry/ Scout dogs     |  |  |
| Messenger dogs         |  |  |

**Activity 2: Write a letter to ‘Dog World’ magazine in response to their advertisement.**

In WW2, an appeal was made by the government’s War Office to families with dogs, asking them to lend their dog to the British Army. The appeal was published as an advertisement in Dog World magazine.

Remember to:

- 🐾 Explain whether you would like to donate your dog or not and your reasons.
- 🐾 Offer two reasons why you think it is a good idea to enlist dogs.
- 🐾 Include two reasons why it would not be a good idea.
- 🐾 If you do decide to lend the British Army your dog, explain what role/job you would like them to do and why.




🐾 Use the layout of a formal letter

🐾 Use clear paragraphs

🐾 Use ambitious vocabulary

🐾 Use a variety of sentence types and connectives



**Top tip**

**Example paragraph structure**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you because \_\_\_\_\_

Firstly, I feel that \_\_\_\_\_

Additionally, I believe that \_\_\_\_\_

However, I do understand that \_\_\_\_\_

Also, it is important to remember that If I had to loan my dog to you, I would like you to train them to become because \_\_\_\_\_

I would also want you to make sure that \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to read my response.

Yours Faithfully,

# How do the military meet a dog's welfare needs?

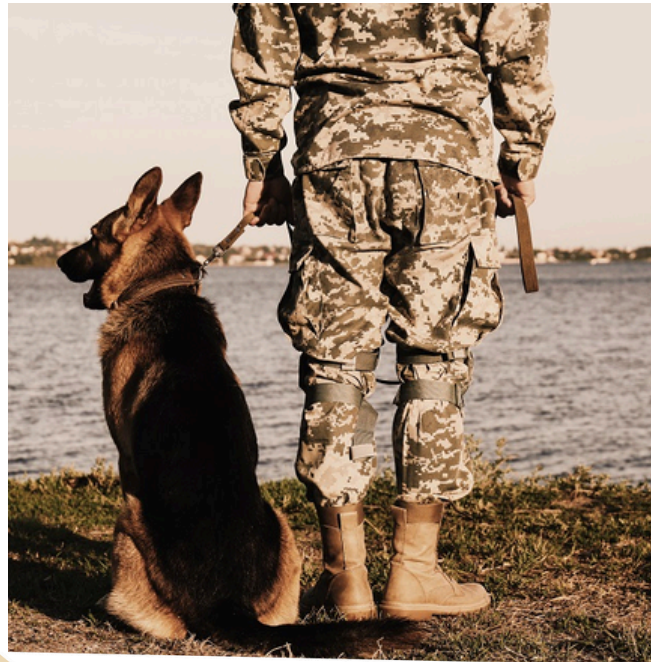
## Activity 3 information sheet

Dogs have been used by the military throughout history, even since the times of ancient civilisations. Over this time, they have had lots of different jobs and roles.

In 1911, the first law against animal cruelty was made; this was called The Protection of Animals Act, which is known today as the Animal Welfare Act (2006).

These laws mean that if you have or are responsible for any animal, you must make sure you are keeping them safe, happy and healthy.

This also means that in WW1, WW2 and even today, the military must be making sure they are doing everything they can to protect the animals they use.





# How do the military meet a dog's welfare needs?

## The five welfare needs

**The law says that there are five animal welfare needs that must be met.**

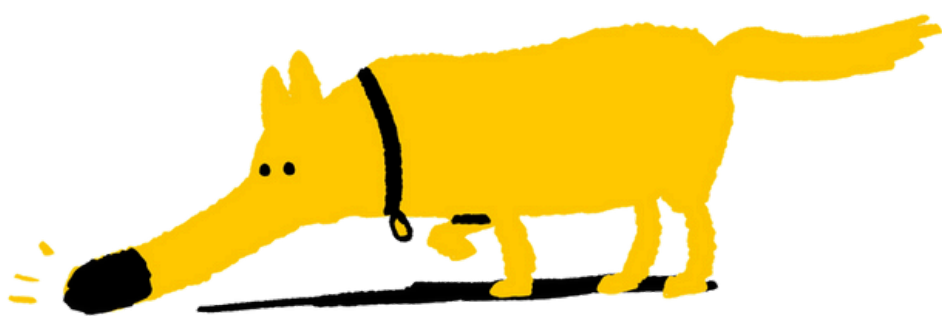
**This means that people responsible for taking care of animals must:**



1. Give them the right amount of healthy and suitable food, and access to fresh, clean water at all times.
2. Make sure they have a safe, comfortable, and suitable place to live.
3. Protect them from pain, harm and suffering, and make sure they have the right help when they need it.
4. Give them the chance to behave in ways that are natural to them, and to have choices about when and where to do that.
5. Give them the choice to live with other animals friends, or space to live on their own if they would prefer that.

**Activity 3: Using the five animal welfare needs on the previous page, sort the following statements into their correct welfare need in the table provided on the next page.**

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| Provide the correct type and amount of food for your dog.                       | Provide companionship and mental stimulation.   | Provide clean, hygienic conditions to live in.                                       | Make sure your dog has access to fresh water at all times.                         |
| Provide a safe environment, free from objects that could cause injury.          | Provide your dog with the right-sized bed, ensuring they are in good condition with dry, clean bedding. | Make sure your dog's accommodation is large enough for the dog to move around easily | Prevent illness by vaccination and by speedy and appropriate veterinary treatment. |
| Protect your dog from situations which could cause stress and mental suffering. | Ensure your dog gets daily outdoor exercise for a suitable amount of time.                              | Serve the food hygienically and at the right consistency to suit your dog.           | Allow natural behaviour, particularly opportunities to sniff the environment.      |



### Activity 3: Sort the statements into their correct welfare need.

| The right amount of healthy and suitable food | A safe, comfortable and suitable place to live | Protection from pain, harm and suffering, and the right help when they need it | The chance to behave in ways that are natural to them | The choice to live with animal friends, or space to live on their own if they prefer |
|---|--|--|---|--|
|   |  |  |   |  |
|   |  |  |   |  |
|   |  |  |   |  |



**Challenge: Can you add your own ideas in the blank boxes about other things you could do to meet each need?**

# Military dogs and their jobs in WW1 and WW2

## Activity 4 information sheet

**Read the information below about how the military look after their dogs in a training facility in Jordan, and then complete the 'welfare needs table'.**

### Arrival

When travelling to a training facility, the dog will have pre-deployment checks to ensure they are fit and healthy. They will travel to the airport with their handler, board the plane together, and the handler will meet them once the flight has landed. The dogs are placed in transportation kennels for the journey to keep them safe. When they arrive, they will have another medical check from the vet and will begin their training to get used to their new environment.



### Location

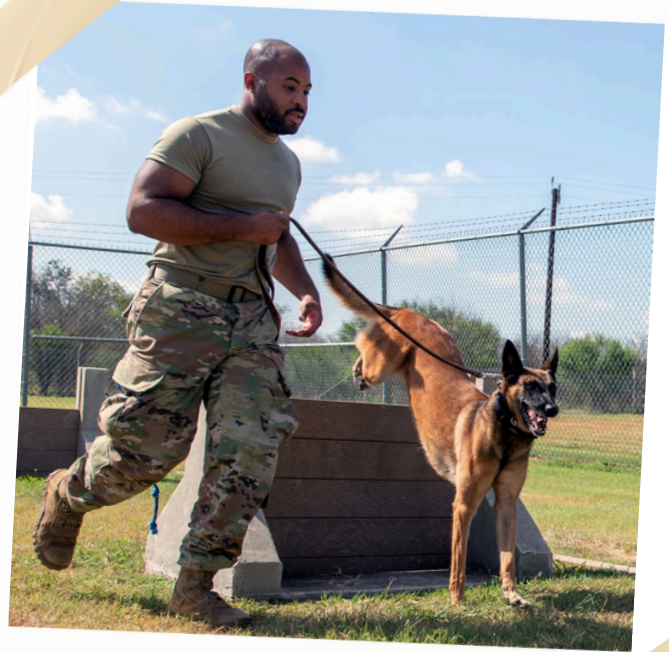
Jordan is a very hot country. As the dogs have arrived from a colder country in Germany, they are groomed regularly. In times of hot weather, or when the dogs have been working really hard, they can go into a plunge pool and swim to cool themselves down. Jordan is an environment that is very different for the dogs, so they often go out on walks to become familiar with the surroundings, as well as meet animals such as goats, sheep and cattle. This helps them feel more comfortable in their environment and gets them used to distractions they might encounter when working.



## A dog's day

Each dog has their own kennel in the training facility, equipped with a bed, toys and water. Classical music and audiobooks are played regularly to the dogs to help them relax and reduce stress (it has been scientifically proven that classical music has a relaxing effect on dogs). When the dogs aren't working, they are allowed to run around and interact with the other military dogs, which gives them the chance to explore, play and socialise.

Each dog is fed twice a day and is fed a specific amount of food depending on their size and how long or hard they have worked on that particular day. The food they receive contains all the nutrients, fats, and minerals that they need.



## Safety

All the dogs are equipped with something called PPE, which means 'Personal Protective Equipment'. These might be things such as dog boots, goggles and ear defenders, which can protect the dog from sharp objects, sand/dust, and loud noises. Whenever the dogs have bumps or scrapes, they will go to see the on-site vet, who can offer treatment. The dogs also have regular check-ups with the vet to keep them healthy.

Note: Military dogs wear these items for their safety. Our dogs may wear items such as leads, harnesses, collars and coats, but we should not be dressing them up for our own enjoyment or entertainment.

**Activity 4: Use the ‘welfare needs table’ below, and add at least TWO things the military are doing to meet each of the five welfare needs in the Animal Welfare Act.**

| <b>The right amount of healthy and suitable food</b> | <b>A safe, comfortable and suitable place to live</b> | <b>Protection from pain, harm and suffering, and the right help when they need it</b> | <b>The chance to behave in ways that are natural to them</b> | <b>The choice to live with animal friends, or space to live on their own if they prefer</b> |
|--|---|---|--|---|
|  |   |   |  |   |
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