America's Veterans

A 23-minute video program for students of American History

Teacher's Guide

Developed and Produced by
The Center for Educational Resources
for The American Legion
America’s Veterans

A 23-minute video program
for students of American History

Developed and Produced
by
The Center for Educational Resources

for
The American Legion
Credits

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR
Larry Laswell
The Center for Educational Resources
3610 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46208

ARCHIVAL SOURCES
CBS News Archives
Department of Veterans Affairs
NBC News
The American Legion
Washington Stock Photographs
Archive Films
The National Archives
The Library of Congress

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER/
TEACHER’S GUIDE WRITER
Alan Backler, Ph.D.

Personal Collections of
Joe Frank
Diane Carlson Evans
Joseph Rodriguez
Billie Holmes

SCRIPTWRITER
Douglas Anderson

TEACHER’S GUIDE DESIGNER/COMPOSITOR
David Strange

VIDEO EDITOR
Kevin Zimmerman

COVER DESIGNER
Jennifer Reagan

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Rob DeVoe

SPECIAL THANKS TO
The Citizens of Cass County, Indiana
Cass County Veterans Council
Denita Clifford
The National Park Service
The Congressional Medal of Honor Society
IPALCO Enterprises, Inc.
Indiana War Memorial Commission
Vietnam Women’s Memorial Project

PRODUCTION STAFF
Brett Lodde
Joel Wanke
Jason Morris

MUSIC
Patrick Hurley

GRAPHICS
Kemberly McDowell
America’s Veterans

Curriculum Connection

The *America’s Veterans* video program and the activities contained in this guide explore several critical dimensions of the question, “What does Veterans Day mean to you?” These dimensions include: who are veterans; how and why we honor veterans; what we can learn from the lives of veterans; and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. The video program complements and enriches the treatment of Veterans Day found in most American history textbooks. In addition, the video and the activities contained in this guide contribute substantially to students’ attainment of the Roles of the Citizen in American Democracy standard of the *National Standards for Civics and Government* (Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education, 1994).

Objectives

The purpose of these materials is to increase students’ understanding of the role of veterans in a free society.

After viewing the video program and participating in the activities contained in this guide, students will be able to

- describe who veterans are, what they have done, and why they should be honored
- appreciate the role played by veterans in a free society
- explain why certain rights and responsibilities are important to themselves and to their family, community, state, and nation

Program Summary

The program begins with Lizzie, who has the day off from school, going over to her grandfather’s house. As she searches for him, Lizzie discovers a Marine dress uniform. She wrongly concludes that grandpa has joined the Army.

Grandpa assures her that he is not joining the Army. Rather, he served in the Marines and fought in Vietnam. Lizzie wants to know why he has the uniform out. Grandpa asks, “Don’t you know what
day it is?” Lizzie replies that it is a free day from school. Grandpa reminds her that it is Veterans Day.

Grandpa then asks the question that frames the program—“What does Veterans Day mean to you?” Lizzie admits that it doesn’t mean much. So begins her voyage of discovery.

Over breakfast in the kitchen, Grandpa explains who veterans are and what they did to protect their families and our country. He indicates that on Veterans Day we honor and say “thank you” to those who served in the military. Lizzie wonders how we say “thank you.”

The announcer of a news program on the kitchen TV sketches the history of Veterans Day—from its origins as Armistice Day following World War I to its renaming in 1954. He then goes on to show ceremonies held at the Tomb of the Unknowns and makes the point that Veterans Day is a time to remember those who died in service to our country and honor those living veterans in every community. Grandpa tells Lizzie that they are going to a Veterans Day parade, one of the ways their community honors veterans.

Next we meet four veterans and hear their stories. Diane Carlson Evans was an Army nurse in Vietnam, where she cared for wounded soldiers. She was later responsible for the creation of the Vietnam Women’s Memorial in Washington, D. C. She feels that people need reminders of what veterans have done for our country. Memorials help people remember.

Billie Holmes was a bomber pilot in the Army Air Corps during World War II. He tells about one mission when two of his crew were wounded and his plane was badly damaged, but they made it back safely. He points out that veterans of every war sacrificed so that others could have their freedom.

Lizzie asks if she can wear a uniform some day. She is excited to hear that she can if she joins the armed forces. Grandpa points out that there is a lot more to serving in the military than wearing a uniform—it is a tough challenge, there are many sacrifices.

We then meet Joe Frank who was an Army engineer in Vietnam when a nearby truck hit a land mine. Joe was blown into the air, landed on his back, and has been paralyzed from his chest down.
ever since. He works with other veterans who have suffered spinal cord injuries. He is a strong advocate for community service. He feels that people must not only take, but give to our country. Grandpa reinforces that point when he tells Lizzie that if we are to enjoy freedoms we must also be willing to take responsibility for preserving those freedoms.

Finally we meet Joseph Rodriquez, who received the Medal of Honor, our country’s highest honor for valor and self-sacrifice, for his actions in the Korean War. We hear part of his Medal of Honor citation. He then states that whether or not they were awarded a Medal of Honor, veterans did their part for the country while in the military, and even after their military service.

The program then moves on to the parade, held in Logansport, Indiana. Joe Frank wheels by as Lizzie gives him a salute. Then Lizzie sees her grandpa go marching by.

After the parade, Lizzie sees the announcer from the TV news program they were watching that morning. He, too, is in uniform and at the parade. He says that he has been asking veterans, “What does it mean to be a veteran?” Billie Holmes says that it means you are willing to die for your country. Joseph Rodriquez says that we need to appreciate what a great country we live in. Diane Evans says that she was proud to serve her country. Joe Frank says that he would do it again, so that people could remain free.

The program ends when the TV announcer asks Lizzie “What does Veterans Day mean to you?” Now she has a lot to say, though we do not hear her words. The question is left open for children in classrooms to answer.

Key Words

armistice—to stop fighting

Army Air Corps—military organization that existed before the U.S. Air Force

barrage— heavy, rapid firing of weapons

bombardier— aircraft crew member who operates the bombing equipment
Bronze Star—U.S. Army medal awarded for heroism in ground combat

camaraderie—close relations among friends

Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial—a monument to honor all Medal of Honor recipients, located in Indianapolis, Indiana

Distinguished Flying Cross—U.S. military medal awarded for heroism in air combat

duce-and-a-half truck—two-and-a-half-ton truck used to transport troops and military materials

dust-off—Vietnam War medical evacuation helicopter missions; pilots for these missions were known as “Dust-Off Pilots”

foxhole—a shallow pit dug by soldiers to protect themselves from enemy gunfire

freedoms (rights)—privileges given to citizens

grenade—an explosive designed to be thrown by hand or fired from a launcher

invincible—one who cannot be conquered

Korean War—a military action between North Korea, with the aid of China, and the United Nations forces (including the United States) between 1950 and 1953

land mine—an explosive usually hidden just below the surface of the ground

last rites—religious ceremony conducted for someone who is about to die

MASH Unit—a temporary hospital set up near the battlefield

Medal of Honor—the highest U.S. military medal awarded to a member of the armed forces for bravery beyond the call of duty in action against the enemy

memorial—something, such as a monument or a holiday, established to serve as a remembrance of a person or event

navigator—aircraft crew member who plots the course of an airplane

paralyzed—unable to move or have feeling in a part of the body as the result of an injury

paraplegic—one who is paralyzed in the lower half of the body, including both legs, caused by injury to or disease of the spinal cord

Persian Gulf War—a military conflict between Iraq and an alliance of several countries, including the United States, Great Britain, France, and Saudi Arabia (1991)

posthumously—after someone has died
Purple Heart—medal given to man or woman wounded in battle

responsibility—duty or obligation

sacrifice—giving up something important to you, such as being with your family, for the sake of something you consider even more important, such as the defense of your country

tail gunner—aircraft crew member who operates a machine gun from a small structure mounted on the back of the plane

Tomb of the Unknowns—located at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, the Tomb is a remembrance for veterans missing in action or who could not be identified; it contains the remains of three unknown servicemen, one from World War I, one from World War II, and one from the Korean War; a fourth section of the Tomb is empty, because the Vietnam Unknown, who had been buried there, was later identified; he was then reburied near his family’s home

upper turret gunner—aircraft crew member who operates a machine gun from a small structure mounted on the roof of the plane

valor—courage and boldness in battle

veteran—someone who has served in the armed forces

volunteer—a person who serves of his or her free will

World War II—military conflict between Germany, Italy, and Japan and allied forces that included the United States, Great Britain, Canada, and Russia, among other countries (1939 to 1945)

Vietnam War—a military conflict between North Vietnam, with the aid of China and the Soviet Union, and allies that included the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea, among other countries (1960s to 1973)

Before the Program

Use the following activity to stimulate students’ curiosity about the video program they are about to see.

1. Ask students “What does Veterans Day mean to you?”

2. Give students some time working in pairs or groups of three or four to consider and record their responses to this query.

3. Reconvene the entire class and record student ideas on the chalkboard.

4. Tell students that they are about to see a video program that addresses the question, “What does Veterans Day mean to you?” As students watch the video, have them figure out how their responses compare with the ideas developed in the program.
**Showing the Program**

The *America’s Veterans* video program is about 23 minutes in length (23:20). It is recommended that you show the program all the way through to give students a sense of the whole. Then you can conduct post-viewing activities. This guide is designed to support this approach.

You are encouraged to show the video, or portions of it, several times.

**After the Program**

After showing the video, give students an opportunity to comment on the program, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. “Tell me what you heard and saw” is a good starting point for the discussion. Then continue, using questions and activities like the ones below. Students may ask you to replay portions of the video.

1. **Question:** Who is a veteran? *(anyone who has served in the armed forces)*

2. **Question:** What are some of the ways in which our nation says “thank you” to veterans? *(parades, ceremonies, memorials/monuments, holidays)*

3. **Activity:** Veterans Day is the day when we stop to listen to veterans’ stories and to learn from them. What can we learn from the stories of Diane Carlson Evans, Billie Holmes, Joe Frank, and Joseph Rodriquez? To help students answer this question for themselves, have them begin by using Venn Diagrams to analyze the veterans’ stories in the video. A blackline master appears on page 17.

   A. Begin by showing the Diane Carlson Evans and Billie Holmes stories. You may need to show them more than once.

   B. Ask the class to identify anything about the two stories that they see as similar or the same. Record the responses on the chalkboard. *(They might respond: they were both in wars; they both had other people’s lives depending on them; they were both scared; they were both young adults in the war; they both risked their lives; they both sacrificed for their country.)*

   C. Using an overhead transparency of the Venn Diagram, list student responses in the overlapping section of the circles.

   D. Ask the class to identify anything about the two stories that was different or distinct. Record the responses on the chalkboard. *(They might respond: Diane was a nurse, while Billie was a pilot; Diane was in the army, while Billie was in the Army Air Corps; Diane was in Vietnam, while Billie was in WWII; Diane was responsible for a creation of a monument, while Billie was not.)*

   E. Using the overhead transparency of the Venn Diagram, list the differences in the non-overlapping parts of the circles, using one circle for Diane and the other for Billie.
F. Have the class check the Venn Diagram to make sure that everything they mentioned is accounted for and in the correct location.

Next divide the class into groups of three or four. Then

A. Distribute a Venn Diagram chart to each group.

B. Show the Joe Frank and Joseph Rodriquez stories. You may need to show them more than once. (As an alternative, have students decide which stories they want to compare and show the requested story pairs.)

C. Have each group identify and record, on a piece of their own paper, the similarities and differences in the paired stories.

D. Have the groups complete their Venn Diagrams.

E. Ask for volunteers to describe their work. Allow for comments and suggestions from other students.

To conclude this activity, have students work individually to write a few paragraphs about what they learned from these veterans’ stories. Have students focus on the information appearing in the overlapping sections of the Venn Diagrams. Allow them to use the information on the Venn Diagram that the whole class developed and/or that their group developed. Ask volunteers to share their thoughts. Consider writing and sharing a few paragraphs of your own.

4. Activity: In the video, Lizzy’s grandpa makes the point that we have many freedoms or rights in this country. But we also have a responsibility to help preserve these rights. This activity explores the ideas of rights and responsibilities. First, write the following terms on the chalkboard, in the order in which they appear here. (For your reference, rights are identified with a star.)

★ to live where one chooses
　to take care of oneself and one’s family
★ to practice the religion of one’s choice
★ to speak freely
　to obey the law
　to respect the rights of others
　to pay taxes
★ to vote (both a right and responsibility)
★ to seek and hold political office
　to serve on juries
★ to own property
　to serve in the armed forces
　to pay attention to how one’s elected leaders are doing their jobs
★ to establish a business
Also on the chalkboard, write the labels “Individual Rights” and “Responsibilities of Individuals.” Have students work as a class to distinguish rights from responsibilities. Record student responses under the appropriate heading. Ask the students placing the phrases to explain why they placed them where they did. Allow other students to comment on the placement of the phrases.

When students are finished placing phrases, point out that one of the primary purposes of American government is the protection of the rights of individuals. The individual rights that they identified are but a few that Americans enjoy. You might want to have students brainstorm other rights that individuals enjoy in America.

Ask students why the rights they identified are important to themselves and to society. Ask them to address a particular right in their responses. For example, “Why is the right to vote important?” (*Their responses will vary.*)

Then indicate that for American democracy to flourish, citizens not only must be aware of their rights and exercise them responsibly, they must also fulfill their responsibilities to family, friends, and others in their community and nation. The responsibilities they identified are but a few that people must carry out in our democracy. You might want to have students brainstorm other responsibilities that individuals have in America.

Ask students why the responsibilities they identified are important to themselves and their family, community, state, and nation. Ask them to address a particular responsibility in their responses. For example, why is the responsibility to vote important? (*Their responses will vary.*)

Indicate that veterans, by their example, show us one very significant way that we can fulfill a responsibility to our families, friends, community and nation.

To end this activity, play the stories of Diane Carlson Evans, Billie Holmes, Joe Frank, and Joseph Rodriguez again. Have students work in pairs to identify what these four veterans say about rights and/or responsibilities. You may need to play the stories more than once. *Responses will vary, but here are some possibilities:*

- **Billie Holmes:** “I hope young people think about what veterans went through. . . . They sacrificed a lot so that . . . these young people could have their freedom.”

- **Billie Holmes:** Being a veteran “means that you have supported your country, and that you are willing to die for your country, for the beliefs, for the things that we have, that we know that no one else in this world has.”

- **Joe Frank:** “Veterans took time out of their life to go serve. . . . They left their family, their home to do whatever they had to do to make their country remain free as it does today.”
• **Joe Frank:** “I’d do it all over again if I had to (so) that people here can be free.”

• **Diane Carlson Evans:** “We were responsible for that soldier, for his life. And we did hold him. But we also held them in our hearts. And they’re still in our hearts . . . forever.”

• **Diane Carlson Evans:** “I would do it again. I am very proud of serving my country, and I’m very proud that I was able to take care of those wounded soldiers.”

• **Joseph Rodriquez:** “There were so many veterans that did their part while they were in the military, and even after.”

5. **Question:** Joe Frank feels that every citizen in this country should do community service. What kind of community service does he do? What kind of community service do/can you do? Why is it important for people to perform community service? (Joe works with other veterans with spinal cord injuries. Answers to the other two questions will vary. The last one should tie to responsibilities that people have for their communities.)

6. **Question:** Based on what you saw in the video and learned in these activities, why do you think that veterans should be honored? (Responses will vary, but might include some of the following: because they served to protect our rights; because they sacrificed to fulfill their responsibility to the nation; because they put themselves in danger to protect us.)

7. **Activity:** Have students compare their answers to the question “What does Veterans Day mean to you?” asked in the opening activity, with the ideas developed in the program. What would they add to their list of responses, based on what they saw? (Answers will vary.)

**Follow-Up Activities**

As an extension of this lesson on Veterans Day, you might want your students to complete one or more of the activities that follow.

Have students work in pairs or groups of three or four to explore one of the ideas developed in the video program by researching a monument, event, or individual. For example a group of students might choose to focus on Diane Carlson Evans or the Medal of Honor Memorial both specifically mentioned in the program. Or, they might focus on something related to an idea developed in the video, but not specifically mentioned. For example, a group of students might choose to focus on memorials to Black aviators who served in World War II.
In either case:

A. Have students identify the monument, event, or individual they want to research.

B. Have students develop a short list of “driving questions” that they will use to guide their research. Check these questions before they start their research.

C. Have students use the library and the Internet to do their research.

D. Have the partners prepare a visual presentation on a poster board representing what they learned from their research.

E. Post the finished products around the classroom. Give students an opportunity to share their work with the class, a few at a time, using the carousel approach: have a few pairs or groups stand beside their displays; ask the other students to circulate among the displays, asking questions and sharing ideas as they go. Don’t let students bunch up at one display. Repeat the routine until all displays have been reviewed.

Follow-Up Activity 2

Wall of Pride

In this activity students plan and develop a Veterans Memorial, a “wall of pride,” in their school.

Begin by reminding students of the comments that Diane Carlson Evans made in the video about the importance of memorials. She said “People forget very quickly about history, about veterans, and what veterans have done for the country—if they don’t have reminders, if they don’t have something to teach them and remind them. That’s what memorials do.”

Indicate to students that they will be planning and developing a “wall of pride” in their school to honor veterans who have ties to the school: teachers; administrators; support staff; former students; relatives of students, of teachers, of staff; friends of the school and so on. (You will need to secure a site for the “wall of pride” before students start their work. You will also need to decide whether the display is to be temporary or permanent.)

A. Have students brainstorm what kinds of items they think should be displayed on the “wall of pride.” Make a list of their ideas and keep it for later reference. (Among other things, they might mention pictures of veterans in uniform, letters veterans wrote while in the service, pictures of activities veterans are doing now, medals, letters from students.)

B. Have students brainstorm strategies that they can use to seek the participation of veterans. (They might suggest using the local newspaper, public service announcements broadcast by radio stations, announcements at parents’ meetings, a brochure sent home to families, presentations at veterans’ organizations.)

C. Divide the class into groups of three or four. Have each group prepare an announcement, presentation, or brochure that describes the project and that
encourages veterans to contribute items to the “wall of pride.” Their work should include a listing of the kinds of items they plan to display. When groups have completed their work, have them pair up with another group and give each other feedback. You should review their work at this time, as well. Then have the groups make final copies of their announcements, using computers and graphics, and distribute them as appropriate.

D. Ask volunteers to prepare the site of the memorial.

E. When items start coming in, have students catalogue each item and send the donor a “thank you” note.

F. Ask volunteers to hang the items on the wall of pride and create explanatory notes and labels as required.

G. Invite members of the community (especially the donors) to come in to view the finished “wall of pride.” Have each student in the class act as a guide for a visitor.

To conclude this activity, have students reflect on the experience of planning and developing the “wall of pride.” Then have them work individually to write a paragraph or two on why memorials are important. Ask for volunteers to share their work. Add the students’ paragraphs to the “wall of pride.”

In this activity, students, working in pairs, will create biographical sketches of veterans in their community. They will conduct interviews of those veterans. Students should be encouraged to use a tape recorder or video camera to gather information.

A. Help students identify veterans to interview. Encourage students to select a person from their own family. If this is not possible, ask for help from the local American Legion Post.

B. Have students work as a class to develop a set of questions that they will all ask in their interviews.

C. Give students time to conduct interviews. Encourage them to use photo albums, scrapbooks, and old letters to supplement the information collected in their interviews.

E. Once the interview is completed, have student teams examine, summarize, and report on the evidence they collected. They might do this by using a map
to plot the places where the person interviewed served, creating a photo essay, and presenting the biography in story form. Let students decide how they will present their biographical sketches.

E. As part of the examination that they make of their featured person, have student pairs consider the following question, “How was the life of the person interviewed affected by being a veteran?”

G. Ask for volunteers to share their work with the class. Have everyone share their work with you.

As a concluding activity, invite some of the veterans interviewed to come to class. Ask them to tell their stories. Give students a chance to ask questions.

Remind students that President Dwight D. Eisenhower appeared in the video program. Mention that on October 8, 1954, President Eisenhower signed the very first Veterans Day Proclamation or public announcement.

Tell students that in this activity they are going to analyze a copy of the actual proclamation to learn more about Veterans Day.

Distribute a copy of the Veterans Day Proclamation activity to each student. Blackline masters appear on pages 18–20. Have students work individually, in pairs, or in small groups of three or four to complete the activity.

Be sure that students understand the assignment. Help them with difficult words (a glossary is provided). You might want them to preview the questions before doing the reading. When students are finished, have volunteers share their work with the class.

Answers for the Veterans Day Proclamation activity questions are:

A. The ending of World War I.

B. “Heroes of that tragic struggle”; World War I veterans, living and dead.

C. World War II and the Korean War.

D. Millions of veterans were added from those wars; need to pay homage to veterans of all wars who contributed to the preservation of the nation.

E. Remember the sacrifices of all veterans who fought to preserve our heritage; dedicate ourselves to peace; display flags.

F. Answers will vary.
Remind students about the parade shown in the video. It is representative of the ways in which communities honor veterans. In this activity students will design and create a brochure to provide people with a self-guided tour of sites and events in your community that honor veterans. As an alternative, you might have students create a Web site.

**Note:** You will want to enlist the help of the local American Legion Post in this activity.

A. Begin by having students review ways in which communities honor or say “thank you” to veterans. Record their responses. *(Possible responses include parades, ceremonies, memorials/monuments, holidays)*

B. Have students brainstorm ways that your community honors veterans. Record their responses. Ask representatives of the local American Legion Post to add to this list. *(Include Department of Veterans Affairs facilities on the list.)*

C. Have students decide what types of information about each site or event on their list needs to be included in the brochure. To help students think about this task, have them visit “A Veterans’ Guide to Washington, D. C.” which appears in the Department of Veterans Affairs Web site at <http://www.va.gov/OCA/vertec_USA.htm>. Ask students to examine the kinds of information shown for each site mentioned in the veterans’ guide.

D. Create a standard form for students to use to collect information about local sites and events.

E. Divide students into work groups. Distribute the sites and events to be included in the local guide among the groups. Have students collect the required information. Again, representatives from the local American Legion Post can help in this endeavor. You might have students obtain pictures of the sites and events for inclusion in their brochures. The local newspaper can also help with pictures and stories.

F. When student groups have completed their work, review all information forms for completeness. When you are satisfied that all information has been collected, provide each student with a set of the completed information sheets.

G. Have students work in groups of three or four to create brochures on their computers. Have them design a logo for the cover and write an introduction for the brochure. *(A Veterans’ Guide to Washington, D. C. can provide some guidance for an introduction.)* Encourage students to include pictures and a map identifying sites in their brochures.

H. As each student group completes its draft brochure, have them exchange their work with another group and get feedback. You should also review their work.

I. Have student groups complete the final versions of their brochures.

J. Have students provide copies of their brochures to the local Chamber of Commerce, Visitors’ Bureau, and American Legion Post.
Remind students that in the video program they met Joseph Rodriquez, who was awarded our country’s highest military honor—the Congressional Medal of Honor. The video featured his Medal of Honor citation, a description of what he did that led to his being honored.

What can we learn about our responsibilities as citizens from Medal of Honor recipients? In this activity students gather information from Medal of Honor citations and then reflect on what they can learn from these heroes. They will use an information chart to gather data from the citations. A blackline master appears on page 22.

Begin by focusing on Joseph Rodriquez.

A. Distribute a copy of the Rodriquez citation to each student. A blackline master of the citation appears on page 21. Have students read the citation to themselves or read it aloud to them. Some key vocabulary words are defined on the handout.

B. Using a transparency of the information chart as a guide, ask students a series of questions:

1. Who is the citation about? List their responses on the chart.
2. What happened that is described in the citation? List their responses on the chart.
3. When did what was described on the citation happen? List their responses on the chart.
4. Where did it happen? List their responses on the chart.
5. Why did it happen? (For example: Why was it necessary for someone to attack the enemy’s position on the hill?) Record students’ answers on the chart.

When you feel comfortable that the students understand how to use the chart, assign them to groups of two.

A. Assign a particular Medal of Honor citation to each group OR let each group choose a citation. Note: Citations for all Medal of Honor recipients appear at <www.army.mil/cmhp/moh1.htm>.

B. Distribute a copy of the information chart (page 22) to each group.

C. Have the groups analyze their citations—using the chart as a guide, and following the procedure used previously. Have them record their findings on the chart.

D. Ask groups to write a short summary of their citations, based on the data gathered. Their summaries should provide answers to the who, what, when, where, and why questions.
E. As students work, walk among the groups to assist as needed and to keep the pace of the work as equivalent as possible among the groups.

F. Invite the group members to sign and post their completed charts and summaries. Select several groups to explain their charts and read their summaries.

To conclude this activity, have students work individually to write a few paragraphs about what they learned from the deeds of Medal of Honor recipients. Have students discuss in their paragraphs how these veterans fulfilled a responsibility to their fellow servicemen. Also, have them speculate about why the honorees might have done so. Ask volunteers to share their thoughts with the class.

**Evaluation Suggestions**

An instrument that can be used as a pre-test or post-test with the *America’s Veterans* video and the related activities in this guide appears on page 23.

**Further Resources**

The American Legion  
www legion org

The American War Library/Veterans and Military/Veterans Day Resource Guide  
http://members aol com/veterans/warlib6 htm

Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial, Indianapolis  
www medalofhonor com

Congressional Medal of Honor Society  
www cmo hs org

Military Order of the Purple Heart  
www purpleheart org

U.S. Army Center for Military History/Medal of Honor Citations  
www army mil cmh pg/moh1 htm

U.S. Army Military District of Washington (Arlington National Cemetery)  
www mdw army mil
Further Resources

Children’s Books

Mir Tamim Ansary
*Veterans Day*

- Introduces Veterans Day, explaining the historical events behind it, how it became a holiday, and how it is observed.

Brent K. Ashabranner
*Their Names to Live: What the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Means to America*

- Describes the planning and creation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and how it came to be a symbol for the dead of all American wars.

Kiernan Doherty
*Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients*
Enslow Publishing (1998)

- While this book is written for young adults, it provides exciting, engaging accounts of the acts that led to the awarding of the Congressional Medal of Honor to an interesting mix of 11 Americans.

Judy Donnelly
*A Wall of Names: The Story of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*

- Surveys the history of the Vietnam War, chronicles the construction of the Vietnam Memorial, and discusses what the memorial means to many Americans.

Margot Parker
*What is Veterans Day?*
Chicago: Children’s Press (1986)

- Ben explains to Amy why we celebrate Veterans Day each year.

Lynda Sorensen
*Veterans Day*
Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Press (1994)

- Introduces Veterans Day to children.
Veterans Day Proclamation

President Dwight D. Eisenhower appears in the video program. On October 8, 1954, he signed the very first Veterans Day Proclamation. That proclamation appears below. Read it carefully. Then answer the questions that follow the proclamation. Write your answers in the spaces below the questions. To help you, here are definitions for some important words:

- **commemorate**—honor
- **proclamation**—an official public announcement
- **concurrent**—at the same time
- **homage**—pay respect
- **reconsecrate**—rededicate
- **solemnly**—seriously
- **tribute**—respect, honor
- **whereas**—it is a fact that
- **intervening**—coming in between
- **in vain**—for nothing
- **observance**—celebration
- **preservation**—keep safe

Veterans Day, 1954

By The President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

3071

Whereas it has been our customs to commemorate November 11, the anniversary of the ending of World War I, by paying tribute to the heroes of that tragic struggle and by rededicating ourselves to the cause of peace; and

Whereas in the intervening years the United States has been involved in two other great military conflicts, which have added millions of veterans living and dead to the honor rolls of this Nation; and

Whereas the Congress passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926 (44 Stat. 1982), calling for the observance of November 11 with appropriate ceremonies, and later provided in an act approved May 13, 1938 (54 Stat. 351), that the eleventh of November should be a legal holiday and should be known as Armistice Day; and

Whereas, in order to expand the significance of that commemoration and in order that a grateful Nation might pay appropriate homage to the veterans of all wars who have contributed so much to the preservation of this Nation, the
Congress by an act approved June 1, 1954 (68 Stat. 168), changed the name of the holiday to Veterans Day.

Now, therefore, I, Dwight D. Eisenhower, President of the United States of America, do hereby call upon all of our citizens to observe Thursday, November 11, 1954, as Veterans Day. On that day let us solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air, on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of freedom, and let us reconsecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts shall not have been in vain. I also direct the appropriate officials of the Government to arrange for the display of the flag of the United States on all public buildings on Veterans Day.

In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans’ organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Towards this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans’ Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington this eighth day of October in the Year of our Lord nineteen hundred and fifty-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and seventy-ninth.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

By the President:

John Foster Dulles
Secretary of States
Veterans Day Proclamation

Questions

A. What event did Armistice Day celebrate?

B. Who was honored on that day?

C. The proclamation says that there were two great military conflicts after Armistice Day was first celebrated. What were these two conflicts?

D. Why was the name changed from Armistice Day to Veterans Day?

E. What are people asked to do on Veterans Day?

F. If you were in charge of Veterans Day activities, how would you want the holiday to be celebrated?
Rodriguez, Joseph C.


Citation: Sgt. Rodriguez, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in action against an armed enemy of the United Nations. Sgt. Rodriguez, an assistant squad leader of the 2d Platoon, was participating in an attack against a fanatical hostile force occupying well-fortified positions on rugged commanding terrain, when his squad’s advance was halted within approximately 60 yards by a withering barrage of automatic weapons and small-arms fire from 5 emplacements directly to the front and right and left flanks, together with grenades which the enemy rolled down the hill toward the advancing troops. Fully aware of the odds against him, Sgt. Rodriguez leaped to his feet, dashed 60 yards up the fire-swept slope, and, after lobbing grenades into the first foxhole with deadly accuracy, ran around the left flank, silenced an automatic weapon with 2 grenades and continued his whirlwind assault to the top of the peak, wiping out 2 more foxholes and then, reaching the right flank, he tossed grenades into the remaining emplacement, destroying the gun and annihilating its crew. Sgt. Rodriguez’ intrepid actions exacted a toll of 15 enemy dead and, as a result of his incredible display of valor, the defense of the opposition was broken, and the enemy routed, and the strategic strongpoint secured. His unflinching courage under fire and inspirational devotion to duty reflect highest credit on himself and uphold honored traditions of the military service.

Key Words
barrage—heavy, rapid firing of weapons
foxhole—a shallow pit dug by soldiers to protect themselves from enemy gunfire
grenade—an explosive designed to be thrown by hand or fired from a launcher
Korean War—a military action between North Korea, with the aid of China, and the United Nations forces (including the United States) between 1950 and 1953
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
America’s Veterans

1. What is a veteran?

2. Why should we honor veterans?

3. What are some ways in which communities honor veterans?

4. What purpose do memorials serve?

5. What are some lessons that we can learn from the lives of veterans?

6. What are some of the rights that we enjoy as Americans?

7. Pick one of the rights you mentioned. Tell why that right is important to you.

8. What are some of the responsibilities that we have as Americans?

9. Pick one of the responsibilities you mentioned. Tell why that responsibility is important to our nation.

10. What does Veterans Day mean to you?
America's Veterans is produced by The American Legion®, the nation's largest wartime veterans organization. Founded in 1919, The American Legion® has a strong commitment to the youth of America. Through America's Veterans The American Legion® strives to help students understand that our nation's freedoms came from sacrifice and a sense of community that spans generations. For more information on The American Legion® visit: www.legion.org.

Development of the teacher's guide and distribution of the America's Veterans video is underwritten with a grant from IPALCO Enterprises, Inc., a multistate energy company providing a variety of energy products and services. The beautiful Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial in Indianapolis - the only one in the country to honor all recipients of our nation's highest military honor - was built by IPALCO and given to the nation in 1999. It is located in White River State Park in downtown Indianapolis. For more information on IPALCO and the Medal of Honor Memorial visit: www.ipalco.com and medalofhonormemorial.com.

For more information contact: The American Legion®, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055. Phone: 317-630-1200 FAX: 317-630-1223. www.legion.org