A graph of Australian Enlistment in the First World War
Maths
Year 8

A graph of Australian enlistment in the First World War

Lesson objective

Students will demonstrate their ability to draw a graph and analyse the results.

Materials

Graph paper and coloured pencils are desirable, but not essential.

Key Facts

In the First World War over 400,000 men enlisted in the Australian Army. Enlistment was entirely voluntary, only those who wanted to go went to war. As a result the enlistment numbers by state and by year reveal an interesting pattern which your graph will reveal. Men could not enlist in the Northern Territory, so 300 Territorians went to Queensland to join up.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL   J00320

Australians enlisting in Melbourne in 1915
http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/J00320/

Task

A line graph is a diagram showing the relationship between, usually, two variables.

Your task is to make a line graph, plotting on the graph the data given.

Your graph should have the years from 1914 to 1918 along the horizontal axis.

On the left hand upright of the graph, the vertical axis, start with zero then evenly space units of 2000 up to 44,000. Now plot your data on the map.

Use a different colour or mark the number of men who enlisted from each state, for each year of the First World War. Once you have plotted all the data connect the plots for each of the six states.

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Data

The numbers below are those who enlisted in each state in each year of the First World War, 1914-1918, rounded off to the nearest thousand.

QLD   6000, 21,000, 19,000, 6000, 3000
NSW   20,000, 67,000, 41,000, 16,000, 12,000
VIC   14,000, 43,000, 33,000, 12,000, 7000
SA   5000, 12,000, 9000, 4000, 2000
WA   4000, 7000, 12,000, 3000, 1000
TAS   2000, 5000, 5000, 2000, 1000

Class Discussion

Once your graph is complete discuss what it tells you about Australian enlistment in the First World War.
Is there much difference between the states? If so, why do you suppose that is?
Why do the numbers enlisting vary significantly in some years?
Do you think the major events of the war, for example Gallipoli in 1915, affected recruitment? If so, how did it affect recruitment?
Can you make any connections between the graph and the pictures?

An Australian enlistment poster from 1917.
http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/ARTV00026/

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