# Remembrance Day Storytelling

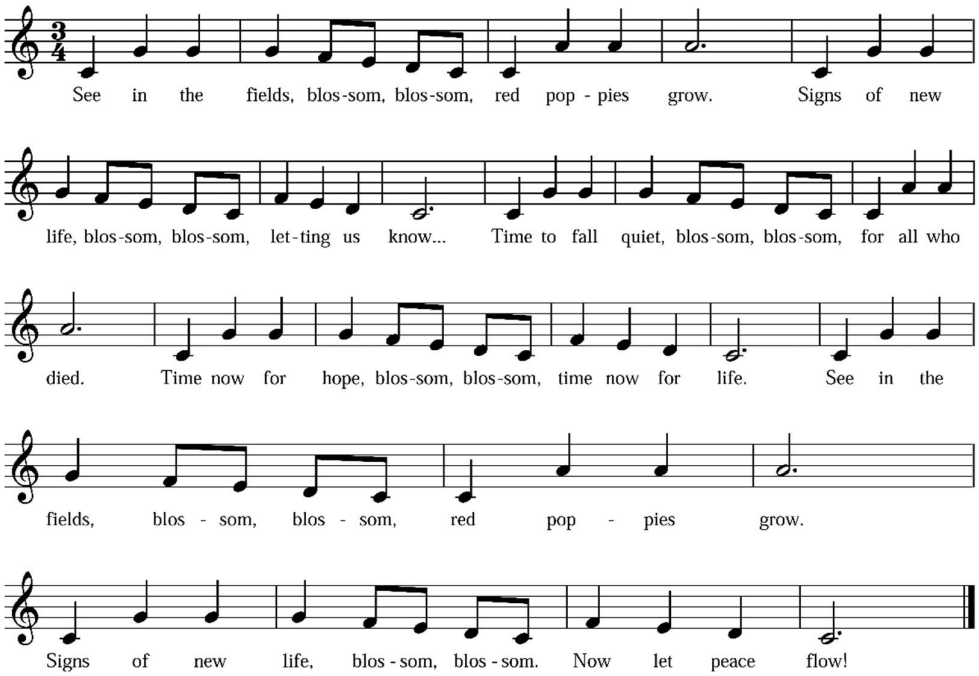
for schools, churches, toddler groups & more

**You will need:**

- 'Small world' people and horses (such as wooden figures or Happyland/Fisher Price figures). If you have no figures and your group includes older children, you could use stones, as some cultures use stones to remember people who have died.
- Two brown pieces of fabric or tissue/crepe paper large enough to cover the figures when they are lain down.
- Remembrance Poppies

## The Sowing Seeds Poppy Song

**Song: 'The Sowing Seeds Poppy song'. Words © Sharon Moughtin**
**Tune: 'Lavender's blue' (traditional).**




## The Storytelling

*Invite the children to sit in a circle so they can all see.*
In November, we remember.

Today's a very special day for remembering.
It's called 'Remembrance Sunday/Day'.
It's the day when we remember the World Wars.

*Show a poppy.* Has anyone seen one of these around?
What is it? *Accept the children's responses.*

We use these poppies to help us remember.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We have a song about the poppies.
Let's learn it together now.

It has the words 'blossom, blossom' in it.
Let's say that 'my turn' *point to self,* 'your turn' *leader's hands out to group*
'blossom, blossom' *point to self*
**'blossom, blossom'** *leader's hands out to group*
We're ready to learn the whole song.

*Ask the group first to say the words after you while performing the actions. Then add the tune. Very young children may choose only to join in with the actions and the 'blossom, blossom' words.*

## The Sowing Seeds Poppy Song

**See in the fields (blossom, blossom),** *Hand shading eyes, looking*
**red poppies grow.** *Twist hands upwards like a snake/poppy stem growing.*
**Signs of new life (blossom, blossom),** *Open palms while keeping wrists together to form a cup shape.*
**letting us know . . .** *Hand to chest.*

**Time to fall quiet (blossom, blossom)** *Finger to mouth.*
**for all who died.** *Hands crossed on chest.*
**Time now for hope (blossom, blossom),** *Twist hands upwards like a snake/poppy stem growing.*
**time now for life.** *Open palms while keeping wrists together to form a cup shape.*

**See in the fields (blossom, blossom),** *Hand shading eyes, looking.*
**red poppies grow.** *Twist hands upwards like a snake/poppy stem growing.*
**Signs of new life (blossom, blossom),** *Open palms while keeping wrists together to form a cup shape.*
**now let peace flow!** *Hands flowing like a river*

*Repeat until the group is becoming confident.*

These poppies tell a story.
We're going to listen to that story now.

> *If your group is used to telling Sowing Seeds stories:*
> This story is different from any other story that we tell together.
> Normally we all join in.

This is a special story.
It's a story to be quiet for.
Who can show me quiet?

This is a story that we listen to using our ears. *Hold ears*
Not our mouths. *Finger on lips*
Or our hands or our feet.


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*If appropriate:*
Today, adults are stopping

everything and being completely quiet
for two whole minutes,
standing still.

This is the story that everyone will be thinking about.

So we're going to sit still here
and be quiet for two minutes as well.

We're going to place our hands on our chest like this.
*Show the children how to cross their arms on their chest.*
And while we're quiet,
I'm going to tell you the poppies' story.
Are you ready?

*When the group is ready:*

About one hundred years ago people started fighting.
*Place three 'small world' figures down*.
They started fighting for lots of reasons.

But once they started, they couldn't stop.
More people joined in
*Place more figures down, including farmers, shopkeeper, horses, etc.*
and then more

until almost the whole world was fighting.
Not just soldiers,
but farmers and policemen,
teachers and artists.

Even people who didn't like fighting had to fight.
Even horses.
Lots of people got very badly hurt;
lots of people died.

*Lay down the people on the floor in silence and lay a brown cloth over the fallen figures.*
Everyone was very sad.

Then something surprising happened.
In the fields where the fighting had happened, red poppies grew!
*Lay the poppies down on the brown cloth.*

People looked at the beautiful poppies
and remembered how beautiful life can be.
They shook their heads and said,
'We must never fight like this again! *Shake head*
We must remember this, so it never happens again!
These poppies will remind us!'
That was the First World War.


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But just a few years later,
the fighting began again.
This time, there were some bullies.
*Place figures down next to the last brown cloth.*

They began to hurt people.
*Place women and children down and lay them down.*
'What can we do?' everyone asked.

The bullying got worse and worse.
'We have to stop them.
We will have to fight!' they said.
So the fighting began again.

*Place figures down.*
Like last time, not only soldiers had to fight,
but firefighters and shopkeepers,
bus drivers and dancers.

*Place children, older people, pets, etc. down.*
But this time, the fighting spread
so it even hurt people at home.
Children and old people, animals and pets.

Lots of people were badly hurt.
Lots of people died.
*Lay the people and animals down.*

But the bullies were stopped.
That was the Second World War.
*Place the second brown cloth over the people.*

When the fighting finished,
everyone shook their heads and said,
'We must never fight like this again!
We must remember these World Wars
so they never happen again!
We must learn not to fight when we're cross or scared,
but to use our words instead.
The beautiful poppies will remind us!'
*Indicate the red poppies on the first brown cloth.*

That's why we wear poppies in November.
To remember the World Wars.
To remember all the people who died.

Today, there is still fighting
all around the world.
We remember the people – all of them - who have died.
We remember the creatures and places that have been harmed.
We remember the soldiers and leaders who try to keep people safe.
And we promise to try to learn to use our words
and not fight,
from the very littlest of us.


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I wonder when we forget to use our words
and hurt people instead? …

We have a song about the poppies.
Can you remember the words, 'blossom, blossom'?
Let's sing our song now
and maybe you can help me with the actions.

## The Sowing Seeds Poppy Song

**See in the fields (blossom, blossom),** *Hand shading eyes, looking*
**red poppies grow.** *Twist hands upwards like a snake/poppy stem growing.*
**Signs of new life (blossom, blossom),** *Open palms while keeping wrists together to form a cup shape.*
**letting us know . . .** *Hand to chest.*

**Time to fall quiet (blossom, blossom)** *Finger to mouth.*
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**red poppies grow.** *Twist hands upwards like a snake/poppy stem growing.*
**Signs of new life (blossom, blossom),** *Open palms while keeping wrists together to form a cup shape.*
**now let peace flow!** *Hands flowing like a river*

*Repeat until the group is becoming confident.*

*You may like to end here, or continue with the following..*

*Show the children one or more baskets/trays with poppies.*
In a moment, *Name* and *Name* are going to bring round these poppies.

If you like, you could take one and hold it up like this.
*Model to the group holding up their poppy.*

Let's ask God to see our poppy as a prayer for peace.
*Sing the 'Sowing Seeds poppy song' until all the children and adults who wish to take a poppy have done so.*

Let's give our poppy prayers for peace to God as we sing.
You can put your poppy anywhere you like on our cloth.
*Indicate the cloth that was laid over the 'small world' people in the storytelling.*

Let's ask God to hear our poppy as a prayer
that we – and all our leaders – will use our words instead of fighting.

*Sing the 'Sowing Seeds poppy song' again as you lead the children and adults in placing their poppies. Some groups may like to invite two children to go around the circle in opposite directions with trays to collect the poppies. The poppies can then be laid on the cloth by one or two of the children. You may like to end by saying the last verse of the song as a closing prayer.*

See in the fields (blossom, blossom),
red poppies grow.
Signs of new life (blossom, blossom),
now let peace flow!


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