



## The Unknown Warrior: a 4-minute film teachers' notes

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Watch the film here: <https://youtu.be/FFav8-49XNo>

### Transcript

NAZIA: Mum, what's that?

AMAL: Ah, Nazia, that's a very special grave, one that no one ever walks over. Some say it's the most important in Westminster Abbey.

NAZIA: A King or Queen?

AMAL: No, not a monarch

NAZIA: But someone famous?

AMAL: No, not when he was alive. We don't actually know who he was.

NAZIA: I don't understand. If we don't know who he was, why is he buried at Westminster Abbey?

AMAL: Because, that's the Grave of the Unknown Warrior.

Nearly nine million men from all over the British Empire fought in the First World War, approximately 6.5 million from Britain and Ireland, and 2.5 million from the Commonwealth. Places like: India; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Australia and New Zealand; the West Indies; Canada.

The average age was 24. And though soldiers had to be over 18, 250,000 boys lied about their age. The youngest was 12 years old. For every nine men that served, three were wounded; often with injuries lasting the rest of their lives.

One in nine were killed. Of those killed, 200,000 were missing and never found. Thousands of warriors, forever unknown.

NARRATOR: The Unknown Warrior's story begins in 1916, in a garden, in France. British Army Chaplain David Railton finds the grave of a fallen British soldier, buried underneath a simple cross, with the words 'an unknown British soldier'.

Back in Britain cries an unknown mother. An unknown wife, a brother, an unknown child, who'd never discover, just where their father lies.

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And born from the grief of a whole nation, David Railton had an idea. What if one unknown warrior could be brought home? And buried at Westminster Abbey, alongside kings and queens, in full splendour to represent all the unknown sons, brothers, fathers who never made it back?

And so, the bodies of four unknown warriors from four battlefields are laid out, each covered by a Union flag.

Secretly, one is selected, placed in a coffin of English Oak, alongside a handful French soil; land over which the warrior fought and died. And on Armistice Day 1920, the Unknown Warrior was buried at Westminster Abbey.

It is true, we don't know, and will never know whether he's British, Irish, or Empire born. But most importantly, we know, he is ours. Unknown, but well known.

NAZIA: It doesn't matter who he is, does it? We remember him because he's unknown. He helps us remember that people died, but he also helps us remember the people we love, too.

AMAL: That's right, love.

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