



Veterans in Our Neighborhood

The students will:

- Identify and describe national patriotic holidays
- explain the importance of veterans in the community
- categorize information
- analyze a primary source
- express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences

TEKS:

K.1A, K.6AB, 1.1A, 1.9A, 1.12A, 2.1A, 2.10A, 3.9A, 3.11A

Vocabulary:

- hero
- Veterans Day
- patriotic holidays
- community helpers
- veteran
- military

Materials:

- Veterans: Heroes in Our Neighborhood by Valerie Pfundstein
- *Veterans PowerPoint K3*
- Veteran Cinquain handout
- Veteran Acrostic handout

Resources:

- LRE [Justiceville](#) website
- PBS [Veterans Day](#) video (1:16)
- [Penguins of Madagascar Teach About Veterans Day](#) video (6:00)
- [Veterans Day Background information](#): Ducksters

Teaching Tips:

- For this lesson you will need the book: Veterans: Heroes in Our Neighborhood by Valerie Pfundstein or a similar book about veterans.
- You might have students ask their parents if they have any veterans in the family. If so, have students find out more about what that family member did. You might also have students ask their parents if they know of any veterans in the community.
- If possible, have a veteran come talk to the class.

Teaching Strategies:

Engage Learning Experience

1. Write the word “hero” on the board or chart paper. Have students brainstorm what comes to mind when they hear this word. Write students’ thoughts on the board/chart paper.

2. As a class, categorize the words on the board. (This can also be done in small groups.)
3. Discuss the different categories.
4. Show **Slides 1**. Share that this image might be what comes to mind when you think of the word 'hero.' Ask questions such as:
 - What makes Spiderman a hero?
 - What character traits does he exhibit that makes him a hero? What makes you say that?
5. Have students share why they think the people/characters on the board are heroes. Ask questions such as:
 - Why are these people heroes?
 - What is meant by the word hero?
6. Have students come up with a definition for the word hero.
7. Show definition of a hero on **Slide 2**. Have students compare their definition to this one.
8. Based on the definition, see if students can think of other heroes and add them to the board or chart paper.

Explore Learning Experience

9. Show the cover of Veterans: Heroes in Our Neighborhood by Valerie Pfundstein, **Slide 3** (or use the actual book cover).
10. Ask questions about the cover and have students predict what it might be about. Ask questions such as:
 - Why is this book called Veterans: Heroes in Our Neighborhood?
 - What is a veteran?
 - Why might a veteran be a hero?
 - What do you think this book has to do with a 'neighborhood?'
11. Read the book aloud asking questions to clarify student understanding. Ask questions such as:
 - What community helpers did you hear about in the story?
 - What do they have to do with veterans?
 - Can you give me an example of a community helper and what he/she did that made him/her a veteran?
 - Why do you think veterans are heroes?
 - When do we celebrate Veterans Day? (November 11)
 - What did the boys and girls do at the end of the story to celebrate veterans?
 - Do you know of any veterans? Have student share.
 - Do you think there are veterans in your neighborhood?
 - What traits did the people in the book exhibit? How did these traits help them in their jobs in the community?

Explain Learning Experience

12. Share with students the primary source image of a veteran, **Slide 4**. Ask students the following questions:

- What do you see in this image?
- Why do you think this man is holding a picture?
- Who might this be a picture of?
- What do you notice about the pictures on the back wall? What might they tell you about this man and the picture?
- What makes this man a hero?

(This is Captain Winslow Buxton who is 100 years old in this picture! He attended the Coast Guard Academy from 1934 to 1938. Before the war he served as deck officer aboard Coast Guard Cutter Mojave and executive officer of Coast Guard Cutter Tallapoosa, working on search and rescue cases. The picture he is holding is a picture of himself. You can see his ships in the background on the wall and the hook where the picture was hung.)

13. Show students the PBS [Veterans Day](#) video on Slide 5 or click on the link. Click the picture to run the video. Ask questions to clarify student understanding.

14. Ask students to come up with a definition of the word ‘veteran.’ Share that a veteran is someone who has served in the military.’ Ask students questions such as:

- What is meant by the military?
- What character traits do veterans have? (brave, leader, work well in groups, honesty, etc.)

Culminating Learning Experience

15. Have students write a poem about a veteran. This is differentiated by student ability level.

- **For older students:** Have them write a cinquain about either the word veteran or a veteran they know, based on what they learned in class. Share with students what a cinquain is by sharing the example of **Slide 6**. Share that a cinquain is a five-line poem. *(The slide is animated so once they see the poem, click to show what each line represents in the poem.)* Give students a [Veteran Cinquain](#) handout.
- **For younger students:** Have them write an acrostic. Give students a [Veteran Acrostic](#) handout.

16. Students share their poems.

Closure

17. Have students reflect on their learning by responding to the following question:

- Why are veterans heroes? (You might have them draw a picture of a veteran.)

Additional Learning Experiences

- Write letters or cards to veterans thanking them for their service.
- Have a Veterans Day parade. Allow students time to make patriotic decorations for the parade.
- Invite a veteran to come speak to the class.
- Students can learn more about community helpers by going to the LRE [Justiceville](#) website.

Name: _____

Veteran Cinquain

a one-word title, a noun that tells what your poem is about (topic)

_____/ _____

2 adjectives that describes what your poem is about

_____/ _____/ _____

3 (-ing) verbs or action words that tells what your topic is doing

a phrase that tells more about what your topic

A synonym or another word for your topic

Name: _____

Veteran Acrostic

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