

## Remembering

## Tips for Teachers: November 2007 An ELMLE Publication

November is a month for remembering. Today in the British isles, the nation stopped what it was doing at the eleventh hour, pausing for two minutes to remember the dead of two world wars and the numerous conflicts that have raged and are still raging across the planet. The eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, a time enshrined in poppies worn on lapels, scattered across churchyards, woven into wreaths on war memorials across the land in remembrance of those flowers which grew on the bomb-stirred soil of Flanders almost a hundred years ago. The Greeks have a legend that poppies grew wherever the blood of Apollo was spilled in his fight with the Delphic python. And today across Britain people wear the blood-red poppy to honor those who, as Laurence Binyon's poem says, "shall not grow old as we grow old".

November is also a month for thanksgiving, recalling the great American holiday that brings families and friends together over groaning boards of nature's bounty, honoring the "pilgrim fathers" and their survival in a harsh new world some 400 years ago. As teachers in international schools across what was once war-torn Europe, we can use this eleventh month to combine remembrance and thanks. Remembrance of the destruction of great European cities: Berlin, Coventry, London, Warsaw, Dresden. Thanks that from the ruined stones and ashes grew a united Europe of commerce, renewed culture, and a home for our international communities and the schools which serve them. A mere sixty-seven years



ago the places in which we now live were emerging from some of the darkest years of modern life, years that spawned Nazism and the Holocaust, and years that produced Stalin's purges and Mao's murderous Great Leaps Forward. So in remembering and being thankful, we can use this eleventh month to think about the forces that control our world and to ponder our own place in it.

**They shall grow not old,  
As we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them,  
Nor the years condemn,  
At the going down of the sun  
And in the morning  
We will remember them.**

-- Laurence Binyon (1869-1943)