**The Anzac Legend:**

**Comparing and Contrasting difference sources**

**LEARNING INTENTION**

Be able to compare and contrast different sources to form an opinion about historical events [about the Gallipoli campaign and the Anzac legend that exists today]

**TASK**

Read through the following 3 sources. Highlight words/phrases, quotes that indicate a one-sided view versus a balanced view of how Anzacs behaved

**SOURCE 1: WIKIPEDIA**

**Anzac spirit**

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[http://bits.wikimedia.org/static-1.24wmf17/skins/common/images/magnify-clip.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:CanberraSimpsonMemorial.jpg)

[Simpson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Simpson_Kirkpatrick) and his donkey statue by [Peter Corlett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Corlett) outside the [Australian War Memorial](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_War_Memorial), [Canberra](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canberra).

The **Anzac spirit' *or*** *Anzac legend* is a concept which suggests that [Australian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia) and [New Zealand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Zealand) soldiers possess shared characteristics, specifically the qualities those soldiers are believed to have shown on the battlefield in [World War I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I).[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-1) These qualities cluster around several ideas, including endurance, courage, ingenuity, good humour, [larrikinism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larrikinism), and [mateship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mateship).[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-AWM-2) According to this concept, the soldiers are perceived to have been innocent and fit, stoical and laconic, irreverent in the face of authority, naturally egalitarian and disdainful of British [class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Class_society) differences.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Manne-3)

The Anzac spirit also tends to capture the idea of an Australian and New Zealand "national character", with the [Gallipoli Campaign](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallipoli_Campaign) often described as being the moment of birth of the nationhood of both Australia[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Manne-3) and New Zealand.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-4)[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-5)[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-6)

The concept was first expressed in the reporting of the [landing at Anzac Cove](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landing_at_Anzac_Cove) by [Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellis_Ashmead-Bartlett); as well as later on and much more extensively by [Charles Bean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Bean). It is regarded as an [Australian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia) legend, although its critics refer to it as the *Anzac myth*.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Manne-3)[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Smith-7)[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Knight-8)[[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-mcdonald-9)[[10]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Seal-10)

**Historical development of the concept[[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Anzac_spirit&action=edit&section=1" \o "Edit section: Historical development of the concept)]**

The British war correspondent [Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellis_Ashmead-Bartlett) provided the first reports of the landing at Anzac Cove by the newly formed [Australian and New Zealand Army Corps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_and_New_Zealand_Army_Corps) (ANZAC). His report was published in Australia on 8 May 1915:

*They waited neither for orders nor for the boats to reach the beach, but, springing out into the sea, they waded ashore, and, forming some sort of rough line, rushed straight on the flashes of the enemy’s rifles.*[[11]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Dawn-11)

Ashmead-Bartlett's account of the soldiers was unashamedly heroic:

*There has been no finer feat in this war than this sudden landing in the dark and the storming of the heights... General Birdwood told the writer that he couldn't sufficiently praise the courage, endurance and the soldierly qualities of the Colonials (The Australians) were happy because they had been tried for the first time and not found wanting.*[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Manne-3)

Also in 1915, in response to the reporting of the efforts of the great Australian troops, the Australian poet [Banjo Paterson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Banjo_Paterson) wrote "*We're All Australians Now*", including the verse:

*The mettle that a race can show*

*Is proved with shot and steel,*  
*And now we know what nations know*

*And feel what nations feel.*[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-12)

The Anzac spirit was particularly popularised by [Charles Bean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Bean), Australia's official war historian. Bean encapsulated the meaning of Anzac in his publication *Anzac to Amiens*:

*Anzac stood, and still stands, for reckless valor in a good cause, for enterprise, resourcefulness, fidelity, comradeship, and endurance that will never own defeat.*[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-13)

For the soldiers at [Battle of Gallipoli](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Gallipoli), Bean argued, life would not have been worth living if they had betrayed the ideal of mateship.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Manne-3) Despite the loss at Gallipoli, Australian and New Zealand soldiers were seen to have displayed great courage, endurance, initiative and discipline. The stereotype developed that the Anzac rejected unnecessary restrictions, possessed a sardonic sense of humour, was contemptuous of danger, and proved himself the equal of anyone on the battlefield.[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Spirit-14)

1958 saw the publication of [Russel Ward](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russel_Ward)’s *The Australian Legend*. Promoting the egalitarianism of the Australian bush and its permutation into the Anzac soldiers as the Australian Legend, it soon became a landmark book in Australian historical writing.[[15]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Arnold-15)

During the 1960s and 1970s, due to lack of observance of [Anzac Day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_Day) in general society, the idea of a unique Anzac spirit began to fade. Especially among [baby boomers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baby_boomers), interest in Anzac Day reached its lowest point in the aftermath of the anti-war demonstrations over Australian involvement in the Vietnam War.[[16]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Editorial-16) Vietnam veterans, especially those taken in the forced draft, were represented by some in the 1970s as lacking the Anzac spirit.[*[citation needed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

A resurgence in popular commemoration of Anzac Day in the 1980s (possibly linked to the release of the film [*Gallipoli*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallipoli_(1981_film))) brought the idea of an Anzac spirit back into prominence in Australian political discourse.[[*citation needed*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)] There has been an increase in people, especially youth, attending Anzac Day Dawn Services in Australia and New Zealand,[[17]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Hede-17) where the Anzac spirit is often invoked.[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Jeffrey-18)[[19]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Thousands-19)

The modern definition of the Anzac spirit relates not just to Australians and New Zealanders, but to the [Turks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkish_people) also. It is felt the Turks shared this sense of mateship forged in honourable battle.[*[citation needed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*]

**The Anzac spirit and national identity[[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Anzac_spirit&action=edit&section=2" \o "Edit section: The Anzac spirit and national identity)]**

Coming just fourteen years after the [Federation of Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federation_of_Australia), the Gallipoli campaign was one of the first international events that saw Australians taking part as Australians. As such, it has been seen as a key event in forging a sense of national identity.[[20]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Remembering-20) According to Dr [Frank Bongiorno](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Frank_Bongiorno&action=edit&redlink=1), Senior Lecturer in History at the [University of New England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_New_England,_Australia):

*The Gallipoli campaign was the beginning of true Australian nationhood. When Australia went to war in 1914, many white Australians believed that their Commonwealth had no history, that it was not yet a true nation, that its most glorious days still lay ahead of it. In this sense the Gallipoli campaign was a defining moment for Australia as a new nation.*[*[21]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Culture-21)

[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ANZAC_Day_at_Manly,_1922.jpg)

[http://bits.wikimedia.org/static-1.24wmf17/skins/common/images/magnify-clip.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ANZAC_Day_at_Manly,_1922.jpg)

Anzac Day at Manly, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia (1922)

Ernest Scott’s influential *A Short History of Australia*, which remained a standard school text for nearly four decades from 1916 and went through six editions in its author's lifetime, clearly enunciated this concept. In the preface to the book's first edition, Scott linked the European settlement of Australia with the idea of Australia becoming a nation on the battlefields of Gallipoli:

*This Short History of Australia begins with a blank space on the map and ends with the record of a new name on the map, that of Anzac.*[*[15]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Arnold-15)

Charles Bean also propagated this view, extending the notion to suggest that New Zealand nationhood was also born in the First World War. In 1924 Bean wrote that:

*Anzac Day now belongs to the past and during the war all energy was concentrated on the future but the influence of the Gallipoli Campaign upon the national life of Australia and New Zealand has been far too deep to fade… it was on the 25th of April 1915 that the consciousness of nationhood was born.*[*[17]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Hede-17)

The popular belief that the Anzacs, through their spirit, forged Australia's national character, is still today frequently expressed.[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Jeffrey-18) For example, in 2006 the [Governor-General](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor-General) of Australia, [Michael Jeffery](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Jeffery) gave an address in which he said that although the Anzacs lost the campaign they created a lasting identity for Australia:

*We are summoned to recall the battle sacrifices of Australian farmers and tally clerks, teachers and labourers and to commemorate outstanding courage and strength of character in the face of sustained adversity... [The campaign] won for us an enduring sense of national identity based on those iconic traits of mateship, courage, compassion and nous.*[*[18]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Jeffrey-18)

An extension of this belief is the idea that the Anzacs set an example for future generations of Australians to follow, laying the bedrock of 'Australian values'. In 2007 the Australian Defence Minister [Brendan Nelson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brendan_Nelson) articulated this view, stating that the Anzacs "forged values that are ours and make us who we are, reminding us that there are some truths by which we live."[[19]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Thousands-19) Nelson had earlier argued that the story of [Simpson and his donkey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Simpson_Kirkpatrick) rescuing wounded men at Gallipoli "represents everything that's at the heart of what it means to be an Australian".[[22]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-clearoff-22)

The Anzac spirit is also sometimes said to be exhibited during Australian civilian crises. For example, the [Returned and Services League of Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Returned_and_Services_League_of_Australia) states:

*The Spirit of the ANZAC continues today in times of hardship such as cyclones, floods and bush fires. At those times Australians come together to rescue one another, to ease suffering, to provide food and shelter, to look after one another, and to let the victims of these disasters know they are not alone.*[*[2]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-AWM-2)

**Criticism[[edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Anzac_spirit&action=edit&section=3" \o "Edit section: Criticism)]**

Professor [Manning Clark](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manning_Clark), in his influential work *A History of Australia*, suggested a contrasting image of the innocent and honourable Anzac soldier. From a range of sources he provided evidence of the soldiers' bad behaviour. For example, he documented that, as recruits, some indulged in sex orgies with an 18-year-old girl at the [Broadmeadows](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broadmeadows) camp before being shipped to war.[[21]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Culture-21) Others confronted police in violent scuffles on the streets of [Melbourne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melbourne).[[21]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Culture-21) Clark also recorded that in [Egypt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt) some soldiers burned the belongings of local people, brawled, got drunk and rioted, and spent sufficient time in the local brothels for many of them to contract [venereal disease](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venereal_disease).[[21]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Culture-21)

Other scholars such as professor of [politics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_science) at [La Trobe University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/La_Trobe_University), [Robert Manne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Manne), have also questioned the veracity of the Anzac legend, arguing that it is more accurate to describe the concept as a [mythology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mythology).[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Manne-3) Dr Dale Blair of [Deakin University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deakin_University) suggests that:

*While traits such as egalitarianism, resourcefulness and initiative are assumed and maintained in the nation's popular memory as a truthful representation, not only of Australia's First World War soldiers, but also, of the national character, they were not sufficiently evident in the experience of the 1st Battalion [at Gallipoli] to justify their advancement as characteristics general to Australian soldiers or the nation.*[*[24]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-BlairReview-24)

According to Blair, the official war historian Charles Bean "advanced an idealised view of sacrifice to provide the nation with higher meaning and comfort as compensation for the death of its soldiers".[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-BlairReview-24) Professor Verity Burgmann of the [University of Melbourne](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Melbourne) argues that the prevailing picture of Anzac and later battles on the Western Front as the highest representation of national unity and shared sacrifice is a misrepresentation, because two conscription [referenda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Referendums_in_Australia) were defeated in Australia, and many Australians were totally opposed to any participation in the war.[[25]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Cahill-25) As Charles Bean,Australian War correspondent stated 'rule of censorship forbids criticism'.Conflicting reports on the factual events of the landing at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915 continue to surface with conflicting eye witness reporting. [[26]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-26) Other sceptics have questioned the idea that Australia's "national character" was forged on the beaches of Gallipoli. In 2008 an editorial in the [*Sydney Morning Herald*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sydney_Morning_Herald) stated:

*But why should Australians now, 90 years later, be still so eager for some stereotypical reaffirmation of their character? Why the self-doubt? The danger in the transformation - as remembrance replaces memory, and nationalism replaces remembrance - is that the solemnity and the serious purpose of Anzac Day will be lost in an irrelevant search for some kind of essence of Australianness.*[*[27]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Editiorial-27)

Similarly, historian Mark McKenna disputes the notion that the character traits that supposedly define the Anzac spirit are uniquely and demonstrably Australian, arguing that these virtues are in fact universal, being "found in Palestine and Iraq, in Darfur and East Timor, in Afghanistan and Zimbabwe."[[28]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-McKenna-28)

Alan Young, a [World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II) veteran and film maker, presents a different view of the origins of the Anzac tradition in his film [*Forging the Anzac Tradition, The Untold Story*](http://www.forgingtheanzacs.com/). Young argues that "If Gallipoli is the birthplace of the Anzac acronym, then the Western Front is where the Anzac legend grew up, stood tall and cemented their place in international history; and in our hearts". He points out that five times the number of men died in the "real war" at the Western Front than at the disastrous Gallipoli diversion, yet many Australasians know very little of this sacrifice.

Some have also critiqued the [masculine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masculinity) underpinnings of the Anzac legend. According to popular notions of the Anzac spirit, the male bonding or mateship becomes the main characteristic in the description of Australianess, yet these characteristics are seen to imply that the true Australian is inevitably and only male.[[29]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Petra-29) Some [feminists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminism) have therefore described this notion as being exclusionary and [discriminatory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discrimination), and contend that, as a result, it cannot possibly define what it means to be Australian.[[29]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Petra-29)[[30]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-30)[[31]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-31) Professor Joy Damousi has questioned a view of an Australian national character which relies exclusively on militarism and heroism, arguing that this obscures a more complex, diverse and inclusive understanding of identity.[[32]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Remembering.26Learning-32)

More broadly, Dr Martin Ball of the University of Melbourne argues that conflating the Anzac spirit with a collective Australian national character exposes an uncritically narrow understanding of Australian history:

*The Anzac tradition holds many values for us all to celebrate, but the myth also suppresses parts of Australian history that are difficult to deal with. Anzac is a means of forgetting the origins of Australia. The Aboriginal population is conveniently absent. The convict stain is wiped clean. Postwar immigration is yet to broaden the cultural identity of the population.*[*[33]*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anzac_spirit#cite_note-Ball-33)

**SOURCE 2: From SKWIRK – an interactive schooling website from NSW**

**What is the Anzac Legend?**

The legend of Anzac was born on 25 April 1915, and was reaffirmed in eight months' fighting on Gallipoli. Although there was no military victory, the Australians displayed great courage, endurance, initiative, discipline, and mateship. Such qualities came to be seen as the Anzac spirit.

The legend is that the Australian and New Zealand troops helped to establish their countries' reputations in the world through qualities of strength and bravery when faced with adversity. It is the legend of these men who endured so much has given something of which Australians can be proud. It is the belief that what happened at Gallipoli put Australia's mark on the world as something other than a nation descended from convicts.

**How was it created?**

It is not uncommon for the characteristics of soldiers to mirror the characteristics commonly found in the society from which they come. This has resulted in the emergence of a number of stereotypes for soldiers from each nation. The Australian soldiers, who had not had a chance to prove themselves on an international front prior to Gallipoli, found that their strong characteristics were revealed in the most challenging of times. It was through events such as the landing at Anzac Cove and the battle at The Nek (where ANZACs were slaughtered in their masses), that they acquired the image that has become synonymous with the word 'digger.' Digger has come to embody the stereotype of a patriotic Australian family man who has temporarily become a soldier and has spent his civilian life in a rural area. More importantly, it suggests a soldier with certain moral qualities, such as a good sense of humour and an overriding belief in mateship and equality.

There were five particularly 'digger-like' qualities which emerged from the ANZACs when faced with hardship during the Gallipoli Campaign. These qualities set them apart from soldiers from other nations and were said to be attributable to their rural backgrounds in the bush. Many of the World War I diggers were third generation Australians from the early days of pioneering. Their particular attributes included:

1. the ability to remain cheerful with a good sense of humour, even in the most difficult of times
2. the ability to be resourceful when they had no supplies, for example by making hand grenades from empty tin cans
3. the spirit of mateship in which a soldier would risk his own life for his mate's
4. Australian courage, which was shown on the very first landing at Anzac Cove where the soldiers continued to charge up on to the beach straight into the line of Turkish fire
5. the notion that people all deserve the same amount of respect, no matter what their background is.

It is precisely this type of person and this type of soldier who gave the ANZACs their reputation which, in turn, instilled a new national pride in Australia and New Zealand. See image 2

**Why is it important?**

The Gallipoli Campaign was a particularly significant event in history because it came at a time when Australia had only just become a federal commonwealth, trying to assert her place alongside a collection of nations with thousands of years of history. In the eyes of the rest of the world, Australia had no eminent military history and no distinct cultural characteristics as a nation. Gallipoli was the first opportunity for Australia to earn the respect of other nations and to show the world her strong national character. See video

The Anzac legend is also important because it encourages Australians to remember the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for their country. The legend has made such an impression on Australians that we continue to commemorate the landing of the ANZAC soldiers on the shores of Gallipoli on 25 April each year.

**SOURCE 3: From the Australian War Memorial Website**

## The Anzac spirit

The [legend of Anzac](http://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/dawn/spirit/extended.asp) was born on 25 April 1915, and was reaffirmed in eight months’ fighting on Gallipoli. Although there was no military victory, the Australians displayed great courage, endurance, initiative, discipline, and mateship. Such qualities came to be seen as the Anzac spirit.

Many saw the Anzac spirit as having been born of egalitarianism and mutual support. According to the stereotype, the Anzac rejected unnecessary restrictions, possessed a sardonic sense of humour, was contemptuous of danger, and proved himself the equal of anyone on the battlefield.

Australians still invoke the Anzac spirit in times of conflict, danger and hardship.

**TASK 2: ANALYSIS**

What clues do you have about whether the above sources are balanced and neutral, or biased (one-sided) and persuasive?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Source 1: Wikipedia | Source 2: Skwirk online educational website from NSW | Source 3: Australian War Memorial website |
|  |  | This source is ONE-SIDED |
|  |  | I know this because... it was focused on the positive. It was in favour of the Anzacs. |
|  |  | It uses “displayed great courage, endurance, initiative...” |
|  |  | It starts to sound more balanced when it says “According to the stereotype...” |
| ` |  |  |
|  |  |  |