

# ANZAC DAY

## ceremony outline



Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs

The Anzac tradition—the ideals of courage, endurance and mateship that are still relevant today—was established on 25 April 1915 when the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Anzac Day is the day on which Australians remember the sacrifice of those who have died in war and is commemorated every year on 25 April.

### CEREMONY OUTLINE

- Introduction
- Catafalque party mounts
- Commemorative Address
- Hymn
- Prayer, Reading or Poem
- Wreath laying
- The Ode
- The Last Post
- One minute's silence
- The Rouse
- The National Anthem
- Catafalque party dismounts

### FLAG PROTOCOL

Before the start of the ceremony, flags should be lowered to half mast. During the playing of *The Rouse*, flags are to be raised slowly to the masthead.

**INTRODUCTION** – The introduction to your Anzac Day ceremony should only take one to two minutes and could include a reference to the significance of Anzac Day and the Anzac tradition, or a thought provoking question about the meaning of the ceremony or day.

### CATAFALQUE PARTY

A catafalque party is a guard of four service personnel who are posted at the four corners of the catafalque, a structure on which a coffin is drawn in a procession. It is usually symbolised by a raised platform often made of stone. The catafalque party is posted facing outwards with rifles reversed to show that the dead are now at peace. This is not mandatory for a school ceremony. If appropriate a cadet could be used to stand quietly to attention. An explanation of the significance should be given during the ceremony. The catafalque party should be posted at the commencement of the ceremony and dismount after the National Anthem has been played.

### COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS

The address could be given by an ex-serviceman or woman, a serving member of the Australian Defence Force, a local dignitary, a teacher or a student. The address may link to an anniversary or a particular person connected to the community. Sample speeches can be found at [www.dva.gov.au/commems\\_oawg/commemorations/commemorative\\_events/organise\\_events/Pages/address.aspx](http://www.dva.gov.au/commems_oawg/commemorations/commemorative_events/organise_events/Pages/address.aspx)

### HYMN

Hymns that may be sung during an Anzac Day ceremony include:

- The Recessional
- Abide with Me
- O Valiant Hearts
- O God, Our Help in Ages Past

### PRAYER, READING OR POEM

Prayers or readings that may be recited during an Anzac Day ceremony include:

- The Lord's Prayer
- Psalm 23
- John 15: 10–13
- Micah 4: 3–5
- Ephesians 6: 13–15

Readings of epitaphs, letters written by soldiers or those on the home front or other readings about war can be recited by students during the ceremony.

Poems that may be read during the Anzac Day ceremony can include:

- *In Flanders Fields*,  
Lieutenant-Colonel  
John McCrae
- *We Shall Keep the Faith*  
(A reply to Lt Col  
John McCrae),  
Miss Moira Michael
- *For the Fallen*,  
Laurence Binyon

Alternatively, students may research and write their own poems on war to be recited during the ceremony.

**WREATH LAYING** – Flowers have traditionally been laid on the graves or memorials of the dead. Students could be chosen to lay a wreath

or flowers at a particular site in the school. This could be under the school's honour roll, at the base of the flag pole or in a designated site in front of the assembly.

**THE ODE** – *The Ode* is taken from Laurence Binyon's poem *For the Fallen*.

*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.*  
(Audience responds)  
***We will remember them.***

**THE LAST POST** – In the military, *The Last Post* traditionally marks the end of the working day. *The Last Post* is a bugle call played during commemorative ceremonies to serve as a tribute to the dead.

**ONE MINUTE'S SILENCE** – One minute's silence is included in the Anzac Day ceremony as a sign of respect. It offers time for reflection on the significance of the ceremony.

**THE ROUSE** – *The Rouse* is played following the silence and signifies waking up to a new day. During the playing of *The Rouse*, flags should be slowly raised to the masthead. At the end of *The Rouse* the ode reader says:

*Lest we forget*

The people gathered repeat:

*Lest we forget*

**THE NATIONAL ANTHEM** – *Advance Australia Fair* is sung at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Further information on Anzac Day can be found on the Department of Veterans' Affairs website at [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au), by email at [commemorations@dva.gov.au](mailto:commemorations@dva.gov.au) or by calling 133 254.

The Last Post, The Rouse and the National Anthem are available to download from the Department of Veterans' Affairs website at [www.dva.gov.au/commems\\_oawg/commemorations/commemorative\\_events/organise\\_events/Pages/audio%20files.aspx](http://www.dva.gov.au/commems_oawg/commemorations/commemorative_events/organise_events/Pages/audio%20files.aspx)