



## HONORING OUR AMERICAN MILITARY HEROES

**Learning Objectives:** The students will...

1. Identify the contributions of selected military heroes in American history identified in the TEKS.
2. Create an appropriate living memorial that explains and celebrates the contributions of military heroes identified in the TEKS.

**TEKS:** US 4A, US 4D, US 7E, US 7G, US 23B

**Materials Needed:** Access to research for selected military heroes, Honoring our American Military Heroes PowerPoint presentation, materials needed for living memorials.

**Teaching Strategy:**

1. Use the PowerPoint to introduce the lesson on the two specific holidays which honor men and women who have served our country in the military and the meaning of the Medal of Honor, the highest award that can be earned by a person in the military. The last slide will introduce the “living” memorial with a picture of one of our most famous, the Iwo Jima Memorial in Washington, D.C. This can be used to show students how they can work together to create a living memorial which is a visual honor of the contribution of these heroes.
2. Explain in this lesson they will be investigating key military heroes or groups and the significance they played in the history of the United States. These names are all names specifically listed in the 11th grade TEKS. Those that are also Medal of Honor recipients are designated by a star by the name.
3. Divide the students into groups. It is suggested that the groups have a minimum of four or five students for the memorial to be visually effective. Since there are 16 names, the teacher may select the ones that are to be honored. A way that all the names could be covered is to assign a group of two to do the research and plan the memorial. Once the planning is complete, the pair can ask for student volunteers to help them when they create the living memorial for the class.
  - a. Theodore Roosevelt (Spanish American War)
  - b. John Pershing
  - c. Alvin York\*
  - d. John Pershing
  - e. Omar Bradley
  - f. Dwight D. Eisenhower
  - g. Douglas MacArthur
  - h. Chester Nimitz
  - i. George Patton
  - j. George Marshall
  - k. Tuskegee Airmen
  - l. Flying Tigers
  - m. Navajo Code Talkers
  - n. Vernon J. Baker \*
  - o. Alvin York \*
  - p. Roy Benavidez \*
4. Allow time for the groups to research the role played by their assigned name and the war in which the person(s) was involved. If available, the LRE bio cards would be a great place to

start this research, but additional research may be needed to thoroughly understand the role they played in the war.

5. After the research has been checked, explain that each group will be responsible for creating a “living” memorial to honor this person(s) role in American history. This memorial is to include:
  - a. Human statues depicting the role played in this war (Each member of the group should have a role in the display with one student who was part of the planning, serving as the tour guide).
  - b. A tour guide to share the information about the memorial to visitors to the display during a gallery walk .
  - c. Props as needed to more accurately identify the war, the significance, and contribution.
  - d. An original and appropriate title for the memorial.
  - e. A paragraph explaining the meaning, symbolism, and significance of the memorial.
6. After the groups have finished their preparation, set up the memorials one at a time in chronological order. The remaining students will then visit each memorial and listen to the explanation of the tour guide, taking notes as appropriate in order to answer the closing questions. NOTE—If using this activity to review key military people that were studied during the year, post the names of all of the people being depicted and see if the students can guess who the memorial is honoring before the tour guide begins their presentation. Ask the students what visual clues helped them with their answer.
7. After all groups have presented, discuss with the students their answers to the following closure questions:
  - a. Which memorial most accurately and completely depicted the person(s) role in the war in which they were involved? What are the reasons for the choice?
  - b. How do these people encourage and inspire us as Americans?
  - c. How did this exercise help you to understand the true meaning of the holidays set aside to honor the military?
  - d. What else if anything should be done to honor our military heroes?