

Recruitment poetry

When war was declared in August 1914 young men rushed to join up, believing they would be participating in a great adventure. Many poets, such as Jessie Pope, wrote poems to encourage young men to join.

Think about how you might persuade people to go and fight in the war. Remember, they had no idea what it was they were getting into: people did not realise the war would last four years – they thought it would be over by Christmas. Make a list of things you could say to encourage people to join up.

Now look at the words in the table below and, using your ideas, think how you could turn these into a recruitment poem. Remember, not all poems rhyme. What might this poem be about? It compares war to something in order to encourage people to join up.

all	job	shoulders
along	knows	show
back	lads	tackle
biggest	lie	thinks
but	line	tight
calling	looking	toe
country	low	turn
course	much	unafraid
crashing	neck	up
crutch	not	wants
eagerly	one	stand
fight	only	sit
fun	out	signal
game	picnic	who
grip	played	won't
gun	pursue	would
hand	red	you
in	right	your
it	seat	'go!'