**Social Studies 10 – WWI Historical Empathy Assignment**

**Historical empathy** refers to the ability to **perceive, emotionally experience,** and thus **better contextualize** a historical figure's lived experience.

In other words, when reading a text about a historical figure's plight, you'll go beyond simply intellectually acknowledging or recalling the facts of their existence and experiences. Instead, you'll be able to understand how that person **felt**, **thought**, **how they acted**, **why they acted that way**, and **what consequences they might have faced** in their unique historical and social context.

We can simplify historical empathy as truly putting yourself in the shoes of a figure in the past.

(from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/historical-empathy-importance-application.html>

1. Choose one of the following battles:

-Second Battle of Ypres

-Battle of the Somme

-Battle of Vimy Ridge

-Battle of Passchendale

2. You are going to assume the identity of a **Canadian soldier** who has just participated in one of these battles. Create a persona for your soldier. Consider his

-name & age

-occupation

-home province

-family structure

These are examples of details you can subtly weave into your letter to help develop your character’s persona.

3. The soldier is writing a letter to his family or a loved one or a friend back home. In the letter, you will be

- describing the battle using historical detail

- creating a clearly-developed persona of this soldier by describing

-his thoughts

-his feelings

-his actions in battle

- why he acted that way

- the consequences of acting that way

- and any other details that will show you are putting

yourself “in the shoes of a figure in the past”.

Evaluation: Please see reverse

**Rubric: Assessing the Personal Letter of a Canadian Soldier**

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|  | **Underdeveloped** | **Competent** | **Well-Developed** |
| **Accurate facts** | Many facts are inaccurate or historically implausible. | A few minor details are inaccurate or historically implausible. | All facts are historically accurate and highly plausible (reasonable) |
| **Specific information** | Almost no historical detail is provided; account is incomplete and vague. | Historical detail is thinly provided; account needs elaboration and more specifics. | Considerable historical detail is provided; account is fully described and very specific. |
| **Revealing insights** | The letter does not add to the reader’s understanding of the battle described. | The letter provides some useful insight that helps in understanding aspects of the battle. | The letter offers a revealing account that helps in understanding the battle. |
| **Empathic perspective** | The entry does not offer an historical character’s point of view. The perspective is unrealistic and impersonal. | The entry captures some of an historical character’s point of view. The perspective is quite realistic and personal. | The entry richly imagines an historical character’s point of view. The perspective is very realistic and personal. |

/ 20 marks