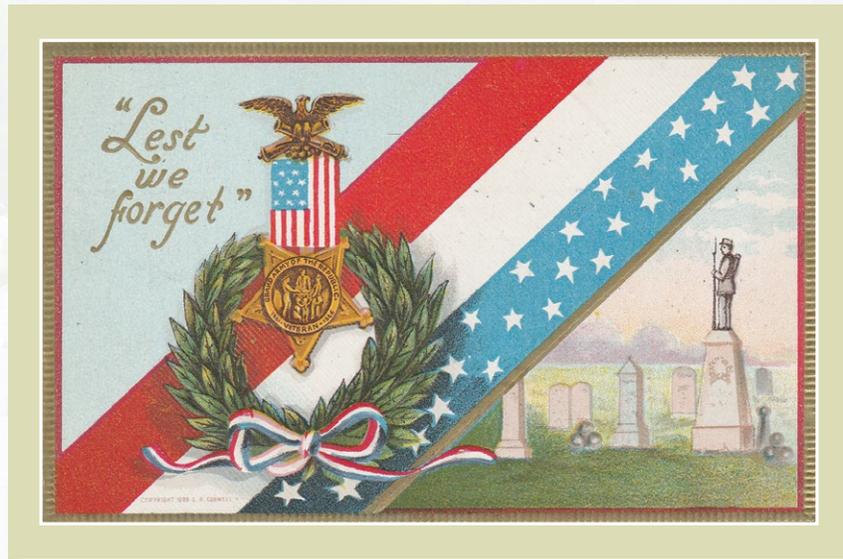




National  
Cemetery  
Administration  
**Veterans  
Legacy  
Program**



## Memorial Day

### *Honoring Service and Sacrifice*

Though widely observed since the late 1860s, Memorial Day did not become a federal holiday until 1971. On this day, communities across the United States place American flags on graves of veterans to memorialize all the Americans who have died in our nation's wars.

## *Educational Activities*

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

[www.cem.va.gov/legacy](http://www.cem.va.gov/legacy)





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*“They say, We leave you our deaths: give them their meaning...”\**



Since the Civil War, the United States has maintained national cemeteries to honor its veterans’ service. A century and a half later, these cemeteries offer a broad range of resources for study and opportunities to honor those who have served in the nation’s wars. Within their walls and records may be found the story of how the nation has met its debt to those who served in its armed forces and how our understanding of that obligation has deepened with time.

Each national cemetery has its own history and unique landscape, with geography, design, and nature worthy of reflection. The cemeteries’ manicured lawns reflect the care extended to sacred ground where honored dead lie. The mission of the Veterans Legacy Program is to extend that care beyond the grave to remember veterans’ service to the nation by telling their stories. The program draws on the help of educators and students to search out the sources to document these lives and honor their deeds. Accounts of courage and sacrifice, and of competence and service, contribute to our appreciation of what earlier generations have given to the nation and help us understand why this ground is set aside as hallowed.

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**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

[www.cem.va.gov/legacy](http://www.cem.va.gov/legacy)

# Welcome, Educators!

The Veterans Legacy Program offers educators an integrated new suite of lesson plans designed to teach students about the service and sacrifice of our nation’s veterans, and to take advantage of our national cemeteries as historic places for teaching and learning — both in the classroom *and* on-site. The educational resources of the Veterans Legacy Program draw on rich stories from national cemeteries to offer teachers a variety of hands-on activities directly connected to national curriculum standards.

- Customized for middle level and high school students, the program’s five lesson plans introduce students to the important roles played by African Americans and women during the Civil War, to heroic Medal of Honor recipients and diverse service men and women of the Second World War, and to the history and traditions of Memorial Day.
- The lesson plans are supplemented online with a variety of additional resources. These include a collection of primary source documents and images, interactive maps, and short videos related to the content of the lesson plans.

As the National Cemetery Administration launches these inaugural components of the new Veterans Legacy Program, educators and students are invited to provide comments, suggestions, and contributions to further develop and enhance these initial materials *and* to develop new resources in the future. Please visit the program website to comment: [www.cem.va.gov/legacy](http://www.cem.va.gov/legacy).

We appreciate your suggestions and know you will benefit from this exciting new program.

## Key Themes of the Veterans Legacy Program’s Lesson Plans

- Honoring African American military service during the Civil War
- How women contributed to the Civil War effort, and memorializing the dead
- Reviewing World War II through Medal of Honor stories
- Diversity and U.S. Forces in World War II
- Memorial Day: its origins, history, and the evolution of its traditions

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### PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

Nicholas Trout, Beaufort National Cemetery, page 12 (lower)

Historic postcards and ephemera from the collections of the Historian’s Office of the National Cemetery Administration and Thomas Connors.

Contemporary photographs are by Thomas Connors except where otherwise indicated.

## EDUCATION STANDARDS

### Common Core English Language Arts Standards (ELA)

**RI:** Reading Informational Text **SL:** Speaking and Listening

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- RI.3** Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- RI.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- SL.4** Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- 

### Common Core History/Social Studies Standards

**RH:** Reading History **WHST:** Writing History

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- RH 11-12.7** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- WHST 9-10.7** Conduct short as well as sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem; broaden inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject.
- WHST 11-12.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem, narrow or broaden an inquiry when appropriate, synthesize multiple sources on the subject demonstrating understanding of the subject.
- 

### NCSS Disciplinary Standards

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#### History

**Assist learners** in utilizing chronological thinking so they can distinguish between past, present, and future time, can place historical narratives in the proper chronological framework, can interpret data presented in timelines; and compare alternative models for periodization.

**Enable learners** to develop historical comprehension in order that they might reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage; identify the central questions addressed in historical narrative; draw upon data in historical maps, charts, and other graphic organizers; and draw upon visual, literary, or musical sources.

**Help learners** to identify issues and problems of the past, recognize factors contributing to such problems, identify and analyze alternative courses of action, formulate a position or course of action, and evaluate the implementation of that decision.



# Memorial Day:

## *Honoring Service and Sacrifice*

### *Learning Objectives*

1. Understand the origins and history of Memorial Day and the evolution of its traditions.
2. Analyze, compare, and contrast traditions over time. Infer how the holiday's meaning changes by looking at how it has been observed over the last 150 years.

### *Relevant National Cemetery*

All national cemeteries [www.cem.va.gov/cem/cems/listcem.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/cems/listcem.asp)

### *Lesson Overview*

The activities in this lesson examine the origins of Memorial Day and the symbols, traditions, and rituals associated with it over time. Examples of current community celebrations and service projects are included. The three activities may be used separately or together, as suits the needs of the group or class.

### *Primary Sources*

- John A. Logan's Memorial Day Order (1868)
- Early Memorial Day and Decoration Day Postcards (early 20th century)
- Twentieth Century Memorial Day Traditions
- Quotation from Henry Ward Beecher (1863)

### *Essential Questions*

1. *Why is Memorial Day a national holiday? What does it memorialize?*
2. *How did the Memorial Day we celebrate today originate in the aftermath of the Civil War?*
3. *What rituals and symbols have developed around Memorial Day?*
4. *How has the way we memorialize soldiers changed over time? How has it remained the same or similar?*

## KEY MESSAGES

- The nation memorializes its military sacrifice on official holidays, drawing on shared patriotic symbolism for its rituals. On Memorial Day, it honors those who died in the country's service.
- After the Civil War ended in 1865, different Decoration Days developed to honor the dead.
- Memorial Day evolved from separate Decoration Days honoring the Union and Confederate war dead. Over time, it became a common national holiday in honor of all service men and women who have died for the country throughout its history.
- The Memorial Day holiday has changed over time. During the twentieth century, it began to incorporate new symbols such as poppies, and new traditions, such as volunteer flag placement at national cemeteries.

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1

Logan's Order and the Origins of Memorial Day

**Time Required:** 45 minutes

### Activity 2

Decoration and Memorial Day Postcards, c. 1900-1920

**Time Required:** 45 minutes

### Activity 3

Twentieth-Century Traditions

**Time Required:** 45 minutes

## HANDOUTS

- John A. Logan Memorial Day Order and Questions
- Graphic Organizer: Word Definitions
- Document Analysis Worksheet
- Graphic Organizer: Decoration and Memorial Day Postcards
- Decoration and Memorial Day Postcard Images
- Memorial Day Traditions: Online Research Sources

### Introduction to Activities

The scale of losses in the Civil War was such that every family and every neighborhood were touched by death. Those who survived felt a duty to honor the memory of the dead. After the Civil War, both sides took action to create formal rituals to honor and remember those who had lost their lives in the war, and both sides proposed annual holidays for this purpose.

The origins of Memorial Day date back to campaigns to remember soldiers who had died in the Civil War. Today, Memorial Day gives Americans a chance to remember *all* who have died while serving in the armed forces.

The original Memorial Day Order from 1868 can be found on page 19.



Civil War Era graves at Cypress Hills National Cemetery, Brooklyn, NY

### FEATURED INSETS:

Sending Memorial Day postcards was a tradition from about 1900 to 1920. Two post cards are shown here. The one at right quotes a well-known poem, “The Bivouac of the Dead”, which also can be found on iron plaques in many national cemeteries.

Picture at right: Flags decorate veterans’ graves on Memorial Day at Cypress Hills National Cemetery in Brooklyn.

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice

## ACTIVITY 1

### *Logan's Order and the Origins of Memorial Day*

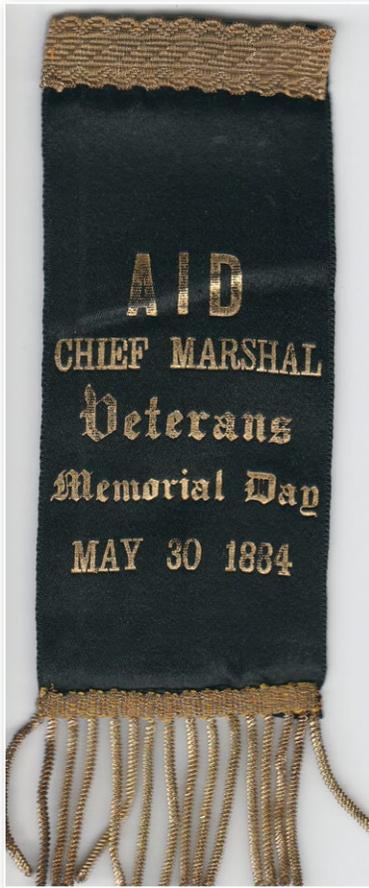
#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Logan's Memorial Day Order (Handout 1), one copy for each participant
- Handouts 2 and 3: Word Definition and Document Analysis worksheets (optional).

*Note: Logan's Order appears in full on page 19 of this lesson.*

#### PREPARATION

Before beginning the activity, review the Activity Steps below and the Optional Activity Steps on page 9 to determine your use of the optional Word Definition and Document Analysis handouts.



#### *Activity Background*

In the spring of 1866, Confederate Ladies Memorial Associations began organizing plans to set aside an annual day near the end of April to memorialize the Confederate dead. Two years later, General John Logan's Memorial Day Order inspired a national effort for a day to honor the Union dead. It eventually resulted in the national holiday now known as Memorial Day.

At the time, Logan was head of the Grand Army of the Republic, the national organization of Union veterans. Logan's order was written in a very ornate Victorian style that draws on a vocabulary that will likely be unfamiliar and too rich for many of today's audiences. (The edited version used in the handout omits the most difficult sentences, and vocabulary words are shown in **bold**.)

#### *Activity Steps*

1. Distribute Handout 1: John A. Logan Memorial Day Order and Questions. You may wish to read the text aloud and discuss answers to the discussion questions as you read; or, you may ask for volunteers to read small passages and discuss each passage. Ask participants:
  - *What does Memorial Day memorialize?*
  - *How does this differ from the purpose of Veterans Day? (Veterans Day honors all veterans; Memorial Day honors those who died in the nation's wars.)*
  - *How is Memorial Day observed in the United States?*
  - *What traditions are associated with this holiday?*
2. Alert students that as they read portions of Logan's Order, they should look for indicators of the purpose of the holiday and for information related to how it should be observed. For example, consider these questions:
  - *How does Logan view the Civil War? What organization is he speaking for?*
  - *What duties or obligations does our society have toward those who have died for the nation?*
3. Have students complete Handout 1 (Logan's Order and Questions). *See Optional Activity Steps on next page.*

#### FEATURED INSET:

The ribbon shown at left was worn by the Chief Marshal of Veterans at a Memorial Day parade in 1884.

### Optional Activity Steps

#### 1. Vocabulary: Word Definitions

Words that students might not be familiar with are in **bold print** on John A. Logan Memorial Day Order and Questions (Handout 1, page 13). Depending on the method used, you may choose to define these words while reading the document or have students use the word definition graphic organizer (Handout 2, page 14) for these important words. Students may work alone or in groups to complete an organizer for an assigned number of words, explain them, and post them on a classroom “Word Wall.”

#### 2. Document Analysis

Honors classes and high-achieving students may complete a Document Analysis Worksheet (Handout 3, page 15) as they read silently and then participate in a discussion. During the discussion, they may choose to share their answers to some of the questions on the handout, such as, “*What would you like to ask the author?*”

### Activity Closure

Ask participants to summarize the meaning of Memorial Day by explaining what the holiday meant immediately after the Civil War and what it means today.

If a follow-up activity is desired, encourage participants to write a **contemporary version** of Logan’s Memorial Day Order for the twenty-first century, honoring service men and women who have fallen since 2000.

Participants may use these questions to help guide a new Memorial Day Order.

- *What is the government’s responsibility to the fallen and to surviving veterans?*
- *How does it fulfill those duties today?*
- *What are American citizens’ responsibilities to those who served in the nation’s wars?*
- *How does this affect how we should approach Memorial Day?*
- *If Martin Luther King Day is associated with community service, what activities would be appropriate for Memorial Day?*

Students’ contemporary Memorial Day Orders can be presented as a speech, poster, artwork, or short video.



Memorial Day, Arlington National Cemetery, 1928.

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice

## ACTIVITY 2

### *Decoration and Memorial Day Postcards, c. 1900-1920*

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Decoration and Memorial Day Postcard Graphic Organizer (Handout 4), one for each participant
- Decoration and Memorial Day Postcards, available on the NCA Legacy Program website, [www.cem.va.gov/legacy](http://www.cem.va.gov/legacy).
- Decoration and Memorial Day Postcard Images (Handout 5, optional)

#### PREPARATION

Download postcards, print them, and trim them to size for use as a wall display or to circulate among group members, if desired. Or, create a PowerPoint presentation using the downloaded images. Alternatively, make copies of Handout 5 for this activity.



#### Activity Steps

1. In small groups or as a PowerPoint slide show, ask participants to look at each postcard and write down what people, places, plants, objects, and activities are shown.
2. Ask participants to consider:
  - *What are the key words in a selected section of text printed on the postcard?*
  - *What do the postcard's images symbolize or mean?*
3. Next, lead a discussion by posing the following questions:
  - *Why were these images and symbols used for Memorial Day postcards?*
  - *Based on these postcards, what traditions were associated with Memorial Day in the early 20th century?*
  - *What would you have seen people doing on Memorial Day during this period?*
  - *How do these traditions compare with Memorial Day activities today?*

#### Activity Closure

Ask participants to summarize the importance of Memorial Day. As an additional option, invite them to create a postcard for today's Memorial Day. Encourage them to select images, symbols, and words that reflect the meaning of the day. Final postcards can be displayed in the classroom or at local cemeteries. Another option would be to have participants write notes and mail the postcards to local veterans.

#### Confederate Memorial Day Background

In the spring of 1866, the Confederate Ladies Memorial Association of Columbus, Georgia called on sister organizations to designate an annual day to honor the Confederate dead. They chose April 26, the date Confederate General Joseph Johnston had surrendered to General William Sherman a year earlier. Over time, Southern states have observed Confederate Memorial Day on different dates, ranging from Robert E. Lee's Birthday (January 19) to Jefferson Davis's birthday (June 3), with the Carolinas settling on May 10, the date Stonewall Jackson died in 1863.

- *Why were Civil War Memorial Days generally set in the spring?*
- *Why might Confederate Memorial Days often be weeks earlier than the national Memorial Day that arose from Union Decoration Day? (Note that spring comes earlier in the South.)*

Research the dates and official status of Confederate Memorial Day in the South today.

- *What differences exist among the Southern states? How would you explain these differences?*

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice

## ACTIVITY 3

### *Twentieth-Century Traditions*

#### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Memorial Day Traditions: Online Research Sources (Handout 6), one for each participant
- Internet access
- Copy of Beecher Quotation (see Activity Step 1, below)

#### *Activity Background*

Over the course of the twentieth century, Americans developed new traditions to honor the veterans of the nation's wars, as older practices, such as sending Decoration Day postcards, became less common.

Memorial Day's meaning broadened beyond the Civil War dead to include *all* service men and women who had given their lives in any American war. Though widely observed since the late 1860s, Memorial Day did not become an official national holiday until 1971.

#### *Activity Steps*

1. Share the following Beecher quotation and call to action:

*"They [the Union dead] hover as a cloud of witnesses above this Nation ... Are they dead that yet move upon society and inspire the people with nobler motives and more heroic patriotism?"*

Henry Ward Beecher, *The Honored Dead* (1863)

2. Pose the following questions:

- *What is Beecher saying about deceased veterans? Is this still true today?*

Ask participants to reflect on Memorial Day and ways in which they have celebrated or plan to celebrate. Encourage them to brainstorm ideas for service learning activities or ways in which they can help to memorialize veterans.

- *In what ways can service learning requirements or Scouting projects be fulfilled at veterans' cemeteries?* (Note: These ideas would need to be developed with the approval and support of local cemetery staff.)

3. Introduce or have participants investigate Memorial Day traditions (see idea-starter box at right), developing a short summary of their meaning and practice, to be presented to the group or class. Assign, or have each group select, a topic from the seven traditions listed, and develop a presentation on the chosen topic.

#### *Activity Closure*

Have participants showcase their learning by presenting their findings to the class. Presentations may take the form of an oral or written summary, artwork, a PowerPoint presentation, or sharing an artifact or photograph — or even bringing in a veteran as a speaker — to represent a particular tradition.

#### PREPARATION

Post or project a copy of the Beecher quotation on the wall or whiteboard

#### Memorial Day Traditions

1. Red Poppies: symbol of World War I battlegrounds and cemeteries, used by veterans' charities
2. Flag Decoration: Scouts and other volunteers decorate graves with flags for Memorial Day.
3. Avenue of Flags or Avenue of Remembrance
4. National Moment of Remembrance
5. Ceremonies, programs, and wreath-laying at national or local cemeteries or memorials
6. Community Banners and other programs highlighting local veterans
7. Service Opportunities: volunteering at national cemeteries; VA's Voluntary Service (VAVS); President's United We Serve program (includes homeless veterans program, volunteer transportation network, welcome home celebrations); local VA hospitals; oral history programs; and more

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice



Scout Volunteer Patch



Memorial Day, Beaufort National Cemetery, 2015

## Activity Extensions

1. Write a letter responding to General Logan, using a date a few days after his Order was issued. Attempt to use a “florid” style similar to General Logan’s Order. Writers should mention who they are (a soldier who returned, a relative of a deceased soldier, etc.) and answer the following questions: *What do you think of Logan’s Order? How does one honor and remember the fallen on Memorial Day?* Letters can be posted in the classroom or read to the group. Teachers could assign this project as homework or for extra credit.
2. Interview veterans and create an archive of oral histories. Then, invite the veterans to speak to the group or class. Be prepared with questions for them, as the older veterans may be so humble that they might have difficulty. The storycorps website suggests questions: <https://storycorps.org/great-questions/>. If possible, invite enough veterans so that 2-3 participants can go to a quiet place and ask them a few pre-arranged questions. There can be much interaction in these instances, and participants will never forget it. Of course, ask participants if they know of a veteran who would like to speak to the group.
3. Explore ideas from the “What Will You Do?” video <http://www.volunteer.va.gov/features/whatwillyoudo.asp>.
4. Find volunteer opportunities at: <http://www.volunteer.va.gov/>.

## Resources

- *The Genesis of the Memorial Day Holiday in America*. Daniel Bellware & Richard Gardiner, Columbus, GA: Columbus State University, 2014
- History of Memorial Day, VA Office of Public Affairs webpage: <http://www.va.gov/opa/speceven/memday/history.asp>
- Memorial Day, VA Office of Public Affairs webpage: <http://www.va.gov/opa/speceven/memday/>
- *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*. David Blight, Cambridge: Belknap, 2000
- *Remembering War the American Way*. G. Kurt Piehler, Washington: Smithsonian, 1995
- Teaching a People’s History website, The First Decoration Day, David Blight, 2011: <http://zinnedproject.org/materials/the-first-decoration-day/>

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice

## HANDOUT 1

### *John A. Logan Memorial Day Order and Questions*

**John A. Logan’s Memorial Day Order (1868)** launched a national effort to set aside a day to honor the Union dead. Eventually, that day became today’s Memorial Day. At the time, Logan headed the Grand Army of the Republic, the national organization of Union veterans. Logan’s order is written in an elaborate, or “florid,” style that was common in the Victorian period.

**Instructions:** As you read portions of Logan’s Order, answer these the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of this holiday? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why was Memorial Day set for late May? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How should this day be observed? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How does Logan view the Civil War? (How had Logan participated in the war?) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What duties and obligations does he argue that the nation has toward those who died for it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **General Order No. 11, Headquarters, Grand Army of the Republic, Washington, DC, May 5, 1868**

The 30th day of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of **strewn** with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of **comrades** who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and **hamlet** churchyard in the land. In this **observance** no form or ceremony is **prescribed**, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and **testimonials** of respect as circumstances may permit.

We are organized, comrades, as our regulations tell us, for the purpose, among other things, “of preserving and strengthening those kind and **fraternal** feelings which have bound together the soldiers, sailors, and marines who united to **suppress** the late rebellion.” What can aid more to assure this result than by cherishing tenderly the memory of our heroic dead, who made their breasts a **barricade** between our country and its foe? Their soldier lives were the **reveille** of freedom to a race in chains ...

Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and **garland** the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred **charges** upon the Nation’s gratitude, the soldier’s and sailor’s widow and orphan.

It is the purpose of the Commander-in-Chief to **inaugurate** this **observance** with the hope it will be kept up from year to year, while a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades. He earnestly desires the public press to call attention to this Order, and lend its friendly aid in bringing it to the notice of comrades in all parts of the country in time for **simultaneous compliance** ...

By order of John A. Logan, Commander-in-Chief

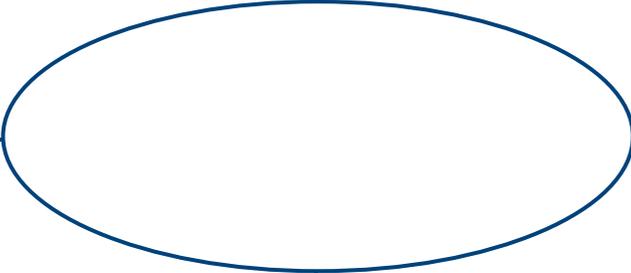
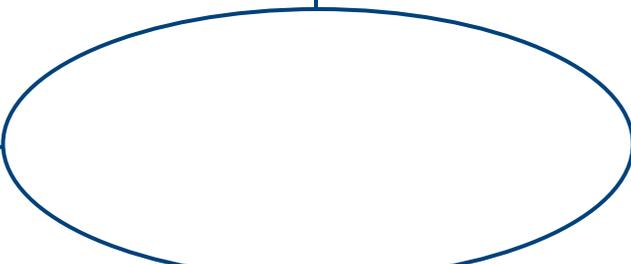
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice

## HANDOUT 2

### Graphic Organizer: Word Definitions

**Instructions:** Use this graphic organizer to provide a visual overview of the vocabulary word(s) you are investigating. Use it as a guide to create your own graphic organizer on blank paper for additional words as needed.

<b>DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>
	
<b>EXAMPLES</b>	<b>NON-EXAMPLES</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>
	
<b>EXAMPLES</b>	<b>NON-EXAMPLES</b>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice

## HANDOUT 3

### Document Analysis Worksheet

**Instructions:** Use the questions below to help guide you in analyzing and understanding the document(s) you are reviewing.

#### 1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper     | <input type="checkbox"/> Report               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter        | <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional record |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patent        | <input type="checkbox"/> Census report        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum    | <input type="checkbox"/> Map                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram      | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Press release | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                |

#### 2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT

(Check one or more):

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting letterhead | <input type="checkbox"/> Notations    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Typed                  | _____                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seals                  | _____                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp       | _____                                 |

#### 3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

(There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)

##### A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

##### B. Why do you think this document was written?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

##### C. What evidence in the document helps you understand why it was written? Quote from the document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

##### D. List two things the document reveals about life in the United States at the time it was written:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

##### E. Write a question to the author that is not answered in the document:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice

## HANDOUT 4

### *Graphic Organizer: Decoration and Memorial Day Postcards*

**Instructions:** For each postcard you examine, use the questions on this page to describe what the postcard depicts. You may use one page to evaluate and list the features of multiple postcards or use a separate page for each postcard.

*Note: You may use downloaded postcard images, visuals from a PowerPoint slide show, or the postcard images shown on Handout 5.*

1. What people are shown? What are they wearing or carrying?

2. What plants and objects are included?

3. What is the setting (or landscape) of the image?

4. What key words or text appear on the postcard?

5. What objects or individuals on the postcard have symbolic meaning for Americans?

6. What actions are taking place? How do they relate to Memorial Day?

7. What is the overall message of the postcard?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Memorial Day — Honoring Service and Sacrifice

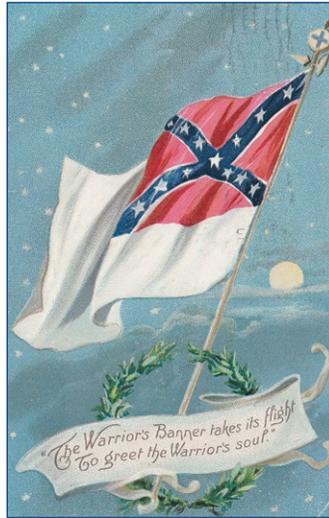
## HANDOUT 5

### Decoration and Memorial Day Postcard Images

**Instructions:** Use one or more of the postcard images below to complete your Graphic Organizer: Decoration and Memorial Day Postcards (Handout 4).



A



B



C



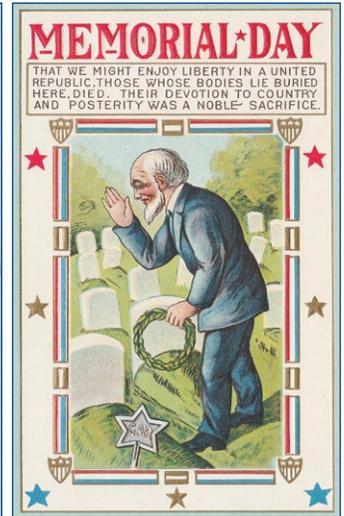
D



E



F



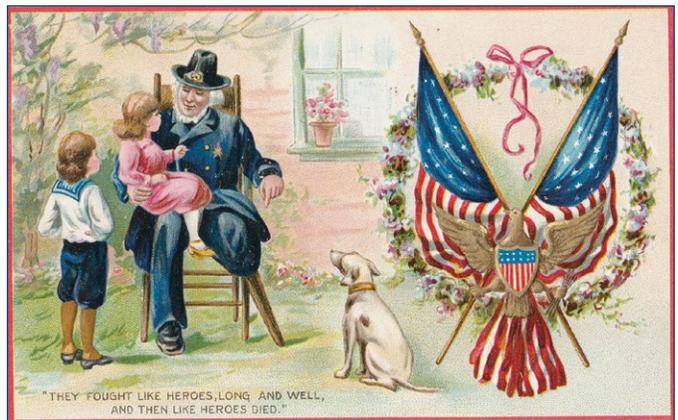
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**Headquarters Grand Army of the Republic,  
Washington, DC, May 5, 1868.**

GENERAL ORDERS  
No. 11

I. The 30th day of May, 1868 is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance no form or ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit.

We are organized, comrades, as our regulations tell us, for the purpose, among other things, "of preserving and strengthening those kind and fraternal feelings which have bound together the soldiers, sailors and marines who united to suppress the late rebellion." What can aid more to assure this result than by cherishing tenderly the memory of our heroic dead who made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foes? Their soldier lives were the reveille of freedom to a race in chains and their deaths the tattoo of rebellious tyranny in arms. We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the nation can add to their adornment and security is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders. Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed grounds. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten, as a people, the cost of a free and undivided republic.

If other eyes grow dull and other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remains in us.

Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the nation's gratitude—the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan.

II. It is the purpose of the commander in chief to inaugurate this observance with the hope that it will be kept up from year to year, while a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades. He earnestly desires the public press to call attention to this order, and lend its friendly aid in bringing it to the notice of comrades in all parts of the country in time for simultaneous compliance therewith.

III. Department commanders will use every effort to make this order effective.

By Command of -  
John A. Logan,  
Commander in Chief

# *Curriculum Development Team*

## **Historian**

### **Thomas G. Connors**

Thomas Connors is associate professor of history at the University of Northern Iowa. He earned his Ph.D. in history from the University of Illinois. He is a recognized expert on history education with a specialization in the use of cemeteries as teaching tools. Since 2000, he has worked with teachers and led tours of 62 cemeteries in 25 states, from Florida to Alaska. He has published a study of Washington Irving and Sleepy Hollow, and his current research focuses on using cemeteries for research and service projects. He is also involved in local historic preservation and education.

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## **Contributing Educators**

### **Lucinda Evans**

Lucinda Evans has taught social studies in Topeka Public Schools for 25 years. She has developed curriculum and teaching materials and has written state standards and assessment items for social studies. She has a B.S. in history from St. Mary of the Plains College in Dodge City, Kansas. As a Master Teacher for the National Council for History Education and the American Institute for History Education, Evans has been involved with numerous Teaching American History grants. She is a past president of the Kansas Council for History Education and has participated in Gilder Lehrman Seminars at Oxford and Cambridge.

### **Gerry R. Kohler**

Gerry Kohler taught social studies for three decades in elementary, junior high, and high schools in Parkersburg, West Virginia. She earned her B.A. in Early Childhood Education from West Virginia Wesleyan College and her M.A. in Education Administration from West Virginia University. In 2006, she was selected as the Gilder Lehrman Institute's National History Teacher of the Year. She has frequently presented as a Master Teacher for the National Council for History Education on Teaching American History grants. Other honors have come from the Daughters of the American Revolution and the U.S. House of Representatives. In 2010, she received the James P. Vaughan Award for Historic Preservation.