

Art After the First World War

In this lesson we will be examining how artists reacted to their experiences in the First World War. Please use the spaces below to record information from the tasks that you will be asked to complete.

Task 1 - Write 5 words to describe a typical soldier's experience in the trenches

Read these sources – think about how Paul Nash's own experiences of fighting in the First World War might have influenced his painting.

1) Paul Nash, letter to Gordon Bottomley (27th September, 1914)

I have joined the Artists' London Regiment of Territorials the old Corps which started with Rossetti, Leighton and Millais as members in 1860. Every man must do his bit in this horrible business so I have given up painting. There are many nice creatures in my company and I enjoy the burst of exercise - marching, drilling all day in the open air about the pleasant parts of Regents Park and Hampstead Heath.

2) Paul Nash, letter to Gordon Bottomley from the Western Front (Easter, 1915)

In the midst of the monstrous event stands Man; the thousands and the hundreds of thousands, the combatants and the non-combatants; who all have one wish and one goal; to cast aside the war; to render its effect invisible so far as they can be understood; to let a well-earned Peace grow its grass over the victims and to carry on as before.

Now look at Paul Nash's painting 'The Mule Track' which he painted after the First World War in 1918.

Task 2 - Write 5 phrases to describe the mood of The Mule Track by Paul Nash



Georges Leroux, *L'Enfer (Hell)* (1917)
(French Artist)



Christopher Richard Wynne
Nevinson *A Star Shell* (1916)
(British Artist)



Otto Dix, *Flandern (Flanders)* (1934-36)
(German Artist)

Task 3 - Look at the pictures above. Using your knowledge of Paul Nash's painting and these other works, write a short paragraph explaining how artists were affected by the experience of the First World War.