**Somme100 FILM**

**Film Screening Personal Reflections Sheet**

**Introduction**

This handout is a resource for anyone watching a live screening (rehearsal or performance) of ***The Battle of Somme*** film. The film contains actual footage of soldierson the frontline in France one hundred years ago. It was made for the War Office by the British Topical Office for War Films in 1916.

It was filmed by two experienced cameramen, [Geoffrey Malins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Malins) and John McDowell, who were sent out to the front line in 1916 and captured the week leading up to the battle and the first week, each man filming in different places.

This film is a pictorial record of one of the most significant WW1 battles for the British military and a lasting visual of what ww1 fighting was actually like, capturing footage from the sunken road in the trenches. There were moral and ethical issues associated with the film as it showed suffering and actual death of British soldiers (the only film ever to do so) and this was not deemed appropriate for entertainment for a general audience.

The film is split into five parts, and this is what you can expect to see on screen during each section:

**Part 1 – In this part of the film you will see:**

* *Troops preparing for battle*
* *Weapon stores*
* *Soldiers marching to the front line*
* *Local French farmers working the fields alongside the military*
* *Tending to horses*
* *A religious ceremony*
* *Attacks in the lead up to the battle*

**Part 2 – In this part of the film you will see:**

* *The evening before the battle , soldiers having a meal and getting kit ready*
* *More soldiers marching*
* *Action on the morning of the battle*
* *The sunken road in the trenches*

**Part 3 – In this part of the film you will see:**

* *Soldiers going ‘over the top’*
* *The attack along the 16 mile front line*
* *Bringing in wounded soldiers and treatment areas*
* *Transporting goods and ammunition*
* *German prisoners of war*

**Part 4 – In this part of the film you will see:**

* *The aftermath of the battle*
* *German prisoners of war, identities being checked and awaiting transportation*
* *British wounded soldiers being cared for by a field hospital unit*
* *Clearing the battlefields of snipers and rifles*
* *Dead and wounded soldiers*

**Part 5 – In this part of the film you will see:**

* *The devastating effects of British shell fire*
* *Capturing German trench mortars*
* *Assembling for the roll call*
* *Clearing up after the advance*
* *Prisoners of war being transported*

**Worksheet – Personal Reflections**

During the screening, take some time to watch the film very carefully and listen to the music. Try to answer some of the questions below. There is no right or wrong answer; they are intended to guide your thinking. Try discussing the answers with your classmates afterwards. It is also important to remember that some of the footage is quite shocking and that it’s ok to feel emotional or angry by what you are seeing.

**The Era**

What pinpoints the scenes to era, 1916? What do you notice about the equipment being used?

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What to you notice about the military equipment being used? How does it differ from today?

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What do you think about the scale of the operation for WW1 – is this what you imagined?

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Why do you think nearly half of the population flocked to the cinema to watch this film?

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**The Music**

How does the music support the images and create the mood of the film?

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How does Laura manage to combine both optimism and agony in the music?

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What musical effects or instruments are used to create combat sounds? Are they effective?

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What orchestration does Laura use to give the piece a military feel?

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In what scenes is Laura’s orchestration at its smallest? Why do you think this is?

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What aspects of the music do you most enjoy and why?

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**Personal reflections**

When you see the faces of the soldiers what does it make you think of?

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Why is it important to remember the Battle of the Somme one hundred years on?

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If you could ask the soldiers questions about the battle, what would you ask?

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What three words sum up your feelings about the film?

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**About The Battle of the Somme Centenary Tour**

From July 1st 2016 till July 2017 there will be **100 orchestral performances** of iconic 1916 film [*The Battle of the Somme*](http://www.laurarossi.com/live-music-to-silent-film/somme/)with Laura Rossi’s acclaimed orchestral score to mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

One hundred years ago your father, uncle or brother could have been signing up to be a part of something big. Together they joined forces in their Pals battalions to fight for their country. 100 years on, we want to remember them and what they did through this international project to commemorate the Battle of the Somme.

Log on to [www.somme100FILM.com](http://www.somme100FILM.com) to find out more.