



ACTIVITY: Code Breaking.

Teacher Notes:

This is a quick activity that should take about 10-15 minutes.

Using a code grid, students can decode eight coded messages to reveal some World War I military slang words.

In this pack you will find:

- Information on why aircrew used coded messages in World War I.
- Information about how the code breaking works.
- Code grids (2 on the page) to be printed out to help the students crack the code.
- Eight coded messages to decode.

Aerial Warfare in World War I:

During World War I, there was not the technology to communicate using radio, as aircrew can today. They had to think of other ways to send messages to the people on the ground.

One way they would do this was by dropping messages from their aircraft in metal canisters.

These messages might be coded, in case they fell in to enemy hands!

How to crack the code:

The grid below shows the letters of the alphabet on the top row, and their scrambled code letter on the bottom row.

Find the letters in the coded word on the top row and that will give you it's decoded letter on the bottom row.

For instance, if your word started with the letter 'A', the decoded letter would be 'F'.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
F	U	O	N	C	I	X	L	V	D	A	R	T
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N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
G	Q	Y	B	H	W	J	Z	P	K	E	M	S

There's an example here:

Clue: Name for a crater left after an explosion of heavy artillery.

Coded word: ELBYV RCHX

Answer: E=C, L=R, B=U, Y=M, V=P = **CRUMP**

R=H, C=O, H=L, X=E = **HOLE**

= **CRUMP HOLE**

Find the letters in the coded word on the top row and that will give you it's decoded letter on the bottom row.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
F	U	O	N	C	I	X	L	V	D	A	R	T
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
G	Q	Y	B	H	W	J	Z	P	K	E	M	S

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A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
F	U	O	N	C	I	X	L	V	D	A	R	T
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
G	Q	Y	B	H	W	J	Z	P	K	E	M	S

Can you decode these messages to find out the WWI military slang words?

1. Nickname for a red cross ambulance because of the symbol on the side.

RCM ELCZZ QBD _____

2. Slang word for Great Britain. Later in the war, it became a name for an injury that was so bad it would get you sent home.

QHFNRMP _____

3. A British military slang word for German anti-aircraft fire.

KLERFX _____

4. Name for a large airship used for observations in WWI.

QHFYV _____

5. The name given by British soldiers to a high-speed shell, so-called because of the high-pitched noise it made.

SRFUU-QKDN _____

6. Flying aircraft very low, sometimes for low-level bombing in warfare.

RXJNX RCV _____

7. British soldiers' nickname for the Belgian city of Ypres, which some couldn't pronounce. (really pronounced ee-pruh).

SFVXLZ _____

8. The name given to shells that exploded at ground level.

JKFZP EBMMXL _____