

Name: _____ Class: _____

In Flanders Fields

By John McCrae
1915

Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae (1872-1918) was a Canadian military doctor and artillery commander during World War I. He wrote "In Flanders Fields" after participating in the Second Battle of Ypres in the Flanders region of Belgium. The battle in Flanders is remembered for the many trenches, or protective pits, dug for combat throughout the region's poppy fields. As you read, take notes on how the imagery affects the tone and themes of the poem.

- [1] In Flanders fields the poppies¹ blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place, and in the sky,
The larks,² still bravely singing, fly,
[5] Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead; short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

- [10] Take up our quarrel³ with the foe!
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high!
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
[15] In Flanders fields.



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1. Poppies are flowers commonly associated with sleep. Because of the trench warfare in Flanders during World War I, poppies are to this day considered a symbol of remembrance for soldiers who died in wars.
2. a type of songbird
3. **Quarrel (noun):** a conflict or argument

Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: What does the “torch” most likely represent in line 12? [RL.4]
 - A. A beacon of hope, because the speaker is upset about his friends dying in battle.
 - B. The war effort, because more soldiers are needed to continue the fight.
 - C. A lost cause, because there is no way the enemy can be defeated in battle.
 - D. The will of the people, because everyone wants to be a part of the war.

2. PART B: Which phrase from stanza 3 best supports the answer to Part A? [RL.1]
 - A. “our quarrel with the foe!” (Line 10)
 - B. “from failing hands we throw” (Line 11)
 - C. “hold it high!” (Line 12)
 - D. “If ye break faith” (Line 13)

3. Which statement best expresses a theme of the poem? [RL.2]
 - A. To honor the soldiers who die in war, take their place on the battlefield.
 - B. The amount of loss in war must be limited in order to promote peace and stability.
 - C. Those who die in war will haunt the living if they are not remembered.
 - D. Soldiers who die in war were average people with normal lives, who must be remembered and honored.

4. What is the author’s most likely purpose in writing this poem? [RL.6]
 - A. to remember a lost friend
 - B. to mourn the casualties of war
 - C. to encourage support for the war
 - D. to suggest that people should stop fighting

5. How does stanza 2 contribute to the poem’s meaning? Cite evidence from the text in your answer. [RL.5]

6. How does the mood of the poem contribute to its meaning?

[RL.5]
