

# Veterans Day

## Goals

- To help students understand how veterans served our country
- To honor veterans for their service
- To practice interviewing and writing skills



## Overview:

Students interview veterans and then complete and present certificates honoring the veterans for their service.

## Materials

- Copies of “Veterans Interview” and “Veterans Award” templates.
- Contact information for one or more veterans who can speak to the class. (A local veterans organization like the VFW or American Legion should be happy to provide a speaker. You can also go to <http://www.va.gov/Kids/teachers/links.asp?intPageID=11> for help locating a speaker.)
- Optional: Print and Internet resources on Veterans Day, veterans organizations, as well as wars and other areas in which veterans have served. Check <http://www1.va.gov/opa/vetsday/> and <http://www.va.gov/Kids/k-5>

## Directions

1. Point to Veterans Day on the calendar and ask students if they know what this holiday commemorates. Ask if they know anyone who has served or is serving in the armed forces. Encourage students to share what these men and women did or are doing. Explain how Veterans Day came to be and tell students they are going to help continue the tradition. (See <http://www1.va.gov/opa/feature/celebrate/vetday.asp> for background information.)
2. Tell students they are going to interview a veteran and award the veteran a certificate for service. Invite a veteran to speak to the class and/or have students interview a veteran on their own. Give each student the “Veterans Interview” form to complete during the interview. Encourage students to think of additional questions they would like to ask. Remind them to keep careful notes of what the veteran says and any photos or objects he or she shares. If students want, they can take photos or tape the interview.
3. Ask students to tell about the veterans they interviewed. What were their biggest challenges? What were the veterans especially proud of? What impressed students most

about the veterans? Then ask students to think of something for which they would like to honor each veteran and complete the “Veteran Award” template.

4. If possible, have students present the certificates personally. See Extensions below for ideas.

### ***Stationery Studio Extensions***

- Invite the veterans to a Veterans Day ceremony in which students present their certificates. If you want, make the ceremony part of a Veterans Day assembly. For assembly ideas, see <http://www1.va.gov/opa/feature/celebrate/acts4vd.asp>.
- Have students use the Veterans Day border and the friendly letter format to write personal letters inviting the veterans to the assembly.
- Send certificates honoring their service to veterans in a local or nearby VA hospital. (Facilities Locator: <http://www1.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp>)
- Write letters and/or send certificates to soldiers currently serving in the armed forces. If a student has a family member in the service, classmates could write to the soldier’s company.
- Send care packages to service men and women. Include a note written with *Stationery Studio*.
- Sponsor an essay contest in which students write about the experiences of a veteran they know, a veteran about whom they’ve read, or a related topic.