

Name: _____

Knit Your Bit

By Lisa Hart

Weather brought hardships to the soldiers of the First World

War. The men needed more than the basic clothing they had been issued to endure winter in the trenches. Lucky for them, most of the girls back home knew how to knit.

Knitters of all ages picked up their needles to make



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helped to provide knitters with yarn and patterns. Most of the patterns were simple.

Quick and easy patterns allowed knitters of all skill levels to do their part and knit their bit for the boys at the front. Thousands of hours were given to create millions of pieces of clothing.

One of the more difficult patterns was the one for socks. Novice knitters often found the turning of the heel to be a challenge. But clean socks played a vital role in the good health of the soldiers. An infection called trench foot posed a constant danger in the cold, wet mud of the trenches. Fresh socks offered hope of avoiding an illness that could take a foot or a life.

These hand-knit items inspired the soldiers. They reminded the men of mothers, sisters and sweethearts sending them love with each stitch. For those left on the home front, knitting brought a way to support the troops and be involved.

Knitting never held so much passion or power.



National Library of Scotland

A wintry scene on the Western Front.

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1. Why did women knit clothing for soldiers during World War I?

- a. Soldiers did not have any clothing while at war so they asked women to knit.
- b. Soldiers wanted their clothing to be made only from yarn and wool.
- c. Soldiers paid women to make clothes and send them to the battlefield.
- d. Soldiers did not have enough winter clothing and women wanted to help.

2. According to the article, why were socks difficult for novice knitters?

- a. Most socks are large and require a lot of yarn.



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4. Circle three words that best describe the women knitters in this article.

patriotic	dangerous	hard-working
curious	charitable	carefree

5. Reread the final sentence of the article

Knitting never held so much passion or power.

Explain how knitting became a passionate and powerful task during this time.

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Match each vocabulary word from the reading passage with the correct definition.

_____ 1. trenches

a. material used to cover a wound

_____ 2. troops

b. long holes cut in the ground for hiding and



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_____ 5. novice

e. soldiers

_____ 6. passion

f. a charitable organization devoted to helping the sick, wounded, or suffering

_____ 7. Red Cross

g. relating to the treatment of illness and injury

_____ 8. home front

h. person who is new or inexperienced

_____ 9. bandage

i. surgically removing an arm, leg, or other body part

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In the article, "Knit Your Bit," you learned about women who knitted clothing and medical supplies for soldiers during World War I.

Describe ways that citizens of our country can support troops overseas in today's world.



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ANSWER KEY

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Explain how knitting became a passionate and powerful task during this time.

Knitting is typically a quiet, mundane task. However, during wartime women became passionate about it because they were helping soldiers, and they were powerful because they were helping the war effort.

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