

First World War Charms

- *What would you bring?*

Soldiers and others serving overseas carried all kinds of charms with them to help get them through the First World War.



There are many stories of lucky Bibles stopping bullets or shrapnel fragments and saving a soldier's life during the First World War. This Bible is thought to have been in the left breast pocket of Gunner John Dickinson when he was hit in 1915. Image and caption taken from *5 Lucky Objects Of The First World War* by Jessica Talarico (Imperial War Museum).



Some objects were considered lucky not because of circumstance, but because of the beliefs or superstitions of their owners. Many soldiers carried lucky charms. The charms often took the form of traditional symbols of good luck, like this shamrock. Made from Connemara marble, it has a hole in the top so it might be worn on a cord or chain around the neck. Image and caption taken from *5 Lucky Objects Of The First World War* by Jessica Talarico (Imperial War Museum).

If you were about to be sent to the Western Front during the First World War, what would you be carrying in your pocket? Is there a particular charm, or object that you would need to have with you so far from home? (examples: a rock from your garden, a lucky item, a piece of fabric, a gift from someone, something to remind you of a place, person or moment, etc.).



A charm could provide comfort to the soldier carrying it. Some men carried charms for protection, in the hope that it would help them avoid injury or death. This piece of coal was sent to a soldier as a token of luck in 1917. Image and caption taken from *5 Lucky Objects Of The First World War* by Jessica Talarico (Imperial War Museum).



A sailor's lucky heart charm. Image from the Imperial War Museum.

Take a picture of your lucky object (something you could put in your pocket so it would be with you all the time) and paste it on a letter you would write home from the trenches to a close friend or family member explaining why you brought it with you. Make sure to describe some of your experiences overseas in your letter home. **The letter should be at least 250 words.**



Upload your final letter to **The Hub** by _____.

Checklist:

- Letter is at least 250 words in length
- Student has successfully written in role (they have identified themselves as a medic, soldier, driver, sailor, etc.) describing some experiences
- Student has selected, and successfully supported, their object that they want to bring with them as they participate in the war effort
- Writing style (including sentence structure and spelling) is acceptable

