

Honoring Our Military

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Memorial Day is a time to remember those who gave the greatest sacrifice. On **Memorial Day** we honor those who died while serving our nation and celebrate their brave achievements. Share the stories of war and sacrifice. Honor these heroic men and women with your students using this special collection of lessons, interactives, and resources.

Recommended Resources for Memorial Day:

- May 26, 2014, is Memorial Day when we honor those men and women who died while serving in the United States military. This [Calendar Entry](#) offers teachers several activities to use with their students to honor these men and women. (5-12)
- [The Massachusetts 54th Regiment: Honoring the Heroes](#) teaches students about the heroism of African Americans during the Civil War. (6-8)
- After watching first-person accounts and analyzing artifacts in [The Soldiers Experience: Vietnam versus World War I](#), students take on the roles of soldiers and news teams to present newscasts comparing the experience of fighting in two wars. (9-12)
- [Images at War](#) encourages students to examine attitudes toward war as revealed in Civil War photographs and WWII posters. (9-12)

Lessons

[Slavery, the Crisis of the Union, the Civil War and Reconstruction](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | K-12

A comprehensive collection of lesson plans and resources about the Civil War.

[The American Civil War](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson Collection | K-12

A collection of lesson plans, student interactives, multimedia presentations, and vetted websites that will allow teachers, students, parents, and lifelong learners to learn more about these events.

[The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and Escalation of the Vietnam War \(from EDSITEment's "We The People Resource"\)](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | K-12

This lesson guides students through an analysis of the Gulf of Tonkin incident and identifies the factors that led to Congressional action authorizing military force. By studying this incident and the debate it has generated, students discuss what we can learn about twentieth century American democracy and military affairs.

[Winslow Homer: The Veteran in a New Field](#)

EDSITEment | Feature | K-12

This resource features a scene of the aftermath of the Civil War painted by Winslow Homer. This was a period of consolidation, adjustment, and renewal, and this painting evoked the complex mood of the United States as it embarked on reunification.

[Wartime Poetry: Working With Similies](#)

ReadWriteThink | Lesson | 3-5

Students analyze a photograph, brainstorm words to describe the characters' senses and feelings, work in pairs to describe a character's experience, and create a poem using their ideas and similes.

[Heroes Around Us](#)

ReadWriteThink | Lesson | 6-8

Students select, read about, and report on a hero and then identify how their hero matches certain criteria and characteristics. Hero reports are then compiled into a class book.

[Homer's Civil War Veteran: Battlefield to Wheat Field \(from EDSITEment's "Picturing America Resource"\)](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | 6-8

In this lesson, students consider Civil War veterans' possible memories and emotions as they returned to civilian jobs. Students study symbolism in Winslow Homer's painting, *The Veteran in a New Field*, and compare it to a photograph of the aftermath of a Civil War battlefield. After reading James Wren's diary entry, students write about and role-play the life of a returning veteran.

[Women Aviators in World War II: "Fly Girls"](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | 6-8

In this lesson, students explore the contributions of the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) during World War II. Students will gain an understanding of the importance of the WASP program, which enhanced careers for women in aviation.

[Comparing Confederate and Union Soldiers in the Civil War](#)

Smithsonian's History Explorer | Lesson | 6-9

Use primary sources as the inspiration for comparing and contrasting the soldiers on either side of the Civil War in this lesson. After examining uniforms and viewing two short video clips, students will develop questions and perform short research projects to uncover the motivations behind the Civil War and the conditions for the soldiers who fought.

[African-American Soldiers in World War I: The 92nd and 93rd Divisions](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | 9-12

In this lesson, students use evidence from a variety of sources, including firsthand accounts, to evaluate the performance of the 92nd Infantry Division in World War I.

[Battle of the Bulge: Americans Respond to the German Surprise](#)

Smithsonian's History Explorer | Lesson | 9-12

In this lesson, students use a video clip and primary sources to develop an understanding of the challenges facing the ground troops during World War II's Battle of the Bulge, and then they take on the role of one of those soldiers and write a letter home.

[Building Vietnam War Scavenger Hunts through Web-Based Inquiry](#)

ReadWriteThink | Lesson | 9-12

Students research the effects of the Vietnam war on a specific group of people who were involved. They then create Internet scavenger hunts to share with the class.

[Images at War](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | 9-12

This lesson encourages students to examine American attitudes toward war as revealed in Civil War photographs and World War II posters.

[Leadership in Victory: One Last Measure of the Man](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | 9-12

In this lesson, students examine the leadership of George Washington to determine what made him a good military leader.

[Love of War in Tim O'Brien's "How to Tell a True War Story"](#)

ReadWriteThink | Unit/Lesson | 9-12

Students explore the theme of love of war through texts on camaraderie among soldiers. They then compose a visual collage depicting their beliefs about the relationship between love and war.

[National Debt and Wars](#)

Illuminations | Unit/Lesson | 9-12

Students will collect information about the National debt, plot the data by decade, and determine whether an exponential curve is a good fit for the data. Then student groups will determine and compare common traits and differences in changes in the National debt in three major eras: the Civil War, World War I, and World War II.

[Poetry of The Great War: 'From Darkness to Light'?](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | 9-12

In this lesson, students explore the historical context of World War I poetry and compare/contrast poems via active class discussion.

[POWs](#)

Smithsonian's History Explorer | Lesson | 9-12

In this lesson, students analyze news sources from the Vietnam War era to describe how POWs and their families were represented in the media. They then write letters from the perspective of the relative of a POW that describes the concerns of POW families.

[The Massachusetts 54th Regiment: Honoring the Heroes \(from EDSITEment's "Picturing America Resource"\)](#)

EDSITEment | Lesson | 9-12

In this lesson, students examine the leadership of George Washington to determine what made him a good military leader.

[The Soldier's Experience: Vietnam versus World War I](#)

Smithsonian's History Explorer | Lesson | 9-12

In this lesson, students analyze museum artifacts and first-person accounts of the Vietnam War and World War I and then take on the role of soldiers and a news team to present a newscast about the experience of fighting these two wars.

[Worth Its Weight: Letter Writing with "The Things They Carried"](#)

ReadWriteThink | Lesson | 9-12

This lesson uses a letter-writing activity based on Tim O'Brien's story "The Things They Carried" to build empathy as students examine the weight they symbolically carry in their own lives.