

Scottish Gallipoli trip: selected quotes from students and teachers

Knowledge and Understanding:

Maria was asked what part of the trip struck her most. 'How close the trenches were together and what a tight space they could be.'

Cameron: 'I didn't know that there were all these different countries all fighting on the same peninsula.'

Cameron: 'Our visit to Troy compares to the migrant crisis [today] because there's all these different people moving through Turkey and going through all the different layers of Troy shows how many people lived in Turkey and went through Turkey throughout the time between thousands of years before Christ and a couple of hundred years after Christ as well. The Greeks lived there, the Romans lived there, lots of Turkish lived there through a long time so it shows how many people, how many different cultures make up Turkey as it is today.'

Craig, youth worker, spoke about what the trip helped the students to understand: 'it helped them to understand how real this was a hundred years ago. These were real people their age, or not far off it. They were all more or less very young men around here. One of the students pointed out one of the graves, and it was a man who had left Leith Academy . . . and we were now standing in Turkey, at his grave. It was that moment when everything becomes very real – not just a fact.'

Attitudes and values:

Aimee (after meeting Turkish students): It was really nice to see the culture difference and meet people who were our age. They were like us but they just lived a different life.

Thomas (after meeting Turkish students): They were told that all British people were bad. So I said, 'well, are we bad?' and they said, 'no'.

Christine, teacher: 'we now have the opportunity to build bridges with Turkey and be friends rather than enemies.'

Lauren, teacher, when asked what learning outcomes her students had achieved: 'it taught them about the human impact of the conflict, and I think that's relevant for today as well. I've heard the students talking about more modern day conflicts as well and it all ties in together – issues in Syria and South Turkey at the moment – it's linking the modern to the history'.

Enjoyment and inspiration:

Thomas was asked what part of the trip struck him most. 'The one where I found the tooth. We were walking along and I see this thing inside the mud. It was where the Scottish and British soldiers had their front line. I found a molar – a tooth – and it had a crack in the bottom of it. It looked old.'

Fraser, about the trip: it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It's gone beyond my expectations.

Cameron: 'One soldier we studied lived in Regent Street in Portobello which I pass almost every day so it's kind of weird to think that a hundred years ago his family would be sitting in that street and he would be dead and they would be sitting in that street and mourning for him, and that was a hundred years ago at this very moment. He's on the Helles Memorial and we put a cross there for him.'

Christine, teacher: 'I think it's been a life-changing experience for the students' 'The opportunity they had to mix with Turkish school students was something I don't think they'll ever forget.'