

# Experiences of War Knowledge Organiser

## 1. Context

<p><b>Core text:</b> <i>Journey's End</i>  <b>Author:</b> R. C. Sherriff  <b>Published:</b> 1928  <b>Genre:</b> Modern drama, social realism  <b>Structure:</b> Three acts taking place over a couple of days.</p>	<p><b>Satellite Text:</b> War Poetry  <b>Authors Include:</b>                  Wilfred Owen                  Siegfried Sassoon                  Rupert Brooke                  Jessie Pope                  Alfred Lord Tennyson</p>
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**Social and Historical Context:**

- World War One (WW1) began in 1914, armistice was declared on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918
- Britain, France and the USA fought against Germany and Austria-Hungary
- Thousands of soldiers from across the Commonwealth, including Jamaica and India, also came over to Europe to fight in the war
- At first, joining the British army was voluntary, but by 1916 the government introduced conscription (forced enlistment for any able-bodied man aged between 18 and 35)
- The government used propaganda to imply that war was fun and easy
- Soldiers spent months living in trenches (muddy tunnels dug into the ground), with lice and rats, many caught diseases such as trench foot
- Letters home were censored
- Millions of young men died in this war
- R. C. Sherriff was a soldier in the war, and wrote this play based on his experiences

## 2. Themes

<p><b>Camaraderie</b> - Sherriff shows the way the soldier support each other in everyday domestic scenes</p>
<p><b>Hierarchy</b> – We see how the soldiers’ lives are defined by hierarchy, and how those in authority mistreat those below them</p>
<p><b>Social Class</b> – The war brought together people from different social classes</p>
<p><b>The Futility of War</b> – Sherriff shows that the war feels pointless and endless to the soldiers</p>
<p><b>Fear and Courage</b> – We see examples of bravery and fear in the characters</p>
<p><b>Coping Mechanisms</b> – Sherriff explores the way soldiers use coping mechanisms to distract themselves from their situation</p>
<p><b>The Impact of War on the Individual</b> – Sherriff shows the toll that trench warfare takes on the mental and physical health of ordinary people</p>

## 3. Thematic Vocabulary

<b>Camaraderie</b>	Trust and friendship among work colleagues	<b>Authority</b>	Power, being in charge	<b>Cowardice</b>	When someone is not brave
<b>Ennui</b>	A feeling of boredom, as though life has no meaning	<b>Altruism</b>	Kindness to others	<b>Patriotism</b>	Loving your country
<b>Paranoia</b>	Feeling that you may be attacked at any moment	<b>Trauma</b>	When an upsetting event affects you in later life, with terrible memories or flashbacks	<b>Loyalty</b>	Supporting someone, staying on their side even when it's difficult
<b>Addiction</b>	When your body or mind needs a particular substance or activity	<b>Innocent</b>	When someone has done nothing wrong, is good	<b>Responsibility</b>	Being in charge, and looking after others/yourself
<b>Transformation</b>	A big change	<b>Propaganda</b>	Political information in adverts, TV or films, designed to alter public opinion	<b>Mental Health</b>	How your mind feels - can change from day to day and affect how you behave
<b>Futile</b>	Pointless	<b>The Public</b>	Ordinary people in a society	<b>Coping Mechanism</b>	An activity someone does in order to be able to live through a painful situation, e.g. eating/reading fairy tales
<b>Frustration</b>	Feeling annoyed because you have no control over a situation	<b>Disassociation</b>	Emotionally disconnecting from your immediate environment – feeling numb	<b>Precarious</b>	When a situation is uncertain, and could change at any moment
<b>Devotion</b>	Strong love for another person	<b>Avuncular</b>	When an older person is friendly and kind to a younger person	<b>Community</b>	A group of people who live and work together
<b>Suffering</b>	Pain	<b>Armistice</b>	An agreement by two sides in a war, to stop fighting. The armistice in World War One happened on 11th November 1918.	<b>Social Class</b>	Depending on someone's money, education or job, they can be considered upper class (richer, works less hard) or working class (poorer, works harder). In the past, upper class people thought they were better than the working class
<b>Classical Hero</b>	A person in a myth who overcomes difficult situations with bravery and skill, and is admired by all for his goodness	<b>Courage</b>	Bravery	<b>Fatalism</b>	The feeling that one is doomed, no matter what one does.

## 4. Characters

<p><b>Captain Stanhope</b> – the talented, jaded captain</p>
<p><b>Lieutenant Osborne</b> – older, intelligent 2<sup>nd</sup>-in-command</p>
<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Raleigh</b> – new to the war, enthusiastic, fresh from school</p>
<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Trotter</b> - jolly, kind</p>
<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Hibbert</b> - terrified</p>
<p><b>Private Mason</b> – the cook, limited dialogue</p>
<p><b>The Colonel</b> – an authority figure, does not fight in battles</p>

## 5. Dramatic Methods

<p>A single set – the dug-out, dim lighting</p>
<p>Use of war sounds from outside</p>
<p>Limited action, a reliance on casual conversation</p>
<p>Tension built up through frequent mentions of the upcoming attack</p>
<p>Characters representing different attitudes to war/ways of coping</p>

## 6. Key Terminology

<b>Stage Directions</b>	Words in a play that show what a character does, or how the stage should look. These are not spoken out loud
<b>Sound and Lighting</b>	Sounds and lighting can add build an atmosphere, and tell us things about how the characters feel
<b>Costume</b>	The characters' clothes - can tell us about their personalities
<b>Props</b>	Objects that the characters use - can tell us about their personalities
<b>Characterisation</b>	How the writer describes the characters, to tell us what they are like
<b>Pace</b>	The speed of a story - can be fast or slow
<b>Simile</b>	Comparing using 'like' or 'as' - e.g. 'the stars were like a million tiny candles'
<b>Metaphor</b>	Comparing using 'is' or 'was' - e.g. 'the stars were a million tiny candles'
<b>Theme</b>	A big idea that runs through a whole text e.g. 'War,' 'Love' - the writer may have a message about it
<b>Pathos</b>	A feeling of great sadness for a character, due to their unpleasant situation
<b>Tension</b>	A feeling that something dramatic could happen any second