



Welcome

Thank you for booking We Were There: Ask questions about conflict

BEFORE YOUR VISIT PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY

ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE

This interactive session enables your students to meet veterans and eye witnesses and hear about their personal experiences of war and conflict. Depending upon availability your students will meet eye witnesses who offer both civilian and military perspectives.* Students are encouraged to think carefully about the type of questions that will enable the eye witness to remember and discuss their memories and experiences.

*Please note that due to the unique nature of this session, eyewitness availability may vary

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE:

- **Please be aware that the eye witnesses are volunteers and often they travel a long way to meet your students. It is imperative that if you are unable to attend or are running late that you contact IWM as soon as possible.**

PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT.

In most cases about a week before your visit you will receive a short biography of the eyewitnesses you will meet in the session. These biographies end with an invitation to your students to start to think of two questions for each eye witness.

There will not be time for students to write down eyewitness's responses, so we advise that you do not make a worksheet with questions and spaces for answers.

Points you may want to consider with your students:

- How can talking to a person with experience of war and conflict differ from using other sources, such as books, websites, films (documentary and drama), museum displays/artefacts or archives (photographs, newspapers, documents)? Consider the advantages and disadvantages.
- What are good starting questions when we have just met an eye witness and want to get to know more about them?
- What one thing do I want to know about the personal experience of conflict that I haven't been able to find out anywhere else?
- Consider the fact that the person will have lived some of their life before or after conflict, what can they tell us about how their life changed immediately and in the longer term? Is their experience of conflict the most important aspect of their life?
- How do we know if a question is appropriate? How might you ask questions in a sensitive way?

Some Guidance

Most of the eyewitnesses have a great deal of experience of working with different groups, and they are happy to answer questions and discuss subjects associated with war such as death, injury, emotional trauma and economic hardship. In some of the eyewitness biographies these elements of their experience are more evident than others. Please work with your students to identify questions related to that person's experience and really think about when it might be appropriate to ask a question on a difficult subject, and the value of different questions.

SCHEDULE FOR We Were There

Arrive at the meeting point 10 minutes before you are due to start. You will be met by a member of the IWM team. **We cannot guarantee the availability of the experience to groups who are more than 15 minutes late.** If we are unable to reschedule your experience due to your late arrival, this is classed as a cancellation and you will incur a 100% administration fee.

On gallery introduction (10-15 minutes)

- Guided introduction to the nature of the stories that IWM holds in its collections and how asking questions of objects enables us to find out these stories
- Some guidance as to appropriate questions and ways of engaging with eye witnesses

In the learning room (45-60 minutes)

- Facilitated session with two eye witnesses to conflict; one of whom, where possible, will have experienced the Second World War as a child.