

Thinking about the difference between attitudes and values

So that we can begin to understand why men and women who do not necessarily believe in a particular war still go to fight.

Read each of the following statements and, without discussing it, write down whether you agree or disagree with it.

1. Everyone deserves the right to an education.

2. Gaining an education is important.

3. Being educated means you have knowledge and understanding about the world.

4. Every week day morning I jump out of bed and think 'Yippee! School again!'

5. I am always sad when it is the end of the school day.

6. On Friday afternoons I feel miserable because there is no school for two days.

Now look back at your answers. Statements 1, 2 and 3 say something about whether you think education is valuable or not. These are your values.

You may well have agreed with the first three statements so we can say you value education and consider it necessary.

However, your attitudes towards school might be very different. I doubt that many of you have agreed with statements 4, 5 or 6.

Now think about how we can transfer these ideas about attitudes and values to war and the soldiers.

Think in particular about why people such as Wilfred Owen in the First World War fought even though they quite clearly thought it was appalling.

We can see that although many soldiers might disagree with a war (their attitude) they feel it is their duty to fight (this is their values).

This is obviously a very simplistic explanation of the difference between someone's attitudes and values but hopefully it has shown you how you can value something that you have negative attitudes towards.