

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 sweaters, hats and scarves. Many on the home front who did not know how to knit learned. Knitters made custom

items to send to the troops, such as mittens with a divided trigger finger. Even medical supplies could be knit. A long strip of knitting made a good, stretchy bandage. Knitted eye patches held dressings in place. For those soldiers who had lost an arm or leg in battle, knitters made amputation socks.

Seeing the need, the Red Cross began to arrange knitting campaigns. They also 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.

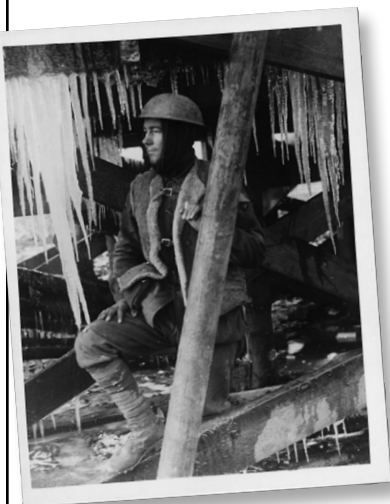
These hand-knit items inspired the soldiers. They reminded the men of mothers, sisters and sweethearts sending them love with each stitch. For those left on the home front, knitting brought a way to support the troops and be involved.

Knitting never held so much passion or power.



State Library of NSW and National Library of Scotland

Bundling socks, 'War Chest' Sock Appeal, Sydney, May 1917, photographer G. A. Hills.



National Library of Scotland

A wintry scene on the Western Front.

Name: _____

Knit Your Bit

By Lisa Hart



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.
 - b. A sock has a curve by the heel.
 - c. A pair of socks can only be worn a few times.
 - d. Knitters needed to use different patterns for right socks and left socks.

3. What is the author's purpose for writing this article?
 - a. To persuade readers to support soldiers
 - b. To teach readers how to knit
 - c. To entertain readers with an amusing story from history
 - d. To inform readers of one way women helped the war effort during World War I

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.

Name: _____

Knit Your Bit

By Lisa Hart



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 moving around during battle

_____ 3. medical

c. strong emotion

_____ 4. amputation

d. area where soldiers' homes are, away from the war zone

_____ 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

Name: _____

Knit Your Bit

By Lisa Hart



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.

ANSWER KEY

Knit Your Bit

By Lisa Hart



- Why did women knit clothing for soldiers during World War I?
 - Soldiers did not have any clothing while at war so they asked women to knit.
 - Soldiers wanted their clothing to be made only from yarn and wool.
 - Soldiers paid women to make clothes and send them to the battlefield.
 - Soldiers did not have enough winter clothing and women wanted to help.**
- According to the article, why were socks difficult for novice knitters?
 - Most socks are large and require a lot of yarn.
 - A sock has a curve by the heel.**
 - A pair of socks can only be worn a few times.
 - Knitters needed to use different patterns for right socks and left socks.
- What is the author's purpose for writing this article?
 - To persuade readers to support soldiers
 - To teach readers how to knit
 - To entertain readers with an amusing story from history
 - To inform readers of one way women helped the war effort during World War I**
- Circle three words that best describe the women knitters in this article.

patriotic

dangerous

hard-working

curious

charitable

carefree

- 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.

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.

ANSWER KEY

Knit Your Bit

By Lisa Hart



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

b 1. trenches

a. material used to cover a wound

e 2. troops

b. long holes cut in the ground for hiding and moving around during battle

g 3. medical

c. strong emotion

i 4. amputation

d. area where soldiers' homes are, away from the war zone

h 5. novice

e. soldiers

c 6. passion

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

f 7. Red Cross

g. relating to the treatment of illness and injury

d 8. home front

h. person who is new or inexperienced

a 9. bandage

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