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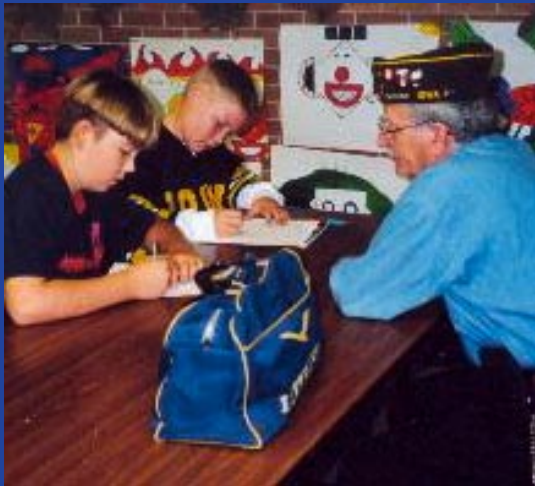
# Teacher's Corner

## VFW Citizenship Education and Community Service Programs

### Veterans in the Classroom

## Veterans' Speaker Program and Oral History Project

“Collecting the oral histories of American veterans is a critical task in preserving our history and an urgent need as we enter the 21st century. These histories



Students Aaron Palmer and Eddy Albrecht interview veteran Jim Cunningham, a Sioux Falls, Iowa, VFW post member.

will be an invaluable resource for future generations and will become part of the nation's vast historical record that the Library of Congress has preserved for 200 years.”

**James H. Billington**  
Librarian of Congress

**M**ore than 19 million war veterans are living in the United States today (including 3,400 from World War I and 6 million from World War II), but almost 1,500 die each day. That is why it is so important to preserve veterans' memories and share them with future generations.

#### **What can teachers do:**

- Invite VFW members to speak to your students about their military experiences in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War and recent conflicts.
- Have your students interview the veterans and submit their audio or videotapes to the Library of Congress Veterans History Project.

#### **What resources are available to help me?**

The Veterans History Project team at the Library of Congress has prepared a set of guidelines and forms that should be followed if you choose to participate.

To contact the Veterans History Project, please visit their website at <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets>.

Project kits available at:

<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/kit.html>.

Tips for a successful interview:

<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/questions.html> <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/questions.html>.

Recording Hints:

<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/guidelines.html>.

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### Veteran's Day Lab

For the last two years, I have gone to a local VFW meeting and invited the local members to accompany my students on a field trip to the Legion of Valor Museum in Fresno, Calif. This year, though, we had a Veterans' Lab Day. World War II veterans came to the school and sat down in small groups at different tables.

Students rotated from table to table to visit each veteran and to view the various memorabilia the veterans brought to the classroom. The students only had about 15-20 minutes with each veteran, but I think they went away deeply touched and with a new respect for what these men had gone through and that they survived. More than 200 students participated in our two-day WWII Veterans Lab Day.

Julie Craig  
Kingsburg High School  
Kingsburg, California  
11<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher

### Write the Troops

Numerous educators have shared their positive experiences with how students develop writing

skills by corresponding to military personnel who are alumni of the local high school (check with guidance counselors for contact information) or related to a member in the local community. One suggestion is for students to compose a monthly letter from the entire

class. This way the soldier(s) can easily respond. In addition to the letter, a copy of the local newspaper and popular magazines can be included. Some classrooms have linked up with a VFW Post or Auxiliary who have adopted a unit and included the

letter(s) with items being sent. Check your telephone directory for the local VFW Post phone number. Ask to speak to the Post commander. You may also contact the state VFW headquarters for assistance at [http://www.vfwkc.org/post\\_location/state.asp](http://www.vfwkc.org/post_location/state.asp).



### Respecting Old Glory

Use the VFW's Ten Short Flag Stories  
[http://www.vfw.org/yourtown/you\\_FlagHistory.htm](http://www.vfw.org/yourtown/you_FlagHistory.htm).

View *Flag Etiquette guidelines*  
[http://www.vfw.org/yourtown/you\\_FlagEtiquette.htm](http://www.vfw.org/yourtown/you_FlagEtiquette.htm) to teach your students about the history of our flag and how to respect the U.S. flag.

### Do you have an idea for a patriotic activity? We want your ideas!

Submit your own classroom activity (describe in 150 words or less and provide us your name, grade level, school name, location and telephone number) to <mailto:tbeauchamp@vfw.org>.

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### Famous Americans and Their Birthday

#### January

Betsy Ross – According to legend, assisted George Washington in making the first flag. (January 1, 1752)

Martin Luther King, Jr. – Civil rights leader; winner of 1964 Nobel Peace Prize. (January 15, 1929)

Franklin D. Roosevelt – 32<sup>nd</sup> U.S. President and world leader during W.W. II. (January 30, 1882)

#### February

Charles Lindberg – First pilot to fly solo over the Atlantic from New York to Paris in 1927. (February 4, 1902)

Elizabeth Blackwell – First U.S. female to receive a medical degree. (February 3, 1821)

Abraham Lincoln – 16<sup>th</sup> U.S. President, who led the Union during the Civil War. (February 12, 1809)

#### March

Alexander Graham Bell – Inventor of the telephone. (March 3, 1847)

Cesar Chavez – Labor leader of migrant farm workers. (March 31, 1927)

James Madison – 4<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S. (March 16, 1751)

#### April

Billie Holiday – American jazz singer. (April 7, 1915)

Booker T. Washington – Black leader and educator. (April 5, 1856)

Thomas Jefferson – 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. President and author of the Declaration of Independence. (April 13, 1743)

#### May

Robert Peary – Explorer who led the first expedition to reach the North Pole in 1909. (May 6, 1856)

Mary Harris Jones – American labor leader. (May 1, 1830)

John F. Kennedy – 35<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S. (May 29, 1917)

#### June

Margaret White – famous World War II photojournalist. (June 14, 1906)

Harriet Beecher Stowe – Abolitionist and writer of Uncle Tom's Cabin. (June 14, 1811)

#### July

Henry Ford – Designer of the Model T and pioneered the assembly line production. (July 30, 1863)

Amelia Earhart – First woman pilot to fly solo across the Atlantic. (July 24, 1897)

John Glenn – First American to orbit Earth. (July 18, 1921)

#### August

Francis Scott Key – Wrote the Star-Spangled Banner, adopted as the U.S. National Anthem. (August 1, 1779)

Annie Oakley – Famous sharp shooter who was part of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. (August 13, 1860)

Lyndon B. Johnson – 36<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S. (August 27, 1908)

#### September

Christa Mc Auliffe – Teacher who lost her life aboard the space shuttle Challenger. (September 2, 1948)

Jesse Owens – Winner of four Olympic gold medals in track and field. (September 12, 1913)

Samuel Adams – Revolutionary War leader. (September 27, 1722)

#### October

Mickey Mantle – Baseball Hall of Famer. (October 20, 1931)

Eleanor Roosevelt – Wife of President, crusader for the underprivileged and racial minorities. (October 11, 1884)

Dwight D. Eisenhower – 34<sup>th</sup> U.S. President and Allied Commander of Europe during World War II. (October 14, 1890)

#### November

Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens) – Author of the Adventures of Tom Sawyer. (November 30, 1835)

Elizabeth Stanton – Suffragist and women's rights advocate. (November 12, 1815)

Robert Fulton – Inventor of steamboat. (November 14, 1765)

#### December

Clara Barton – Founder of the American Red Cross. (December 25, 1821)

Woodrow Wilson – 28<sup>th</sup> U.S. President. (December 28, 1856)