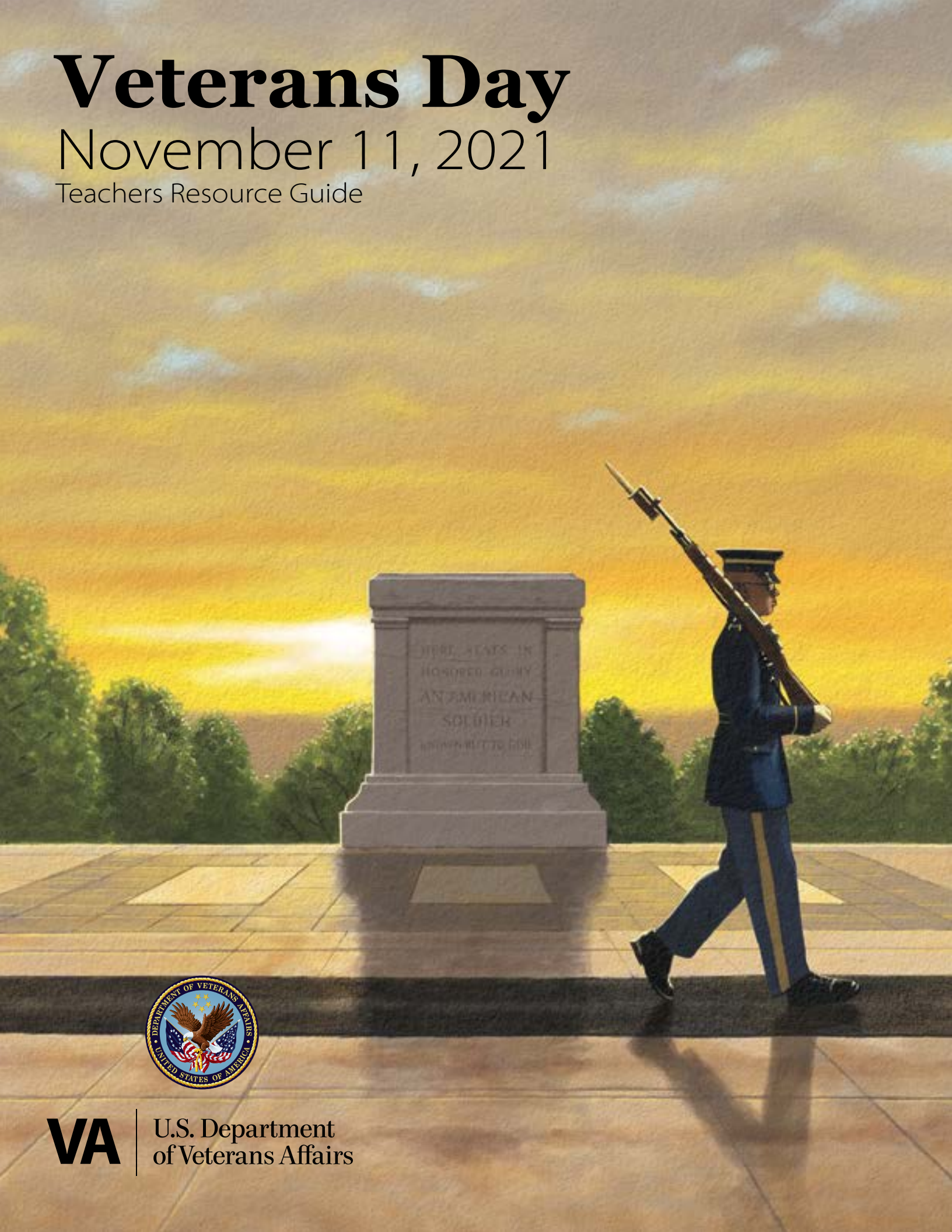


# Veterans Day

November 11, 2021

Teachers Resource Guide

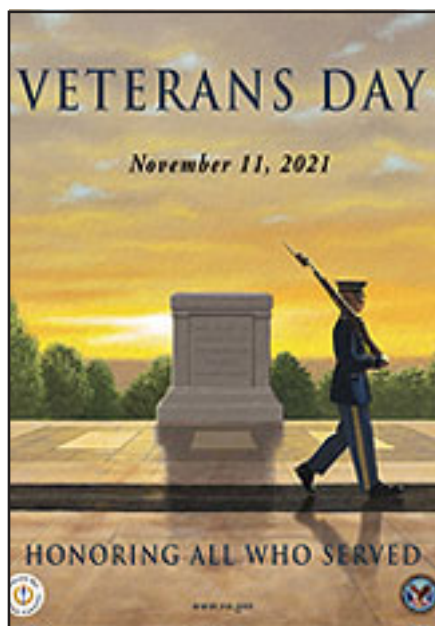


**VA**

U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans Day National Committee are pleased to provide you with this Teachers Resource Guide. It is our hope that by thanking America's Veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice, we can reward them with the honor they so richly deserve.

Introduction .....	page 3
Program Guide.....	page 4
Tomb of the Unknown Soldier .....	page 5
Prisoners of War (POWs) and Those Missing in Action (MIAs) .....	page 6
Origins of Veterans Day .....	page 7
Student Activities .....	page 8
Veterans Legacy Program .....	page 9
America's Wars .....	page 10
How to Contact Veterans Service Organizations .....	page 11
Scholarships .....	page 12
Respecting the Flag.....	page 13
Folding the Flag .....	page 14
2021 Veterans Day National Committee .....	page 16



Each year, the Veterans Day National Committee publishes a commemorative Veterans Day poster. The poster is selected from artwork submitted by artists nationwide and is distributed to VA facilities across the country and to military installations around the world. It also serves as the cover of the official program for the Veterans Day Observance at Arlington National Cemetery.

Over the years, these posters have illustrated the rich history of our country's service members. Each poster clearly reflects our pride and patriotism in saluting Veterans while providing thematic artistry for the year.

Current and past Veterans Day posters are available for download from VA's Veterans Day Poster Gallery at <https://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/gallery.asp>.

### On the Cover

The 2021 National Veterans Day poster commemorates the Centennial of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The Tomb was dedicated on November 11, 1921. The winning artist is Matt Tavares from Maine.

### Our American Veteran

A Veteran of the United States is someone who has served on active duty in the Armed Forces, Public Health Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or Environmental Science Service. The Veteran must have earned any character of discharge other than dishonorable. ***On Veterans Day, we honor the service and sacrifice of all Veterans – living and deceased.***



**W**elcome to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 2021 Veterans Day School and Teachers Resource Guide. As Veterans Day approaches, we hope you will help your students connect with Veterans who served in the past, as well as service members now on active duty. We can all better appreciate the freedoms we have because of the men and women who have served in defense of the United States.

There are about 18 million Veterans living among us, in every state and territory and from every walk of life. Many of the students in your class may be the son, daughter, cousin, or other relative of a Veteran or current Servicemember. By engaging in discussion about these crucial members of our society, your students will be able to hear from and about those who helped shape U.S. history. Our hope is that students will be encouraged to learn more of these often unheard stories from those close to them.

This resource guide, along with another group of America's finest — our teachers — will allow your students to learn more about the price our brave Veterans have paid to defend our nation.

### *The School Assembly:*

Because the weather can be quite cold in November in many parts of the country, an indoor assembly is far more sensible than one that would take place outside, eliminating the need for foul weather plans.

The scope of such a program may be large enough to permit invitations to the community, to include local Veterans groups. Students can be encouraged to bring family members who are Veterans (especially parents, siblings or grandparents) or who currently serve in the Uniformed Service.

### *Inviting Local Veterans Groups:*

Inviting local Veterans groups makes assembly programs far more exciting and meaningful for students. Students tend to better understand and absorb the significance of Veterans Day when they can attach a human face to it.

In addition, Veterans groups often put on very exciting shows. From stirring renditions of the National Anthem to thrilling speeches and stories, Veterans will both entertain and educate students.

You can find Veterans groups in your area through your local Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities or regional offices. You may be surprised at how many Veterans live in your area. Schools that send out invitations often end up with former generals and admirals, Medal of Honor recipients and other distinguished Veterans as guest speakers. A listing of VSOs appears on page 11 of this guide. Or visit [www.va.gov/vso/](http://www.va.gov/vso/) for an online directory of Veterans' groups.

Nearly 100 Veterans of America's wars -- from World War II to the Global War on Terrorism -- join cadets of the Elbert County Comprehensive High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Program in rendering a hand salute, in honor of Veterans and our fallen heroes during a Veterans Day commemoration. *Georgia National Guard photo by Capt. William Carraway*



## Program Guide:

Undoubtedly, your school will want to put on a program worthy of all your distinguished guests. The following are some suggestions for a sample program guide that will make this Veterans Day memorable for both students and guests:

**Prelude and Posting of Colors** — As the audience enters to be seated, a school or community musical organization may offer several appropriate selections. A procession and posting of the colors (U.S. Flag) is a stirring event. Local VSOs often participate in such programs with their impressive array of military banners and U.S. Flags.

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Singing of the National Anthem** — The program chairperson, school principal or student body president should invite the audience to stand and join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and singing the National Anthem.

**Introductory Remarks** — Brief introductory remarks set the tone for the entire program. Consider reading the President’s Veterans Day Proclamation, which the White House issues in advance and posts on the internet. For more information, please visit: [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov).

Additional remarks and suitable quotations for speeches can be found on the Veterans Day website [www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/](http://www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/).

**Introduction of Guests** — Introduce any special guests, who may include local government officials, school alumni with distinguished military service, Veterans from the community who represent different periods of service and faculty members who are Veterans.

**Principal Speaker** — Your principal speaker should be invited far enough in advance to allow adequate preparation for your program.

**Student Essay or Reading** — By including various presentations by individual pupils in school programs, student body participation may be increased. Selected essays from class or school-wide competitions may be read aloud by the authors. The reading of a well-known patriotic address by a U.S. president or war hero is also effective. There are a number of published musicals/narratives that can enhance your program. A student-performed short play or skit can be quite entertaining as well.

**Moment of Silence, Taps** — While Veterans Day is primarily a tribute to America’s living Veterans, it is always appropriate to recognize and remember those who gave their lives for our country. More than a century ago, World War I ended when an armistice – a truce – was signed at 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918; thus, the saying that the war ended on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Although 11 a.m. remains a traditional hour for remembering our fallen heroes, a moment of silence is appropriate at any point in the program. This may be followed by the playing of “Taps.” For more information on the history of Taps please visit [www.tapsbugler.com](http://www.tapsbugler.com).

**Closing** — The Master of Ceremonies announces “Retire the Colors.” Accompanied by appropriate music, such as a John Philip Sousa march, the Colors are paraded out of the assembly area. This concludes the ceremony.



The Meade High School JROTC Color Guard performs during a Veterans Day Assembly held at MacArthur Middle School, which has a “Partners In Education” program, where Servicemembers act as mentors to students. Photo by: Daniel Kucin Jr. Baltimore Sun



# Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

In 1921, an American soldier – his name “known but to God” – was buried on a Virginia hillside overlooking the Potomac River and Washington, D.C. The burial site of this unknown World War I soldier in Arlington National Cemetery became known as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The neoclassical, white marble sarcophagus depicts three carved Greek figures representing Peace, Victory, and Valor. Inscribed on the back of the Tomb are the words:

***“Here rests in honored glory an American soldier known but to God.”***

The Tomb sarcophagus stands above the grave of the Unknown Soldier of World War I. To the west are the crypts for an Unknown Soldier from World War II

and the Korean War. A white marble slab flush with the plaza marks each crypt.

In the following years, thousands of people flocked to Arlington National Cemetery to pay their respects at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, which soon came to symbolize the sacrifices of all American Servicemembers.

In 1926, Congress established a military guard to protect the Tomb during daylight hours. Since midnight on July 2, 1937, the Army has maintained a 24-hour guard over the Tomb. Sentinels of the 3rd U.S. Infantry, “The Old Guard,” assumed these duties on April 6, 1948, maintaining a constant vigil regardless of weather conditions.



Soldiers from the 3d U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) support an Army Full Honors Wreath-Laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. (U.S. Army photo by Elizabeth Fraser)

# Prisoners of War (POWs) and Those Missing in Action (MIAs)

A prisoner of war (POW) is any person captured or placed in prison (interned) by a foreign or enemy power during war. In the strictest sense, it is used only for members of the Armed Forces, but by broader definition it has also included members of small independent groups taking part in irregular fighting (guerrillas), civilians who openly fight against an enemy, or noncombatants associated with a military force.

Most Americans who became prisoners of war did so through no fault of their own; they were captured while defending their country. Fortunately, POWs have become much less common in recent conflicts. For example, it is estimated that while more than 130,000 were captured and interned during World War II, the number fell to 725 during the Vietnam War, 47 during the Gulf War and 12 during more recent conflicts.

We must never forget any POW or those Missing in Action (MIA) who did not return home. The issue of accounting for U.S. POW/MIAs became a matter of public interest with the founding of The National League of POW/MIA Families in 1970, formed by the families of those missing in action during the Vietnam War. The League pushed for an increased effort by the U.S. government to seek answers about those still missing. While the Vietnam War raged on, those at home raised awareness of the POW/MIA cause.

To further show support for those who are missing in action, National POW/MIA Recognition Day was established in 1979 with bipartisan action by Congress, followed by a proclamation signed by President Jimmy Carter. Since then, each president has issued an annual proclamation for National POW/MIA Recognition Day, which falls on the third Friday in September.

Name	Captured and Interned	Died While POW	Returned to U.S. Military Control	Refused to Return
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	142,186	16,985	125,180	21
<b>World War I</b>	4,120	147	3,973	–
<b>World War II</b>	130,201	14,072	116,129	–
<b>Korean War</b>	7,140	2,701	4,418	21
<b>Vietnam War</b>	725	65	660	–



United States Army Colonel Floyd "Jim" Thompson (right), was the longest-held prisoner of war in American history, surviving nine years (3,278 days) of torture and deprivation at the hands of the enemy. While flying in an observation plane, Thompson was shot down by enemy small arms fire and was captured near Quang Tri, South Vietnam. He was released with other POWs in mid-March 1973 as part of Operation Homecoming. *Photo courtesy Department of Defense*



# Origins of Veterans Day

## *“To Honor Veterans of All Wars”*

**R**aymond Weeks of Birmingham, Alabama organized an Armistice Day parade for that city on November 11, 1947 to honor Veterans for their loyal service. Later, U.S. Representative Edward H. Rees of Kansas proposed legislation changing the name of Armistice Day to Veterans Day – to honor all Veterans who have served America.

In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11th as Veterans Day and called upon Americans everywhere to re-dedicate themselves to the cause of peace. He issued a presidential order directing the head of the Veterans Administration (now the Department of Veterans Affairs) to form a Veterans Day National Committee to organize and oversee the national observance of Veterans Day. In addition to fulfilling that mission, the committee oversees the annual production and distribution of a Veterans Day poster and a Teachers Resource Guide.

In 1968, Congress moved Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. However, it became apparent that the November 11th date – the end of

World War I – was historically significant to many Americans. As a result, Congress formally returned the observance of Veterans Day to its traditional date in 1978.

The Veterans Day National Ceremony is held each year on November 11th at Arlington National Cemetery. At 11 a.m., a color guard made up of members from each branch of the military renders honors to America’s war dead during a tradition-rich ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.











The President or his representative places a wreath at the Tomb and a bugler sounds “Taps.” The balance of the ceremony, including a “Parade of Flags” by numerous VSOs, takes place inside the Memorial Amphitheater, adjacent to the Tomb.

In addition to planning and coordinating the National Veterans Day Ceremony, the Veterans Day National Committee supports a number of Veterans Day Regional Sites. These sites conduct Veterans Day celebrations that provide excellent examples for other communities to follow.



President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs H.R.7786 into law on June 1, 1954, changing Armistice Day to Veterans Day.

# Student Activities: Veterans Day 2021

-  Plan a school assembly to be held on Veterans Day and invite local Veterans. Present them with a small flag, flag pins, a medal, a traditional “poppy” or other remembrance and honor them during the program. [Poppies first became a symbol of remembrance for soldiers who died during World War I, since poppy fields grew where some of the battles were fought.]
-  Involve Scout groups to present the U.S. Flag and State Flag at an assembly on Veterans Day, or at the morning flag raising.
-  Discuss the meaning of what it means to be a Veteran. Create a short play with several students in conversation, talking about “Who Is A Veteran?”
-  Ask students to bring a photograph of any family members who are Veterans and display them. Each photo could be displayed on a laminated sheet of paper with the Veteran’s service record, name and the student’s name. These photos should be mounted on school walls in a significant area.
-  Look up former students who are Veterans and display their pictures as described above, but incorporate the school colors, either as background or in a ribbon, attached to the picture.
-  Students can share the stories of their family members who are Veterans, and whether it was difficult to obtain a photograph and service records.
-  Involve the student government by asking them to research teachers and staff at the school who are Veterans. Honor them with something on their class or office door, such as a patriotic wreath or sign made by the art class.
-  Hold a Veterans Day Breakfast for teachers and staff who are Veterans, or for local Veterans in the area.
-  Hold a Veterans Day Poster Contest or copy a previous Veterans Day Poster or the current one and paint or color it. This could be blown up very large or create small ones to be colored.
-  Challenge students to match military terms (i.e., “junior officer”) to a random list of definitions.
-  Read the poem “In Flanders Fields” by John McCrae. Discuss the poem’s significance to Veterans. Have students write a poem for Veterans Day and hold a contest for the best poems. These could be read at the school assembly or Veterans Day program.
-  Draw pictures of poppies. Ask a local VSO for a supply of small poppies to distribute among the students.
-  Write letters to Veterans and place small U.S. Flags at the graves of local Veterans.
-  Research Armistice Day and why it was changed to Veterans Day. Research military campaign medals and ribbons.
-  Assign small groups to research wars and conflicts, and give oral reports to the class.
-  Set up a Missing Man Table during your assembly or Veterans Day event

The Missing Man Table is on permanent display in many military dining facilities, and is also traditionally part of formal dinner ceremonies and military balls. The ceremony may also be performed in conjunction with Veterans Day, Memorial Day and Armed Forces Day services. The Missing Man Table is a small table set for one, symbolizing the isolation of the absent service member. (Sometimes the table is set for six – for the five branches of the Armed Forces and civilians.) It is meant to honor and remember those who have served and are still missing and unaccounted for in overseas locations.





National Cemetery Administration

VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Veterans Legacy Program

## Discover Their Story – Honor Their Sacrifice

### A National Legacy

At VA, we seek to engage educators, students, researchers, and the general public to build an appreciation of what earlier generations have given to the nation and help us understand why this ground is set aside as “national shrines to the gallant dead.”

The Veterans Legacy Program proudly shares the stories of all Americans who served.

### TEACH USING VA NATIONAL CEMETERIES

- As you develop your curriculum for the fall, explore our five new digital lesson plans, Teacher-developed and standards aligned.
- Lesson plans are built on primary sources, contain colorful hand-outs and lesson extensions, and provide ideas for on-site learning!
- Additional lesson plans are being developed to invite learners to explore their local history. Keep checking the website.
- If you are interested in participating in one of NCA's Teachers institutes, please contact us for information.

**Contact the Veterans Legacy Program**

VeteransLegacyProgram@va.gov

Connect with Us



For More Information, tools and resources visit us at <https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/legacy/index.asp>.



# America's Wars



## WORLD WAR I

(1917 - 1918)

Total Forces.....	4,734,991
Battle Deaths.....	53,402
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater).....	63,114
Wounded.....	204,002



## KOREAN WAR

(1950 - 1953)

Total Forces.....	5,720,000
Battle Deaths.....	33,739
Other Deaths (in Theater).....	2,835
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater).....	7,672
Wounded.....	103,284



## GULF WAR

(1990 - 1991)

Total Forces.....	2,225,000
Battle Deaths.....	147
Other Deaths (in Theater).....	235
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater).....	1,565
Wounded.....	467



## WORLD WAR II

(1941 - 1945)

Total Forces.....	16,112,566
Battle Deaths.....	291,557
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater).....	113,842
Wounded.....	670,846



## VIETNAM WAR

(1955 - 1973)

Total Forces.....	8,744,000
Battle Deaths.....	47,434
Other Deaths (in Theater).....	10,786
Other Deaths in Service (Non-Theater).....	32,000
Wounded.....	303,644



## Iraq War

(2003 - 2011)

Total Forces.....	192,000
Killed.....	4,507
Wounded.....	32,292

## Afghanistan War

(2001-present)

Total Forces.....	775,000 +
Killed.....	2,420
Wounded.....	19,950



# How to Contact Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs)

**V**eterans service organizations (VSOs) are organized groups of Veterans who assist Veterans and their families, and support them as advocates for a variety of Veterans' issues. Many organizations consist of members that share a common experience, such as those who served in the same military unit or period of war. The following is a list of organizations that serve on the Veterans Day National Committee. Many of these groups have chapters/posts throughout the country with Veterans who can share their experiences with younger generations.

## *Voting Members*

Air Force Sergeants Association  
 American G.I. Forum  
 AMVETS  
 Army Navy Union, USA  
 Blinded Veterans Association  
 Catholic War Veterans, USA  
 Commissioned Officers Association of the US Public Health Service  
 Congressional Medal of Honor Society  
 Disabled American Veterans  
 Fleet Reserve Association  
 Jewish War Veterans of the USA  
 Korean War Veterans Association  
 Legion of Valor of the USA  
 Marine Corps League  
 Military Chaplains Association of the USA  
 Military Officers Association of America  
 Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA, Inc.  
 Military Order of the World Wars  
 Non Commissioned Officers Association  
 Paralyzed Veterans of America  
 Polish Legion of American Veterans, USA  
 The American Legion  
 The Retired Enlisted Association  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States  
 Vietnam Veterans of America

## *Associate Members*

Air Force Association  
 American Ex-Prisoners of War  
 American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.  
 American Red Cross  
 Association of the United States Navy  
 Blue Star Mothers of America  
 Bowlers to Veterans Link  
 Coast Guard Chief Petty Officers Association  
 Enlisted Association of the National Guard  
 Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.  
 The Independence Fund  
 Japanese American Veterans Association  
 Marine Corps Reserve Association  
 National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs  
 National Association of State Veterans Homes  
 Navy Seabee Veterans of America  
 Reserve Organization of America  
 Student Veterans of America  
 Wounded Warrior Project

## *Emeritus Members*

American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor Memorial Society  
 Women's Army Corps Veterans Association

# Scholarships

Whether you're looking into schools for yourself or a family member, you can find the financial support and resources you need. Here is a partial list to get you started:

The ***Survivors & Dependents Assistance Program*** offers financial assistance to children, ages 16 to 26, of U.S. Army personnel who have been disabled or killed in the line of duty. The program is also open to the children of service members who have been declared missing in action, or who have been detained as prisoners of war. The program offers up to 45 months of educational benefits to eligible students who are enrolled in approved undergraduate, graduate or vocational studies. [https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/survivor\\_dependent\\_assistance.asp](https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/survivor_dependent_assistance.asp)

The ***Spouse Education Assistance Program (SEAP)*** provides grant money to the eligible spouses of active-duty or retired U.S. Army personnel. Applicants must be enrolled at least part-time in an accredited college or university. Scholarship funding is available for fall and spring semesters only. [https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Spouse-Education-Assistance-Program-\(SEAP\)-Scholarship](https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Spouse-Education-Assistance-Program-(SEAP)-Scholarship)

The ***General Henry H. Arnold Education Grant Program***. The program provides financial assistance to the children of active-duty and retired U.S. Air Force personnel. It also provides grants for the children and spouses of deceased service members. This is a need-based grant and current awards stand at \$2,000. <https://afas.org/general-henry-h-arnold-education-grant/>

The ***Scholarship for Air Force Enlisted Members' Dependent Children*** is supported by the Air Force Sergeants Association and the Airmen Memorial Foundation. These scholarships are available to the dependent children of U.S. Air Force service members, retirees or Veterans. Scholarship awards are determined by academic achievement, service to the community, personal character and writing ability. Financial need is not a consideration. Award amounts range from \$500 to \$3,000. <https://www.hqafsa.org/scholarships.html>

The ***Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society*** provides financial support to U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel and their families. In addition to a number of interest-free loans for service members and their families, the Relief Society offers the following programs for the college-bound dependents of Navy and Marine Corps personnel. <https://www.nmcrs.org/pages/education-loans-and-scholarships>

The ***Joseph A. McAlinden Divers Scholarship Program*** is available to the children or spouses of active-duty U.S. Navy or Marine Corps divers. Students must be studying oceanography, ocean agriculture or aquaculture in an approved college program. Awards range from \$500 to \$3,000, and are determined by financial need. <https://www.nmcrs.org/pages/joseph-a.-mcAlinden-divers-scholarship-program>

The ***PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation for the Advancement of Public Health*** offers a scholarship program available to high school students sponsored by a member in good standing of the Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS. The scholarships are funded by active-duty and retired U.S. Public Health service members, local branches of the association, and open to students who are pursuing a career that may relate to any of the Public Health Service professional categories (e.g., physician, dentist, nurse, engineer, etc.). <https://www.phscf.org/dependent-scholarship.html>



# Respecting the U.S. Flag

*"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."*

## *Important Things to Remember*

**T**he Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag should be rendered by standing at attention and facing the flag, with the right hand over the heart. If not in uniform, a person should remove his or her hat with the right hand and hold it near the left shoulder, with the hand over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

Display the U.S. Flag every day, but especially on national and state holidays. On Memorial Day, the flag is flown at half-staff in the forenoon (sunrise until noon), then raised to its normal position at the top of the staff. When raising the flag to half-staff, first raise it to the top of the staff, then lower it half-way. When lowering a flag that has been flying at half-staff, first raise it to the top of the staff, then lower it all the way. The U.S. flag should be displayed on or near the main building of every public institution, in or near every school on school days, and in or near every polling place on election days. Always hoist the U.S. flag in a brisk manner; lower it slowly.

## *Things to Avoid*

**Never show disrespect to the U.S. Flag.** Never dip (lower quickly and then raise) the U.S. Flag to any person or thing. Regimental colors, state flags and organization or institutional flags are dipped as a mark of honor. Never display the U.S. Flag with the field of stars at the bottom, except as a distress signal. Never let the U.S. Flag touch anything beneath it — ground, floor, water or merchandise. Never carry the U.S. flag horizontally, but always aloft and free.

**Always allow the U.S. Flag to fall free** — never use the U.S. Flag as drapery, festooned, drawn back or up in folds. For draping platforms and decoration in general, use blue, white and red bunting. Always arrange the bunting with blue above, the white in the middle and the red below. Never fasten, display, use or store the U.S. Flag in a manner that will permit it to be easily torn, soiled or damaged in any way. Never use the U.S. Flag as a covering or drape for a ceiling. Never place anything on the U.S. Flag and never have placed upon it (or on any part of it or attached to it) any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture or drawing of any nature.

The U.S. Flag should not be embroidered on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs and the like; printed or otherwise impressed on paper napkins or boxes, or anything that is designed for temporary use and discarded; or used as any portion of a costume or athletic uniform. However, a flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, fire fighters, police officers and members of patriotic organizations. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff from which the flag is flown.

Learn more about the U.S. Flag Code at [www.usflag.org/uscode36.html](http://www.usflag.org/uscode36.html).

# Folding the Flag

**W**hen the U.S. Flag is no longer in suitable condition for display, it should be destroyed in a dignified manner -- preferably by burning. Many Veterans groups perform this service with dignified, respectful flag retirement ceremonies.

When your flag isn't on display, fold it into a triangular shape and store in a safe place to show your respect. Here's how to do it:

## What You Need

A U.S. Flag and another person to help fold it.

## Follow These Steps

Start by holding the flag parallel to the ground, at waist-level, making sure to keep it taut.

Fold it in half, length-wise, so that the Union (that's the part with the stars) faces the ground.

Now fold it in half again. The stars should now face out from both sides of the flag.

*Tip: As you're folding, make sure the crease is perfectly aligned.  
You can also smooth it out with your hand to get rid of any air bubbles.*

Now you're ready to start folding the triangles. While your partner holds the flag taut, take the left-hand corner on the end opposite from the stars and fold it up on top of the flag so that the edge is parallel to the right-hand side. The stripes should now run perpendicular to each other, forming a triangle.

Now take the outermost point of the triangle's edge, and fold it over the flag. Continue to do this until the stripes meet the stars. Try to make the folds as tight as possible.

Tuck the remaining flap into the slot formed between the stars and stripes.

You now have a perfectly folded flag that will fit neatly in any drawer.

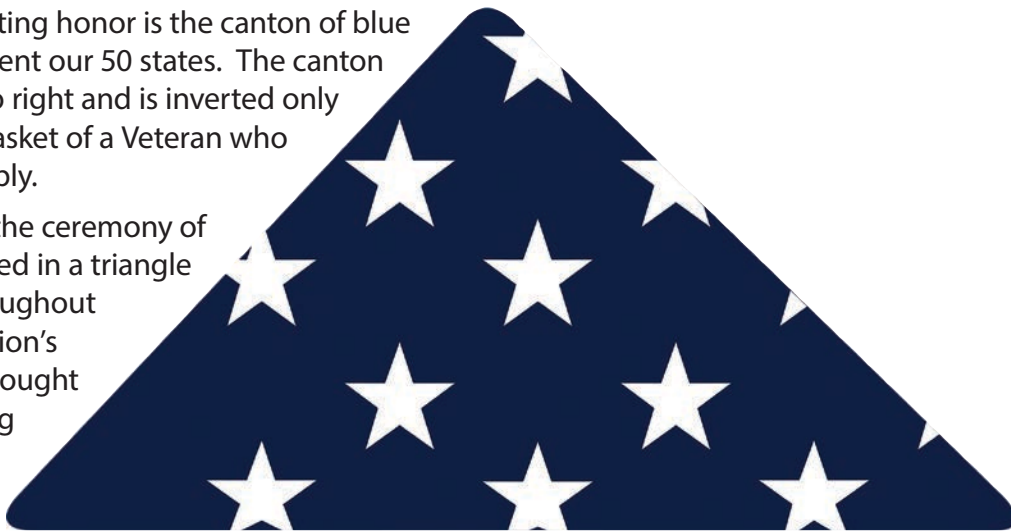
Watch a "Flag-Folding Ceremony" video, performed by members of the U.S. Marine Corps at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVYYdOQ8RvM>.

## Meaning of Flag-Folding Ceremony

The U.S. Flag-folding ceremony represents religious principles that guided the founders of our nation.

The portion of the flag denoting honor is the canton of blue containing the stars that represent our 50 states. The canton field of blue dresses from left to right and is inverted only when draped as a pall on the casket of a Veteran who has served our country honorably.

In the U.S. Armed Forces, at the ceremony of retreat, the flag is lowered, folded in a triangle fold and kept under watch throughout the night as a tribute to our nation's dead. The next morning it is brought out and, with the accompanying sound of reveille, is raised on the flagpole.



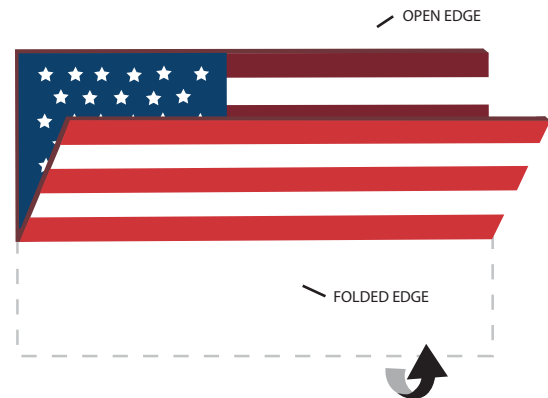


Flag etiquette is an important part of the American tradition that ensures the Stars and Stripes are treated with the dignity it deserves. Established by Congress in 1942, the official U.S. Flag Code created guidelines for the care and display of the flag. Although it does not describe an official method for folding the flag, the rules do state that you should never store a flag in a way where it can get torn, soiled or damaged. You should also never let the flag touch anything beneath it, such as the ground or floor.

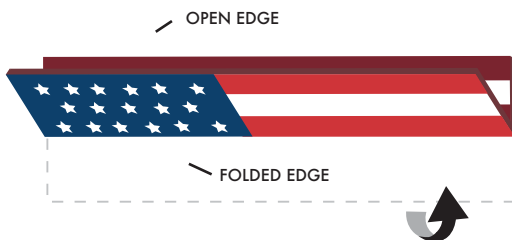
Over time, a triangular shape has become the traditional way to fold the flag and store it in a safe manner. The exact origin of this specific procedure is unknown, but it may trace back to the Gold Star Mothers of America or the United States Air Force Academy.



Hold the flag waist-high with a partner; the flag should be parallel with the ground.



Bring the upper and lower halves of the flag together, folding it lengthwise in half.



Fold the flag lengthwise again, bringing the lower half up to the top. The field of stars should be visible on the left side.



Bring the striped corner of the folded edge up to meet the top edge of the flag, making a small triangle.



Fold the triangle over itself, making the triangle point inward. Continue triangular folding.



The triangular folding continues until the entire length of the flag is folded.

# 2020 Veterans Day National Committee

Honorary Chairman  
The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States

Chairman  
The Honorable Denis R. McDonough  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Vice Chairman  
The Honorable Kayla M. Williams Assistant Secretary of  
Public and Intergovernmental Affairs

## Members

Air Force Sergeants Association

Army Navy Union, USA

Commissioned Officers Association of the USPHS

Fleet Reserve Association

Legion of Valor of the USA

Military Officers Association of America

Non Commissioned Officers Association

The American Legion

Vietnam Veterans of America

American G.I. Forum

Blinded Veterans Association

Congressional Medal of Honor Society

Jewish War Veterans of the USA

Marine Corps League

Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA, Inc.

Paralyzed Veterans of America

The Retired Enlisted Association

AMVETS

Catholic War Veterans, USA

Disabled American Veterans

Korean War Veterans Association

Military Chaplains Association of the USA

Military Order of the World Wars

Polish Legion of American Veterans, USA

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

## Associate Members

Air Force Association

American Ex-Prisoners of War

American Red Cross

Blue Star Mothers of America

Enlisted Association of the National Guard

The Independence Fund

Marine Corps Reserve Association

Navy Seabee Veterans of America

US Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Association

Student Veterans of America

Wounded Warrior Project

American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor

*(Emeritus)* American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.

Association of the United States Navy

Bowlers to Veterans Link

Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.

Japanese American Veterans Association

National Association of State Directors of

Veterans Affairs National Association of the

State Veterans Homes Reserve Organization of

America

Women's Army Corps Veterans Association

*(Emeritus)*

Navy Mutual Aid

The Veterans Day Teachers Resource Guide is published  
in honor of U.S. Veterans by the

### **VETERANS DAY NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

Department of Veterans Affairs

Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs

810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20420

<http://www.va.gov/vetsday>