Anzac Day

What Is Anzac Day?

Anzac Day is a day of remembrance that takes place on 25th April. It is commemorated in Australia and New Zealand or by Australians and New Zealanders living elsewhere in the world. It is held in memory of the members of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZACs), many of whom lost their lives in battle.

Australia and New Zealand Join the First World War

In 1914, at the beginning of the First World War, Australia was allied with Britain and France. In August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany and the Australian Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, offered his support and agreed to send troops to help the British war effort. In 1915, soldiers from Australia and New Zealand were sent to capture the Gallipoli peninsula.

The Battle of Gallipoli

The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed at Gallipoli on 25th April 1915. This was the first major combat of the war for these two countries. The plan was to defeat Turkey as quickly as possible in a quick battle; however, the battle lasted eight months. Generals and commanders were worried about the high number of casualties as well as the coming winter and they started to plan a retreat. At the end of 1915, the ANZAC forces were rescued from the beach.

Many were killed during the Battle of Gallipoli. Over 8000 Australian soldiers and more than 2500 New Zealander soldiers lost their lives. Even though the mission was not successful, the bravery and determination shown by the ANZACs have made it an important moment in history.

The ANZAC Spirit

By the end of the war, more than 70,000 Australian and New Zealander soldiers had lost their lives. When the total population of these countries at the time is considered, this was a substantial number. Around the world, the ANZACs were

seen as brave, strong and determined men who developed strong bonds with each other to get them through the horrific experiences they had to face. The idea of 'mateship', looking out for and supporting one's friends, was established at this time.

The spirit of the brave ANZACs caused Australia to be regarded as a reliable and strong nation across the world.

How Is Anzac Day Celebrated?

The first Anzac Day was commemorated on 25th April 1916. A popular tradition of Anzac day is a dawn service. This is a ceremony which includes the raising of flags, the reading of relevant passages and a performance of the Last Post. This is followed by a minute's silence. Many schools will hold their own Anzac ceremony.

Parades are usually held every year in local towns and major cities. Originally, ANZAC soldiers marched in these parades. Now, it is common for the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of ANZAC soldiers to march in them. They wear the medals or carry something belonging to their ancestors. Nowadays, these parades are more celebratory events with crowds lining the streets to cheer on and applaud the military personnel. There is a sense of pride in what these brave men and women have done, and continue to do for Australia.

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Questions

1. Who celebrates Anzac Day?

   _____

2. Which is closest in meaning to the word 'allied'? Tick **one**.

   ○   in partnership

   ○   allowed

   ○   against

   ○   enemies

3. Who is Andrew Fisher?

   _____

4. Did the battle of Gallipoli go according to plan? Explain your answer using the text.

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. Do you think the battle of Gallipoli was a success? Give **two** reasons for your answer.

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. When was the first Anzac day?

   _____

7. Tick the boxes to say whether the sentences are true or false.

Sentence	True	False
Over 70,000 Australian and New Zealander soldiers died at Gallipoli.		
Anzac day is to remember the only people who died.		
The First World War started in August 1915.		
At the end of the war, the ANZACs were seen as brave, strong and determined.		

8. Explain in your own words what the ANZAC spirit was.

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