

# VIMY 100 IN THE CLASSROOM



THE VIMY FOUNDATION  
LA FONDATION VIMY

With the support from

*Tim Hortons*

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

More and more photographs from the First World War are being turned from the original black and white versions into colour ones. In fact, The Vimy Foundation has partnered with the Department of Canadian Heritage to colourize a series of rarely seen images from the Great War. Doing so raises an interesting historical question: Is a black and white photograph from the war more accurate than a colourized one?



*Canadian soldiers returning from Vimy Ridge*

*Photo courtesy of: Canadian War Museum George Metcalf Archival Collection 19920085-295*

*Colourized for the first time ever by Canadian Colour*

## DISCUSSION

1. First, browse through the collection of black and white and colour photos found [here](#).
2. In groups of three or four, make a list of pros and cons about colourizing photographs from the First World War.
3. Second, discuss whether black and white photos or colour ones are more historically accurate. What does a historian need to consider?
4. How important are images to building our understanding of the past? Could photographs ever be misleading for a historian?

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## EXAMINING PHOTOGRAPHS CLOSELY

### ACTIVITY 1

After browsing through the collection of photographs, choose one that the colourization process has made the greatest difference for you in terms of bringing the photograph to life.

- As a group, which ones did you really like?
- What was it about the photograph that colourization made a difference for you?

### ACTIVITY 2

All photographs are primary sources, the essential ingredient for building an understanding of the past. Choose one other photograph from the collection and write a brief explanation of what you learned about the First World War from observing the photograph closely. Make references to specific aspects of the photo.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

To read more about the First World War and photography, [click here](#). What contributed to the growth of photography during the war? How successful were the bans on soldiers taking pictures?