

# America's Unseen Soldiers



*Presidio National Cemetery, San Francisco, 2012, The Jon B. Lovelace Collection of California Photographs in Carol M. Highsmith's America Project, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.*

Created through a partnership with the Veterans Legacy Program

VA



U.S. Department  
Of Veterans Affairs  
National Cemetery Administration

THE GILDER LEHRMAN  
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY

TL TEACHING LITERACY  
TH THROUGH HISTORY

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## AMERICA'S UNSEEN SOLDIERS

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### UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit has been developed in conjunction with the National Cemetery Administration’s Veterans Legacy Program and is a part of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Literacy through History™ resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. The lessons were developed to enable students to understand, summarize, and evaluate original documents of historical significance and to recognize how those documents reflect the shared experiences of America’s unseen soldiers who served their country during various conflicts, many of whom are honorably laid to rest in National Cemeteries across the country. Students will learn and practice the skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on visual and textual source materials.

While each of these lessons can stand alone, taken in concert they retell a rich history of service and sacrifice of soldiers willing to serve their country in spite of the obstacles. These five lessons focus on soldiers from groups whose service has been largely “unseen” or underrecognized throughout US history: African Americans, American Indians, Asian Americans, Latinas and Latinos, and women. Over the course of these lessons, students will analyze primary sources by and about these “unseen” soldiers whose service has been so vital to the US Armed Forces and American liberty, supported by scholarly essays written by leading scholars. The primary sources include letters, diary entries, government documents, newspaper articles, and interviews with soldiers who served in wars throughout United States history. Each lesson is supported by an essay by an eminent scholar, which can be shared with the class.

The objective is to have students recognize the similarities and differences within these experiences and examine the common threads that connected these soldiers and why they decided to serve. While each of these lessons tells the story of service and sacrifice of those “unseen,” it is not the complete picture and there are more stories yet to be told. With that in mind there are several service and civic learning extensions and opportunities designed for students to memorialize and honor the service and sacrifice of these brave men and women.

## UNIT OBJECTIVES

- Analyze, summarize, and logically infer the essential message of a primary source using close-reading strategies
- Draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of primary sources through text-based evidence

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Despite the obstacles, why did these soldiers choose to serve?
- How did these soldiers contribute to the success of the United States military?
- Why were these soldiers “unseen”?

**NUMBER OF CLASS PERIODS:** 1–5 (Each Lesson is designed for one class period.)

**GRADE LEVEL:** 7–12

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Standards will vary with each lesson.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA- Literacy.RH.6-8.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA- Literacy.SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA- Literacy.W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

## LESSON 1

### **AFRICAN AMERICANS AT WEST POINT: THE CAREER AND LEGACY OF COLONEL CHARLES YOUNG**

By Jermain Corbin

#### **OVERVIEW**

This lesson provides an opportunity to analyze primary sources in order to understand the reasons some African Americans served in the US Armed Forces despite the discrimination they faced. Many of these men and women have been honorably laid to rest in National Cemeteries across the country. The lesson includes letters written to and by Charles Young, the first Black colonel in the US Army, and a poem about him. Students will develop their understanding of this topic by carefully examining the letters and the poem as well as two essays, one about the history of African Americans in the US military and another about the first Black cadets at the US Military Academy at West Point.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- Analyze, summarize, and logically infer the essential message of a primary source using close-reading strategies
- Draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of primary sources through text-based evidence

#### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

- Despite the obstacles, why did these soldiers choose to serve?
- How did these soldiers contribute to the success of the United States military?
- Why were these soldiers “unseen”?

#### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

##### **African Americans in the Military History of the United States**

by Adrian R. Lewis, University of Kansas, Lawrence

Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letter, U.S., let him get an eagle on his buttons, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States.

—Frederick Douglass, 1863

African Americans have served, fought, and died in all the major wars of the United States—with the one exception of the Mexican-American War—from the American Revolution to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. They fought on two fronts, against racism, prejudice, and discrimination from their countrymen and against the enemies of the United States (usually in segregated units) at home and abroad. Historically their service, contributions, and sacrifices have not been recognized or rewarded. Why?

During the American Revolution a pattern evolved that influenced the service of African Americans until the Vietnam War. That pattern arose out of two fundamental motivations: First, one of the foundational tenets of Western Civilization is that loyal, honorable military service to the political body earns the rights and privileges, and the duties and responsibilities, of citizenship. Second, the United States established an economic, social, cultural, and political system based on racial slavery. To maintain this slave state Whites, particularly Southerners, built a complex, pervasive system of control and oppression. White Southerners understood the great danger to their society of armed, trained Black soldiers. And the qualities of character required of soldiers—courage, tenacity, the will to persevere—were qualities they did not want to recognize in Black men, free or enslaved.

These two motivations set the model of African American military service around four “rules”:

1. **THE EXCLUSION RULE:** Whites denied Blacks the right and privilege to fight.
2. **THE NECESSITY RULE:** Black men were needed to fight when not enough White recruits showed up.
3. **THE HONORABLE SERVICE RULE:** Black soldiers fought for the United States with honor, integrity, loyalty, and courage.
4. **THE DENIAL OF RECOGNITION RULE:** Whites refused to acknowledge the honorable service of African Americans and therefore could continue to deny that they had earned the right to full citizenship.

African Americans built an impressive record of service. In the American Revolution, roughly 5,000 Black men served in the Continental Army. During the American Civil War, 10 to 12 percent of the US Army was Black, serving in segregated units. African Americans fought and died in 449 engagements and 39 major battles. Of the more than 186,000 Blacks who served, more than a third died.

In World War I, roughly 200,000 African Americans served in France, 42,000 in combat units. The 93rd Division, which fought under French leadership, and therefore did not suffer under American prejudices, served with great distinction. In World War II, more than a million African Americans served, still in segregated units, in every theater, on land, on the water, and in the air.

On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, which called for “equality of treatment and opportunity for persons in the Armed Services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin.” Truman’s order was not immediately carried out. The services delayed desegregation until the Korean War. The US 8th Army in Korea was integrated under the leadership of General Matthew B. Ridgway in 1951. He wrote:

It was my conviction . . . that only in this way could we assure the sort of esprit a fighting army needs, where each soldier stands proudly on his own feet, knowing himself to be as good as the next fellow and better than the enemy.

Not all military leaders felt as Ridgway did. Not until October 31, 1954, could the Army report all units integrated. The Vietnam War was the first war since the American Revolution that the United States entered with an integrated force. Racism, however, continued to plague the services. Today African Americans continue to serve with honor, courage, and integrity in all the Armed Forces of the United States.

*Adrian R. Lewis is the David Pittaway Professor in Military History at the University of Kansas, Lawrence. A retired soldier, Lewis is the author of The American Culture of War: The History of US Military Force from World War II to Operation Enduring Freedom (2018) and Omaha Beach: A Flawed Victory (2001).*

## MATERIALS

- Optional: Historical Background
  - “African Americans in the Military History of the United States” by Adrian Lewis, David Pittaway Professor in Military History, University of Kansas, Lawrence
  - Important Phrases activity sheet
- In Context
  - “The First African American Cadets at the US Military Academy at West Point,” by Jermain Corbin
  - Important Phrases activity sheet
- Summary Organizer 1: A Letter from W. E. B. Du Bois to Charles Young, July 17, 1913, Charles Young Collection, National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, Wilberforce, Ohio. Available from the Ohio History Connection, [dbs.ohiohistory.org/africanam/html/det50c6.html?ID=5388](https://dbs.ohiohistory.org/africanam/html/det50c6.html?ID=5388).
- Summary Organizer 2: A Letter from Charles Young to Booker T. Washington, November 24, 1911, Charles Young Collection, National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, Wilberforce, Ohio. Available from the Ohio History Connection, [dbs.ohiohistory.org/africanam/html/detc102.html?ID=5385](https://dbs.ohiohistory.org/africanam/html/detc102.html?ID=5385).
- Summary Organizer 3: A Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Charles Young, May 15, 1917, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. Available from the Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, [theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o279509](https://theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o279509).
- Analyzing a Poem: “In Memory of Col. Charles Young” by Countee Cullen from Countee Cullen, *Color* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1925), p. 99, with activity sheet.
- Critical Thinking Questions: A Letter from Charles Young to Secretary of War Newton Baker, April 26, 1918, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, [credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b013-i468](https://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b013-i468), with activity sheet.

## PROCEDURE

1. This lesson is a “drill down” exercise into primary source documents. Students should have prior knowledge of the historical figures W. E. B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, and Theodore Roosevelt as well as the events and context of the Spanish-American War, World War I, and race relations in the late nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth century.
2. Review the history of African Americans in the military based on the Historical Background. The Historical Background by Adrian R. Lewis is intended as a teacher’s resource, but you may choose to distribute it, along with the Important Phrases activity sheet, to the class to read and discuss.
3. You may choose to “share read” the Historical Background with the class. Have the students follow along silently while you begin reading aloud, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Ask the class to join in with the reading after a few sentences while you continue to serve as the model for the class. This technique will support struggling readers as well as English language learners (ELL).

Once the students have read the Historical Background and selected three informative or important phrases or sentences, you may choose to reconvene the class to discuss their selections.

4. Distribute the In Context reading on the history of African American cadets at West Point along with the Important Phrases activity sheet. You may share read the text with the students or have them read it independently. When they have completed the Important Phrases activity sheet, reconvene the class to discuss their selections.

5. Take a few minutes to engage the students on the concepts of de facto and de jure segregation in addition to prevailing social mores of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For instance, societal norms required that Charles Young invite his superior officers to dine at his home. However, Young would rescind those invitations at the last minute, citing sickness, so his superiors could avoid declining the invitation.
6. Distribute three Summary Organizers with correspondence between Charles Young, W. E. B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, and Theodore Roosevelt. The primary sources are relatively short and pre-teaching vocabulary and using annotation tools can be useful scaffolding techniques.
7. Summary Organizers
  - a. Model the summary organizer activity with the class for Summary Organizer 1: A Letter from W. E. B. Du Bois to Charles Young, July 17, 1913.
  - b. Display the activity sheet in a format that all the students can see. Explain that the whole class will be going through the text-analysis process together for the first letter. Remind the students to keep in mind the three Essential Questions as they read.
  - c. Share read the text with the students as described in Procedure 3 above.
  - d. Explain that the first objective is to select Key Words from the text and then use those words to create a summary sentence that demonstrates an understanding of what W. E. B. Du Bois was writing about.
  - e. Guidelines for Selecting the Key Words: Key Words are very important to understanding the text. Without them the selection would not make sense. These words are usually nouns or verbs. Tell the students not to pick “connector” words (*are, is, the, and, so, etc.*). Students must know the meaning of the words they select. This will give them practice reasoning out word meanings using context clues and advanced dictionary skills.
  - f. Students will now select three to five words from the text that they believe are Key Words and write them in the Key Words section of their organizers.
  - g. Survey the class to find out what words they selected. You can ask for a show of hands to determine the most popular choices. Using this vote and some discussion the class should, with your guidance, decide on three to five Key Words. For example, let’s say that the class decides on the following words: *executive, Negro, regiment, best, chance*. No matter which words the students had previously selected, have them write the words agreed upon by the class or chosen by you in the Key Word section.
  - h. Explain that the class will use these Key Words to write a sentence that summarizes the meaning of Du Bois’s letter. This should be a class discussion-and-negotiation process. For example, they might say: *“We want you to be the executive for a Negro regiment, which will be the best chance to advance our people.”* You might find that the class decides they don’t need some of the Key Words to make the Key Word Summary even more streamlined. This is part of the negotiation process. Copy the final negotiated sentence into the organizer.
  - i. Tell the students to restate their Key Word summary sentence in their own words, not having to use the Key Words from the text. Again, this is a class discussion-and-negotiation process. For example, *“New York has authorized Black troops to mobilize for war, which is a good opportunity to demonstrate the abilities and loyalty of African Americans, and W. E. B. Du Bois would like Colonel Charles Young to lead them.”*
  - j. For Summary Organizer 2, you may choose to have the students work in pairs, stopping to discuss the Key Words, the Key Word Summary, and the In Your Own Words restatement as the students work through the organizer. They may choose 4 to 5 Key Words for this letter.
  - k. For Summary Organizer 3, you may choose to have the students work independently, bringing the class together to discuss their final restatements. They may choose 3 to 4 Key Words for this letter.



8. Analyzing a Poem: Distribute Countee Cullen’s poem “In Memory of Col. Charles Young” along with the Analyzing a Poem activity sheet. When the students have completed the activity sheet, bring the class together to discuss the students’ different selections and the meaning of the poem.
9. Critical Thinking Questions: Distribute Charles Young’s letter to the Secretary of War along with the activity sheet for students to complete independently in class or for homework. When the students have completed the activity sheet, bring the class together to discuss the students’ different selections and the purpose of the letter.
10. As an assessment, you may ask the students to respond, orally or in writing, to one of the unit’s essential questions, supporting their responses with evidence from all the texts in this lesson.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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NAME

PERIOD

DATE

### Important Phrases: African Americans in the Military History of the United States

Which phrases or sentences related to African Americans in the military history of the United States are most informative or important in this scholarly essay? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

## IN CONTEXT

### The First African American Cadets at the US Military Academy at West Point

by Jermain Corbin

The United States Military Academy at West Point was founded in 1802, but did not admit its first Black cadet, James Webster Smith, until 1870. Smith encountered virulent racism during his tenure and was subsequently court-martialed three times and dismissed from the academy.

Henry Ossian Flipper was appointed to West Point in 1873. Flipper had similar experiences with racism as Smith had. In 1877, Flipper became the first Black American to graduate from West Point and was assigned to serve with the famed Buffalo Soldiers of the 10th Cavalry, one of four all-Black Army regiments. In 1881, Flipper was accused of a specious charge of embezzlement and kicked out of the service. Two White officers had been recently charged with embezzlement and both were allowed to remain in the Army. This gross miscarriage of justice was addressed in 1999 when President Bill Clinton posthumously pardoned Flipper.

The second Black graduate of West Point was John Hanks Alexander in 1887. Alexander was an outstanding student and earned the highest grade in the competitive exam to gain entry to the military academy but was passed over in favor of a White applicant. When Alexander also passed the preliminary exam and the White applicant failed, Alexander earned the coveted spot. In 1889 Alexander became the first Black officer to command a unit. Given the racism prevalent in the United States as well as the military, the Army wanted to avoid having a Black officer command White troops. This was accomplished by assigning Alexander to teach at the historically Black Wilberforce University in Ohio. At the age of 30, Alexander suddenly died of a ruptured aorta and a promising life and military career was cut short.

Charles Young became the third African American to graduate from West Point, in 1889. What sets Young apart from his predecessors is his long and storied career as an Army officer, professor, and administrator. Young faced racism throughout his time at West Point and throughout his military career. He served for more than twenty-eight years, mostly with the Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th and 10th Cavalry.

Black officers were routinely assigned to teach at Historically Black Colleges and Universities to avoid putting them in command over White soldiers. Young was assigned to lead the Military Sciences Department at Wilberforce University. He petitioned five times to be returned to the regular Army for duty. He was eventually reassigned and saw action in the Philippines in the wake of the Spanish-American War and Mexico during the Punitive Expedition in the search for Pancho Villa. As part of his military duties, Young served as the first Black superintendent of a national park when he took over Sequoia and General Grant National Parks, and as a military attaché in Haiti and Liberia providing much needed intelligence. In 1917, former president Theodore Roosevelt was trying to raise a regiment to fight in World War I, and wanted Young to command Black troops within that regiment. President Woodrow Wilson wanted to keep Roosevelt out of the public eye and refused his request.



Major Charles Young, 24th Infantry, in Mexico, with Capt. John Barber, photograph by Underwood and Underwood, 1915 (Library of Congress)



Young achieved the rank of colonel but was unceremoniously forced from the service to prevent him from reaching the rank of general. If he had ever achieved the rank of general, he could no longer be assigned to roles keeping him from command of White troops. The reason given was lack of physical fitness due to health concerns. To dispel that falsehood, in June 1918 Colonel Young embarked on a 497-mile horseback ride from Ohio to Washington, DC, to seek an audience with Secretary of War Newton Baker. Despite demonstrating his fitness, Colonel Young's request to return to full service was denied, and he finished out his military career as attaché in Liberia. He died while on a mission in Nigeria in 1922. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

In 1900, while stationed at Fort Duchesne in Utah, Young had become acquainted with a promising Black corporal named Benjamin O. Davis. Davis was an extremely capable soldier who was soon promoted to sergeant major. The Army had decided to expand the officer corps and Davis endeavored to take the competitive exam. Young supported Davis's ambition, writing him a glowing letter of recommendation and tutoring him in several subjects. Davis placed third out of twelve applicants. He became a commissioned officer and in 1941, was the first Black officer to achieve the rank of general. In 1936 Davis's son, Benjamin O. Davis Jr., became the first Black graduate of West Point since Charles Young. Racial progress has always been slow and incremental. This is evident when we realize West Point went forty-seven years between Black graduates. The arc and trajectory of Black service in the military was altered due to the service and sacrifice of Colonel Charles Young.

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### Important Phrases: The First African American Cadets at the US Military Academy

Which phrases or sentences related to the first African American cadets at the US Military Academy are most informative or important? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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## Summary Organizer 1: A Letter from W. E. B. Du Bois to Charles Young, 1913

### *Original Text*

My dear Young:

You probably know that the state of New York has provided for a Negro regiment. Of course, we want you as its executive, and Major General O’Ryan, the head of the National Guard, and Colonel Watson also want you. I am sending you a copy of the memorandum which Mr. Villard has just sent me. I am also writing the Secretary of War. I write you to ask first, that you persuade yourself without hesitation as this is the biggest and best chance for us and that you must accept, and secondly, to get you to give me any pointers as to how to push the thing through as soon as possible. We have got some other big things on foot in New York and with you at the head of the regiment we will put this state at the head of the Negro race in the place of Alabama.

I hope you are well and happy.

We all send best love.

Very Sincerely yours,

W. E. B. Du Bois

Source: W. E. B. Du Bois to Charles Young, July 17, 1913, Charles Young Collection, National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, Wilberforce, Ohio

### *Key Words*

### *Key Word Summary*

### *In Your Own Words*

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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## Summary Organizer 2: A Letter from Charles Young to Booker T. Washington, 1911

### *Original Text*

My dear Dr. Washington:

In reply to your communication of the 18<sup>th</sup> instant, relative to the Military Attache' detail in Liberia, I wish to state that I am always willing to aid in any work for the good of the country in general and of our race in particular, whether that race be found in Africa or in the United States.

Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard of the New York Evening Post, wrote to me sometime ago asking if I would undertake the organization of a Negro Regiment in connection with the New York National Guard, provided the War Department would consent to loaning me for such duty. I consented, not knowing that I would be wanted for the "Homeland" detail. Since then I have heard nothing of the progress of things in New York.

Now if you and the War Department think I can be of more good to the country and our people on the African detail with Mr. Paige, I am perfectly willing to go, and shall render him faithful and loyal service.

Always with the same esteem and friendship,

Your sincere,

Source: Charles Young to Booker T. Washington, November 24, 1911, Charles Young Collection, National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center, Wilberforce, Ohio

### *Key Words*

### *Key Word Summary*

### *In Your Own Words*



NAME

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### Summary Organizer 3: A Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Charles Young, 1917

#### *Original Text*

My dear Colonel Young:

Indeed, there is not another man who would be better fit to command such a regiment than you would be. I have been getting Mr. Schieffelin to superintendent the raising of a colored regiment, if I am allowed to take one. I shall consult with him at once as to whether we cannot have a special regiment specially raised for you to take. As far as I am concerned, I would give you carte blanche in raising it, and I know you would handle it in the best possible fashion. I would particularly like to have you with me.

Faithfully yours

Source: Theodore Roosevelt to Charles Young, May 15, 1917, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site

#### *Key Words*

#### *Key Word Summary*

#### *In Your Own Words*



## In Memory of Colonel Charles Young, 1925

by Countee Cullen

Along the shore the tall, thin grass  
That fringes that dark river,  
While sinuously soft feet pass,  
Begins to bleed and quiver.  
The great dark voice breaks with a sob  
Across the womb of night;  
Above your grave the tom-toms throb,  
And the hills are weird with light.  
The great dark heart is like a well  
Drained bitter by the sky,  
And all the honeyed lies they tell  
Come there to thirst and die.  
No lie is strong enough to kill  
The roots that work below;  
From your rich dust and slaughtered will  
A tree with tongues will grow.

Source: Countee Cullen, *Color* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1925).



NAME

PERIOD

DATE

### Analyzing a Poem

Important Phrases: Which are the most important or powerful phrases in the poem? Choose three phrases and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?



## A Letter from Charles Young to the Secretary of War, 1918

Wilberforce, Ohio, April 26, 1918

From: Chas. Young, Col. U. S. Army, retd.

To: The Hon. The Secretary of War.

Subject: Asking for work.

1. I beg to call the personal attention of the Secretary of War to the recommendation of the Examining Board in my case, now in the office of the Adjt. General, and which was to the effect that the "finding of the Medical Officers be waived in my case and that I should be advanced to my next grade and be retained in the active service during the period of the war."
2. Not the findings of the Surgeons, but these proceedings of the Board with its recommendations (unanimous), I understand were approved by the Secretary of War; but that through an error the words "active duty" were used instead of "active service," which brought about my retirement.
3. Despite the diagnosis of the Doctors, I feel as physically fit as I did during the hard service in Mexico with Gen. Pershing. I therefore, deem it my duty to my country to inform the Secretary of War that I believe myself wholly able to assume the work of organization, training, and leading troops in the field.

To help in the country's service is my sole motive in making this direct request. Besides I have an abiding conviction that in the present need of the country for higher officers who know the trade of war, that I cannot honorably take advantage of a technicality or an error and thus escape my plain duty.

4. Giving me this chance will but be in line with the national reputation of the Secretary of War for unflinching fairness in dealing with all men, and I submit, will in no small way enhance the enthusiasm of the colored people throughout the United States for the tremendous war task in which we are engaged.

Chas. Young

Source: Charles Young to Secretary of War Newton Baker, April 26, 1918, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.



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### Critical Thinking Questions

1. What did Colonel Young hope to achieve by writing this letter?
2. Col. Young was forcibly retired from the Army. What reason was given?
3. What was Col. Young's concern regarding the source of the recommendation?
4. What was Col. Young's motive for making this direct request?
5. List three arguments Col. Young made to be reinstated to active service.

## LESSON 2

### AMERICAN INDIANS: WHY THEY SERVED

by Erik Bloch

#### OVERVIEW

This lesson provides an opportunity to analyze primary sources in order to understand some of the reasons American Indians chose to serve in the US Armed Forces despite the way they were treated by the US government. Many of these men and women have been honorably laid to rest in National Cemeteries across the country. Students will develop their understanding of this topic by carefully examining the firsthand accounts by American Indian Veterans, each with their own unique perspective and motivations.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Analyze, summarize, and logically infer the essential message of a primary source using close-reading strategies
- Draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of primary sources through text-based evidence

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Despite the obstacles, why did these soldiers choose to serve?
- How did these soldiers contribute to the success of the United States military?
- Why were these soldiers “unseen”?

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

##### Indigenous Soldiers in the United States Military

Dr. Shane Doyle, Apsáalooke

Although Native American Nations suffered through a catastrophic loss of people, land, and resources during the United States’ colonial era, Native American soldiers from throughout the nation have served valiantly under the United States flag in every major military conflict since the Revolutionary War. Remarkably, Native men and women volunteer for military service at a higher rate than any other demographic group in the nation. During the Civil War, 28,693 Indigenous soldiers served in both the Union and Confederate Armies and another 12,000 signed up to serve their country in World War I, despite not being federally recognized American citizens at the time of their deployment. World War II saw 25,000 Native American soldiers serve, followed by 10,000 in the Korean Conflict, 42,000 in Vietnam, and another 50,000 in the Afghan and Iraq Wars. As of November 2021, there were 31,000 Native Americans serving on active duty and over 140,000 living Veterans. These astonishing statistics only give part of the picture, while the thousands of individual stories of valor and courage under fire provide a truer and more complete understanding of the significant role that Native soldiers have played throughout US history.

The story of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation’s contribution to the US military is like none other, and can be traced back to the Plains Indian Wars of the 1860s and 1870s. The famous Chief Plenty Coups served as a scout for General George Crook during the 1876 Great Sioux War campaign and was credited by the general and his commanders for sparing the regiment from a deadly light infantry attack by Crazy Horse and others at the largest engagement of the Plains Indian Wars, the Battle of the Rosebud. One week later, Apsáalooke scouts served under Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer, providing him with critical reconnaissance information about the size and demeanor of the Lakota and Cheyenne camp along the Little Bighorn on the morning of June 25, 1876. Had he followed the strategic advice of his Apsáalooke scouts and waited for reinforcements that day, Custer could have avoided his disastrous last stand.

Later, during the First World War, Apsáalooke dough boys rushed to volunteer for service abroad, including my grandfather, John Doyle, who was also a product of Carlisle Indian School. As a child I observed his gas mask, steel helmet, backpack, and bugle hanging on my uncle’s wall as a memorial to his service. My grandfather’s brother, Thurlow Doyle, served as a fighter pilot in World War II and earned a meritorious achievement honor for completing 854 hours of flight time over hostile enemy territory in the Pacific Theater. He was one of hundreds of Native American soldiers who served as code-talkers, turning the tide of the war, and saving thousands of lives.

Their collective sacrifice and dedication were officially recognized and ceremonially honored on November 11, 2020, with the opening of the Native American Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, located adjacent to the National Museum of the American Indian.

*Dr. Shane Doyle, Apsáalooke, is an educational and cultural consultant in Bozeman, Montana. He is currently the program coordinator for the National Indian Education Association’s Montana Warrior Spirit Native Veterans Curriculum Project.*

## MATERIALS

- Optional: Historical Background
  - o “Indigenous Soldiers in the United States Military” by Dr. Shane Doyle, Apsáalooke
  - o Important Phrases activity sheet
- Handout 1: Getting Started
  - o Photograph: Alan Karchmer, National Native American Veterans Memorial, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian, [americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/nnavm/2021AK12-558-946x709.jpg](http://americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/nnavm/2021AK12-558-946x709.jpg).
  - o Excerpt from *Why We Serve: Native American in the United States Armed Forces*, Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 2020, [americanindian.si.edu/why-we-serve/](http://americanindian.si.edu/why-we-serve/).
- Handouts 2A, B, and C: Interview Analyses
  - o 2A: Excerpts from an interview with Roy Daniel Bailey, “Willing to Serve: American Indians,” *Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project*, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, [memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.44446/](http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.44446/)  
(Roy Daniel Bailey, Born: November 5, 1926; Died: February 12, 2011; Burial Site: Sitka National Cemetery, Sitka, Sitka Borough, Alaska)
  - o 2B: Excerpts from an interview with Ed McGaa, “Willing to Serve: American Indians,” *Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project*, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, [memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.28952/](http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.28952/)  
(Ed McGaa, Born: April 16, 1936, Pine Ridge, Oglala Lakota County, South Dakota; Died: August 25, 2017,

Hill City, Pennington County, South Dakota; Burial Site: Black Hills National Cemetery, Sturgis, Meade County, South Dakota)

- o 2C: Excerpts from an interview with Dan Akee, “Willing to Serve: American Indians,” *Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project*, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, [memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.52555/](http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.52555/)  
(Dan Akee, Born: November 11, 1922, Tuba City, Coconino County, Arizona; Died: October 14, 2016, Tuba City, Coconino County, Arizona; Burial Site: Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Camp Navajo, Bellemont, Coconino County, Arizona)
- Handout 3: Why They Served
  - o Excerpt from *Why We Serve: Native Americans in the United States Armed Forces*, Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, 2020, [americanindian.si.edu/why-we-serve/](http://americanindian.si.edu/why-we-serve/).

## PROCEDURE

1. Do Now: Begin class with a paired discussion or focused write based on the following prompt: For what reasons do Americans join the Armed Forces?
2. Give students a few minutes to discuss in pairs or draft in journals. Expect to hear suggestions such as patriotism, honor, desire to serve and protect, family, tradition, peer pressure, career opportunities, travel opportunities, action and adventure, recruitment, the draft, pop culture influences, etc.
3. Give additional time for students to share out, perhaps recording their reasons on the board.
4. Explain to students that they will be exploring this question further, focusing on American Indian members of the US military, during the lesson. Review the history of American Indians in the US military with the class based on the Historical Background. The Historical Background by Shane Doyle is intended as a teacher’s resource, but you may choose to distribute it, along with the Important Phrases activity sheet, to the class to read and discuss. You may choose to share read the Historical Background as described in Lesson 1.
5. Distribute Handout 1: Getting Started. The handout reframes the question from the Do Now using language from the Museum of the American Indian’s *Why We Serve* exhibition. It also lays out the procedures for the next activity.
6. You can read through the handout or have students read silently to themselves. Give students time to ask procedural questions if needed.
7. Distribute Handouts 2A, B, and C: Interview Analysis. The texts provided are excerpts transcribed from interviews found on the Library of Congress website *Willing to Serve: American Indians (Stories from the Veterans History Project)*. Explain to students that these are excerpted from actual interviews, which is why some may sound conversational or informal. The veterans featured on the site participated in World War II, the Cold War, and Vietnam.
8. You may decide to have the whole class work on a handout together first to model the procedure. Then, have students work in pairs or independently. Students should be sure to annotate and mark up any sections of the text they find confusing or noteworthy, and to provide clear and specific responses in the spaces provided.
9. Circulate around the room to assist as needed. Keep students focused on grounding their answers in the text.



10. Allow students to debrief the questions below, supporting their responses with evidence from the interviews, in small groups, then in a whole-class setting:
  - a. Did the Veterans have anything in common? Explain.
  - b. Were you surprised by anything you read?
  - c. What was the most compelling reason for enlisting?
  - d. What questions did you have while reading the interviews?
  - e. Were you able to relate to any of these speakers? Explain. Distribute Handout #3: Why They Serve. This document is designed to have students apply direct evidence from primary sources (the interviews) to a secondary source (the museum website).
11. Distribute Handout #3: Why They Serve. This document is designed to have students apply direct evidence from primary sources (the interviews) to a secondary source (the museum website).
12. Students may work independently or in pairs for the remainder of class time. They should read the statement from the museum website, then use direct quotations from the interviews to provide evidence in the corresponding tables. In this way, students will be able to connect the individual experiences of the interviewed Veterans with the overall message of the museum and memorial.
13. Depending on time, this activity may be done as the closing activity or saved for homework/follow-up work.
14. You may choose to have the students respond orally or in writing to one of the Essential Questions as an assessment activity.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Indigenous Soldiers in the United States Military

Dr. Shane Doyle, Apsáalooke

Although Native American Nations suffered through a catastrophic loss of people, land, and resources during the United States' colonial era, Native American soldiers from throughout the nation have served valiantly under the United States flag in every major military conflict since the Revolutionary War. Remarkably, Native men and women volunteer for military service at a higher rate than any other demographic group in the nation. During the Civil War, 28,693 Indigenous soldiers served in both the Union and Confederate Armies and another 12,000 signed up to serve their country in World War I, despite not being federally recognized American citizens at the time of their deployment. World War II saw 25,000 Native American soldiers serve, followed by 10,000 in the Korean Conflict, 42,000 in Vietnam, and another 50,000 in the Afghan and Iraq Wars. As of November 2021, there were 31,000 Native Americans serving on active duty and over 140,000 living Veterans. These astonishing statistics only give part of the picture, while the thousands of individual stories of valor and courage under fire provide a truer and more complete understanding of the significant role that Native soldiers have played throughout US history.

The story of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation's contribution to the US military is like none other, and can be traced back to the Plains Indian Wars of the 1860s and 1870s. The famous Chief Plenty Coups served as a scout for General George Crook during the 1876 Great Sioux War campaign and was credited by the general and his commanders for sparing the regiment from a deadly light infantry attack by Crazy Horse and others at the largest engagement of the Plains Indian Wars, the Battle of the Rosebud. One week later, Apsáalooke scouts served under Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer, providing him with critical reconnaissance information about the size and demeanor of the Lakota and Cheyenne camp along the Little Bighorn on the morning of June 25, 1876. Had he followed the strategic advice of his Apsáalooke scouts and waited for reinforcements that day, Custer could have avoided his disastrous last stand.

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Their collective sacrifice and dedication were officially recognized and ceremonially honored on November 11, 2020, with the opening of the Native American Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, located adjacent to the National Museum of the American Indian.

*Dr. Shane Doyle, Apsáalooke, is an educational and cultural consultant in Bozeman, Montana. He is currently the program coordinator for the National Indian Education Association's Montana Warrior Spirit Native Veterans Curriculum Project.*

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### Important Phrases: Indigenous Soldiers in the United States Military

Which phrases or sentences in this essay about American Indians in the US military are the most informative or important? Choose three and give the reason for each choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

## Handout 1: Getting Started

In November 2020, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian dedicated the National Native American Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC. The museum also ran an accompanying exhibition: *Why We Serve: Native Americans in the United States Armed Forces*.

This text is from the introduction to the exhibition:

*Why We Serve* honors the generations of Native Americans who have served in the armed forces of the United States—often in extraordinary numbers—since the American Revolution.



*National Native American Veterans Memorial, Washington DC (National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institute, photograph by Alan Karchmer)*

For some, the Indigenous commitment to the U.S. military doesn't make sense. Why would Indians serve a country that overran their homelands, suppressed their cultures, and confined them to reservations?

### *Directions*

You will be asked to find evidence that helps to address this question by examining firsthand accounts by several American Indian Veterans. The interviews were conducted as part of the Library of Congress's Veterans History Project, which compiles oral accounts by Veterans. The specific interviews you'll be studying are part of the VHP's series *Willing to Serve: American Indians*, which features American Indian Veterans from WWII, Korea, Vietnam, the Middle East, and more.

Read and complete an Interview Analysis (handouts 2A, B, and C) for each Veteran. Be sure to annotate and mark up significant passages or details. Be prepared to share your findings.

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### Handout 2A: Interview Analysis: Pvt. Roy Daniel Bailey

WAR: World War II, 1939–1945 | Branch: Army | Unit: 71st Infantry Division

SERVICE LOCATION: Camp Roberts, California; Fort Benning, Georgia; Camp Kilmer, New Jersey; European Theater

RANK: Private

Interview excerpts	Responses
<p>I was placed in an orphanage in Juno, Alaska and was there until 1937. And then from 1937 to 1941 at Sheldon Jackson’s school. Sheldon Jackson’s school was by that time from the 7th grade on up through high school. . . . Mainly Alaska natives, we had one or two students who were not Alaska natives, that is, the way we think of it. But in 1941, 1940, most of the Yellowsboro workers in Sitka were already taken into the military which left a manpower shortage. . . . So that’s more or less the foundation of how it was before and immediately prior to World War II. For me that is.</p>	<p>Where is Roy Daniel Bailey from, and what was this environment like?</p>
<p>My classmates, they had lived a different lifestyle, which meant that they were out of school for long periods of time in between the regular school year. And the end result is, my classmates were anywhere from two to five years older than I was. . . . So they went into the military much sooner than I and, of course, that left me as the only boy in the class after that. . . . You feel a little bit odd to be the only boy in the class—a class of just girls—and – nothing against girls, but the desire to be with the boys and be also in the military is one of the reasons why I preferred the Navy since they took volunteers at 17. But from there on the military life for me began on Camp Roberts, California. Essentially that was 61 years ago. If I’m doing my math right.</p>	<p>What, in your own words, is Bailey’s main motivation for enlisting in the military?</p>
<p>I went into the draft board in Seattle, and that followed me all the way through my military . . . where . . . being the only Alaskan, everyone assumed that from you being from Alaska you were Eskimo. There was just no questions asked. I’m not Eskimo. I didn’t know what Eskimos were really. But according to all my friends, I was from Alaska therefore I was Eskimo.</p>	<p>Does Bailey’s account of how his identity was perceived surprise you? Explain why or why not.</p>

Source: Roy Daniel Bailey, “Willing to Serve: American Indians,” *Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project*, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/vets/>.

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### Handout 2B: Interview Analysis: Maj. Ed McGaa

WAR: Cold War; Vietnam War, 1961–1975 | Branch: Marine Corps; Marine Corps | Rank: Major

Interview excerpts	Responses
<p>I had a Marine hat from my brother I wore. I was in love with the Marine Corps because my oldest brother was in the Marine Corps, and I always said, “I’m going to be a Marine.” I guess probably because my brother was a Marine. . . . And it’s normal for a lot of times to you to follow. He saw a lot of combat, a lot of action, and told me all about it. He seemed to be more proud of being a Marine than . . . I mean, my brothers were in the Army and that, but one was in the Navy, two were in the Navy, but it seemed like the Marine one was just a little bit more proud. . . . Yeah, they’re not afraid to die. The Marine Corps is not that bad, but yet they have a lot of spirit and they have a lot of pride. . . .</p> <p>They had a lot of movies. We had <i>The Flying Leathernecks</i> and John Wayne was always portraying a Marine hero.</p> <p>And then we had various other movie actors that you probably never have heard of them. I can’t even think of the name of them right now, but some of these guys were . . . There was Tyrone Power who was a super handsome guy. . . .</p> <p>And they had these movies, and I remember seeing them as a little kid. You just wanted to become a Marine, you know?</p>	<p>In your own words, explain how Maj. McGaa was influenced to enlist by both private and public forces.</p>
<p>My brothers, I had six brothers, five of them where they all went in the service and they all wound up seeing combat. Those days, they were gone for a long time. . . .</p> <p>Well, my mom didn’t want me to go in. . . . I was the last of 13 children.</p> <p>She was a little bit overprotective of her last one, you know? And then she didn’t want me in the Marine Corps at all. My parents had to sign and my mom wasn’t going to sign. And I know I was real mad at my mom because she wouldn’t sign. And finally, some lawyer talked her into it and explained the benefits, and the war was all over, the career was over with. There was no assurance that it was going to stay over with, but this lawyer had to talk to her, I remember that. And my dad, he felt it was a good thing because of the GI [Bill].</p>	<p>What additional motivations does Maj. McGaa reveal here? How does it influence his parents’ attitudes toward his enlistment?</p>

Source: Ed McGaa, “Willing to Serve: American Indians,” *Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project*, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/vets/>.

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### Handout 2C: Interview Analysis: SGM. Dan Akee

WAR: World War II, 1939–1945 | Branch: Marine Corps | Unit: 25th Marine Regiment, 4th Division

SERVICE LOCATION: Iwo Jima; Saipan and Tinian; Marshall Islands; Pacific Theater

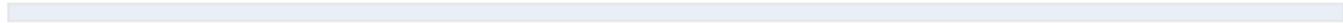
RANK: Sergeant Major

Answer 1, and then either 2 or 3.

Interview excerpts	Responses
<p>I was born—they called it Old Coal Mine, in 1922. It’s about 16 miles from Tuba City. And I was not born at the hospital, but there’s a coal mine camp is what they call it. I was born there. . . . And right now, my age is 82 years old, right now. Then in the year of 1942, they were trying to recruit some Navajo, so I—I did volunteer in—into the service. . . .</p> <p>I’m Sergeant Major—served with the Marine Corps during the Second World War. . . . I heard about they were brave, they were good fighters and all that, and all concerning. I thought I was tough. I was not. I never even planned to be in the war, know. I just want to be in the service, that’s all that my—in my mind, since I was very young.</p> <p>I was just pass over 18 years old when—when I first volunteer. That’s when I was—was almost close to 18 year—I mean, 19 years old. That’s when—when I first volunteered then.</p>	<p>1. In your own words, what does Dan Akee cite as his motivations for joining the armed forces?</p>
<p>I kind of lied to my mom that I was drafted. So that’s way I got in. I’m not the only one, there’s a lot of code talker didn’t that say that they—they were young. Some were 16 when they went in, know. But that time, know, they really didn’t care about the—I mean, the age. . . . Lied about your age, they accept it. . . . Within seven weeks, I was clear with my boot camp training. Since I was a volunteer, know, I was eligible to select any branch in the Marine Corps. . . . So that’s when they told me that there’s some Navajo with a communication—they don’t call the code talker that time. It was . . . very secret, confidential, what we were doing. . . . After my training, I took some tests, and it was really hard, because the words, some were ABC, and it goes into vocabulary. That’s the hardest part there.</p>	<p>2. What is one surprising detail that Akee provides here? Does it impact your understanding in any way?</p>

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_



<p>[My name was] Red Boy. <i>Tichyii</i>, that was my name. I—I didn’t have no English name, till I got this—came to school. My brother, my oldest brother, his name was Askkii, that’s a boy. . . . I told them we have no English name. Then it’s when they told us you’re—my brother was Lee. He—his name is Lee Akee, and you’re Dan Akee. That’s how we got that—our name. In 1931, that’s when their census people went around giving out the names around the reservation. There were a lot people didn’t have no name—English name.</p> <p>[I got my English name] when I was only six years old. . . .</p> <p>My parents—my mother never went to school, and also my father never went to school. And that’s how mostly I was raised there, without no English. . . . Well, it—only Navajo word—Navajo language, that’s the only one they know. . . . We raise sheep, and also mom—my mom usually do weaving. Mostly we’re living on the—on our herding sheep, raising our livestock. . . . The traditional way, you know, a lot of—they tell the story about the more traditional, but I never did care for to learn.</p>	<p>3. What is one surprising detail that Akee provides here? Does it impact your understanding in any way?</p>
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Source: Dan Akee, “Willing to Serve: American Indians,” *Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project*, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/vets/>.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### Handout 3: Why They Served

The passage below appears on the website for the National Museum of the American Indian's exhibition *Why We Serve: Native Americans in the United States Armed Forces*:

For some, the Indigenous commitment to the U.S. military doesn't make sense. Why would Indians serve a country that overran their homelands, suppressed their cultures, and confined them to reservations?

Native people have served for the same reasons as anyone else: to demonstrate patriotism or pursue employment, education, or adventure.

How do the Veterans that you read about today bring this statement to life? Find direct passages from the three interviews that provide vivid examples.

<b>Name of veteran:</b>	
Choose reason for enlisting:	Patriotism   Employment   Education   Adventure
Evidence from interview:	

<b>Name of Veteran:</b>	
Choose reason for enlisting:	Patriotism   Employment   Education   Adventure
Evidence from interview:	

<b>Name of Veteran:</b>	
Choose reason for enlisting:	Patriotism   Employment   Education   Adventure
Evidence from interview:	

## LESSON 3

# JAPANESE AMERICAN SOLDIERS DURING WORLD WAR II

by Melissa Perkins

## OVERVIEW

This lesson provides an opportunity to analyze primary sources in order to understand some of the reasons Japanese Americans joined the US Armed Forces to fight in World War II, despite being viewed as enemies by many of their fellow Americans. The lesson includes firsthand accounts by two soldiers, Stanley Hayami and Daniel K. Inouye. It also includes the inscription from a historical marker at the site of the former Santa Fe, New Mexico, internment camp. After analyzing the texts, students will use the primary source material to help explain why these men risked their lives and contributed to America’s wartime efforts despite the racism and incarceration that many Japanese Americans endured at that time.

## OBJECTIVES

- Analyze, summarize, and logically infer the essential message of a primary source using close-reading strategies
- Draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of primary sources through text-based evidence

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Despite the obstacles, why did these soldiers choose to serve?
- How did these soldiers contribute to the success of the US military?
- Why were these soldiers “unseen”?

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Asian American Soldiers in US History

Simeon Man, UC San Diego

For Asian Americans, enthusiasm for serving in the military has historically corresponded with the intensity of their exclusion from the promises of American citizenship. During the “era of exclusion” in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Asians, with few exceptions, were barred from citizenship because of race, and serving in the military offered one of the limited pathways to obtaining it. The Nye-Lea Act of 1935, fought for and won by Asian Veterans of World War I, was the first law allowing Asians to become citizens through military service. During World War II, when Japanese Americans were incarcerated by the US government and questioned about their loyalty, many enlisted in the segregated 442nd Regimental Combat Team to prove their “200% Americanism.”

The story of the 442nd—framed within a larger story of racial exclusion and national redemption—is a familiar one in US textbooks, but it has elided other stories. A more critical narrative centers on the role of US colonialism and highlights Asians and Pacific Islanders who served in the military because of the US presence in their country. In 1901, shortly after the US annexation of the Philippines, President William McKinley signed an executive order allowing the Navy to recruit 500 Filipinos. Filipinos joined the Navy not to demonstrate their national belonging but to mitigate the precarity of colonized life. The patterns and experiences of Filipinos in the Navy mirrored that of Chamorros from Guam, who were similarly enticed by the prospects of mobility; both fulfilled an essentially colonial labor function for the US military, and their labor continues to this day.

Just as Japanese Americans in World War II were asked to prove their loyalty to the nation by fighting and dying for it, Chamorros were called to show their gratitude for the US “liberation” of Guam from Japan by fighting in the Vietnam War. Chamorros hold the distinction of having the highest killed in action rate per capita during the Vietnam War. A similar sense of indebtedness to the United States as a “liberator” also structured, to varying degrees, the participation of South Koreans and Filipinos in the Vietnam War. Filipino doctors, nurses, and other “civic actionists” were recruited from the Philippines for US counterinsurgency, to model freedom and US benevolence as “fellow Asians” for the Vietnamese; South Korean troops, paid for by US dollars, were mobilized through a discourse of anticommunism and debt to Americans for their sacrifice in the Korean War. These narratives do not fit the standard script of “Asian American soldiering,” yet they reveal the porous boundaries of that category when we center the framework of US empire.

Asian Americans fighting in Vietnam faced a common predicament of fighting an enemy who looked like them. Marine and Army Veterans recalled shared experiences of boot camp training in which drill sergeants singled them out in the platoon to show “what the ‘gook’ looks like.” Others recall moments in the Vietnamese jungle when they felt endangered by the Viet Cong and by friendly fire alike, fearing being mistaken for the enemy by their own troops. In the 1980s and 1990s the clinical psychologist Chalsa Loo worked with Asian American Veterans and coined the phrase “race-related PTSD” to explain how the experiences of racism in the military impacted their mental health no less than combat-related stress.

Asian Americans in the Vietnam War, whether they were drafted or enlisted, came of age in the 1960s and many developed a critical consciousness about the military participating in the Asian American movement and the antiwar movement. Some worked in draft counseling to help young people avoid the draft. Others organized drug prevention youth programs to open more pathways to young people beyond “army or jail.” Asian American soldiers’ resistance to US militarism continued into the twenty-first century and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through such organizations as the Asian American Vietnam Veterans Organization. The Vietnam War expanded their “Third World” consciousness alongside the enduring narrative of Asian American martial patriotism.

*Simeon Man is an associate professor of history at the University of California, San Diego, and the inaugural director of the Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies Program. He is the author of Soldiering through Empire: Race and the Making of the Decolonizing Pacific (2018).*

## MATERIALS

- Optional: Historical Background
  - “Asian American Soldiers in US History” by Simeon Man, Associate Professor of History, University of California, San Diego
  - Important Phrases activity sheet
- Summary Organizer 1: Excerpts from Stanley Hayami’s Diary Entry, February 12, 1943, Japanese American National Museum, [janm.org/collections/stanley-hayami-diary](http://janm.org/collections/stanley-hayami-diary).
- Summary Organizer 2: Excerpts from an Interview with Senator Daniel K. Inouye, “Daniel Inouye Oral History Interview,” interview by Tom Ikeda and Beverly Kashino, June 30, 1998, Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project, Densho Visual History Collection, Honolulu, Hawaii, [ddr.densho.org/narrators/32/](http://ddr.densho.org/narrators/32/).
- Summary Organizer 3: Santa Fe Internment Camp Historical Marker, text transcribed from a photograph in the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, February 26, 2017, [santafenewmexican.com/news/local\\_news/south-of-atomic-city-a-second-secret-community-during-wwii/article\\_6e870fae-314a-5301-ac54-965168f8b64d.html](http://santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/south-of-atomic-city-a-second-secret-community-during-wwii/article_6e870fae-314a-5301-ac54-965168f8b64d.html).
  - Dorothea Lange, “Manzanar Relocation Center, Manzanar, California. Making camouflage nets for the War Department,” July 1, 1942, National Archives, [catalog.archives.gov/id/538107](http://catalog.archives.gov/id/538107).
  - Unidentified photographer, “Risa and Yasubei Hirano and their son, George, at the Colorado River camp with a photograph of their son Shigera,” National Archives, [catalog.archives.gov/id/535989](http://catalog.archives.gov/id/535989).
- Assessment: Identifying Japanese American Service and Military Contributions in World War II



## PROCEDURE

1. This lesson is a “drill down” exercise into primary source documents. Students will learn about Asian Americans’ and Pacific Islanders’ contributions to America’s wartime efforts. Then they will dig deeper into the experiences of Japanese Americans during World War II and read primary source accounts by two Japanese American soldiers who explain their motives for joining the military despite being viewed as the enemy by many of their fellow Americans.
2. To begin, review the Historical Background and the history of Asian American and Pacific Islander military service with the class. The Historical Background by Simeon Man is intended as a teacher’s resource, but you may choose to distribute it, along with the Important Phrases activity sheet, to the class to read and discuss. You may choose to share read the Historical Background as described in Lesson 1.
3. Students should have a working understanding of the Pearl Harbor bombing, Executive Order 9066, and Japanese American internment before beginning the lesson.
4. Discuss the Essential Questions before moving on to the primary sources. These sources are relatively short and pre-teaching vocabulary and using annotation tools can be useful scaffolding techniques.
5. Distribute Summary Organizers 1–3, which provide the primary sources to be analyzed. For details on Summary Organizers and the process of selecting key words, creating a key word summary, and writing a summary in the students’ own words, please refer to Lesson 1 on page 7.
6. Beginning with Summary Organizer 1, share read the excerpt with the entire class as described in Lesson 1. You may choose to have the students complete Summary Organizer 1 as a class exercise, Summary Organizer 2 in pairs or small groups, and Summary Organizer 3 independently. When they are working in pairs or small groups, have them complete the activity collaboratively, choosing and negotiating the selection of key words and the summaries.
7. Summary Organizer 1: The excerpt from Stanley Hayami’s diary is 279 words long, so the students can select seven to ten key words.
8. Summary Organizer 2: The excerpt from the interview with Senator Daniel K. Inouye is 266 words long, so the students can select seven or eight key words.
9. Summary Organizer 3: The excerpt from the historical marker at the Santa Fe camp is 124 words, so the students can select four or five key words. This organizer also includes two images that can be viewed and discussed before students begin their work on the key words and summaries.
10. Assessment: Distribute the final activity: Identifying Japanese American Service and Military Contributions in World War II. Review the questions and remind students to use the textual evidence from the primary sources to support their responses. Students may complete the assessment individually, in pairs, or in small groups. If you are having students work with partners or in groups, have them negotiate their answers as they record them.
11. Time permitting, reassemble the class and lead a discussion of their assessment responses. Ensure that everyone has demonstrated an understanding of some of the reasons why Japanese Americans joined the military, despite the injustices they faced at the time.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Asian American Soldiers in US History

by Simeon Man, UC San Diego

For Asian Americans, enthusiasm for serving in the military has historically corresponded with the intensity of their exclusion from the promises of American citizenship. During the “era of exclusion” in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Asians, with few exceptions, were barred from citizenship because of race, and serving in the military offered one of the limited pathways to obtaining it. The Nye-Lea Act of 1935, fought for and won by Asian Veterans of World War I, was the first law allowing Asians to become citizens through military service. During World War II, when Japanese Americans were incarcerated by the US government and questioned about their loyalty, many enlisted in the segregated 442nd Regimental Combat Team to prove their “200% Americanism.”

The story of the 442nd—framed within a larger story of racial exclusion and national redemption—is a familiar one in US textbooks, but it has elided other stories. A more critical narrative centers on the role of US colonialism and highlights Asians and Pacific Islanders who served in the military because of the US presence in their country. In 1901, shortly after the US annexation of the Philippines, President William McKinley signed an executive order allowing the Navy to recruit 500 Filipinos. Filipinos joined the Navy not to demonstrate their national belonging but to mitigate the precarity of colonized life. The patterns and experiences of Filipinos in the Navy mirrored that of Chamorros from Guam, who were similarly enticed by the prospects of mobility; both fulfilled an essentially colonial labor function for the US military, and their labor continues to this day.

Just as Japanese Americans in World War II were asked to prove their loyalty to the nation by fighting and dying for it, Chamorros were called to show their gratitude for the US “liberation” of Guam from Japan by fighting in the Vietnam War. Chamorros hold the distinction of having the highest killed in action rate per capita during the Vietnam War. A similar sense of indebtedness to the United States as a “liberator” also structured, to varying degrees, the participation of South Koreans and Filipinos in the Vietnam War. Filipino doctors, nurses, and other “civic actionists” were recruited from the Philippines for US counterinsurgency, to model freedom and US benevolence as “fellow Asians” for the Vietnamese; South Korean troops, paid for by US dollars, were mobilized through a discourse of anticommunism and debt to Americans for their sacrifice in the Korean War. These narratives do not fit the standard script of “Asian American soldiering,” yet they reveal the porous boundaries of that category when we center the framework of US empire.

Asian Americans fighting in Vietnam faced a common predicament of fighting an enemy who looked like them. Marine and Army Veterans recalled shared experiences of boot camp training in which drill sergeants singled them out in the platoon to show “what the ‘gook’ looks like.” Others recall moments in the Vietnamese jungle when they felt endangered by the Viet Cong and by friendly fire alike, fearing being mistaken for the enemy by their own troops. In the 1980s and 1990s the clinical psychologist Chalsa Loo worked with Asian American Veterans and coined the phrase “race-related PTSD” to explain how the experiences of racism in the military impacted their mental health no less than combat-related stress.

Asian Americans in the Vietnam War, whether they were drafted or enlisted, came of age in the 1960s and many developed a critical consciousness about the military participating in the Asian American movement and the antiwar movement. Some worked in draft counseling to help young people avoid the draft. Others organized drug prevention youth programs to open more pathways to young people beyond “army or jail.” Asian American soldiers’ resistance to US militarism continued into the twenty-first century and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through such organizations as the Asian American Vietnam Veterans Organization. The Vietnam War expanded their “Third World” consciousness alongside the enduring narrative of Asian American martial patriotism.

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### Important Phrases: “Asian American Soldiers in US History”

Which phrases or sentences related to Asian American soldiers in the US military are most informative or important in this scholarly essay? Choose three and give the reason for each choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

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NAME PERIOD DATE

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### Summary Organizer 1: Stanley Hayami's Diary Entry

*Stanley Hayami, 18, wrote the following while incarcerated at Heart Mountain Camp in Wyoming. He later enlisted in the segregated 442nd Regimental Combat Team. An estimated 33,000 Japanese American men and women served in the US military during and immediately after World War II, and 18,000 served in the 442nd. Hayami was killed in action in 1945 and was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his bravery.*

#### *Original Text*

February 12, 1943

. . . I went to a meeting held by the army concerning the new order opening voluntary enlistment in the army. . . . A lot of people wanted to know if they could have some guarantee so that after the war was over, they wouldn't have their citizenship taken away, & the lands they own taken. They answered that we would be protected by the 14th amendment in the Constitution. Then one man says, "well the 14th also is supposed to have kept us out of camp, what about that? the army men answered by saying that In time of war the 14th & such do not hold & the army has control & can do practically anything. Then one man says "what the heck, are we going to get kicked out everytime a war comes up." Then the army man said that he agrees that a great injustice was done . . . but he says that the army has realized that what they did was probably wrong, and is now trying to help us to make up for it. He says that if we volunteer it'll do a lot to show our loyalty, and improve the relations & opinions of the American people toward us. It'll show that we are truly Americans, because we volunteered despite the kicking around that we got. On the other hand however he says if we all do not volunteer it'll be the other way around. Instead of improving our relations with the other Americans it would make it worse. . . .

Our block's young men got together to discuss it. The niseis [American-born children of Japanese immigrants] wanted to join provided that they got certain guarantees: such as citizenship, land owning & such.

Source: Japanese American National Museum

#### *Key Words*

#### *Key Word Summary*

#### *In Your Own Words*

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NAME PERIOD DATE

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## Summary Organizer 2: Interview with Senator Daniel K. Inouye

*Daniel K. Inouye was a US senator and recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. He was seventy-three years old when he shared the following wartime remembrances in 1998. Senator Inouye died in 2012 and is buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.*

### *Original Text*

When the news of December the 7th finally hit me . . . I sort of concluded that the end of the world was here as far as our future was concerned. Because after all, the men who piloted those planes looked like us. Looked like me. . . .

On February 19, the Executive Order was issued authorizing the army to set up concentration camps. . . . There were hundreds from Hawaii who were shipped out. . . .

On March 17th when the government of the United States designated Japanese as a designation for enemy alien, many of us took this as a personal matter and insult. . . .

The president of the United States [later] issued a statement saying that Americanism is a matter of mind and heart, it is not and has never been a matter of race or color, and declared that if we wished we could volunteer and become a part of this special combat team. When that announcement was made, together with several of my classmates, we literally ran from the campus to the draft board. . . . This was the opportunity we've been waiting for . . . to demonstrate that once and for all that we are Americans. Unhyphenated Americans. So that's why over 85% of the eligible men in Hawaii volunteered. . . . We had a mission. . . . We were there to prove once and for all that we were just as good as others. That we were Americans."

Source: Densho Visual History Collection, Honolulu, Hawaii

### *Key Words*

### *Key Word Summary*

### *In Your Own Words*

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### Summary Organizer 3: Santa Fe Internment Camp Historical Marker

*On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which authorized the forced removal and incarceration of people of Japanese descent from the West Coast. Approximately 112,000 Japanese Americans, nearly 70,000 of whom were American citizens, were sent to camps in remote areas in California, Utah, New Mexico, Wyoming, Arizona, Colorado, and Arkansas. The last camps closed in 1946. In 2002, a historical marker was placed to recognize the camp in Santa Fe, New Mexico.*

#### *Original Text*

At this site, due east and below the hill, 4555 men of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated in a Department of Justice Internment Camp from March 1942 to April 1946. Most were excluded by law from becoming United States citizens and were removed primarily from the West Coast and Hawaii.

During World War II, their loyalty to the United States was questioned. Many of the men held here without due process were long time resident religious leaders, businessmen, teachers, fishermen, farmers, and others. No person of Japanese ancestry in the U.S. was ever charged or convicted of espionage throughout the course of the war.

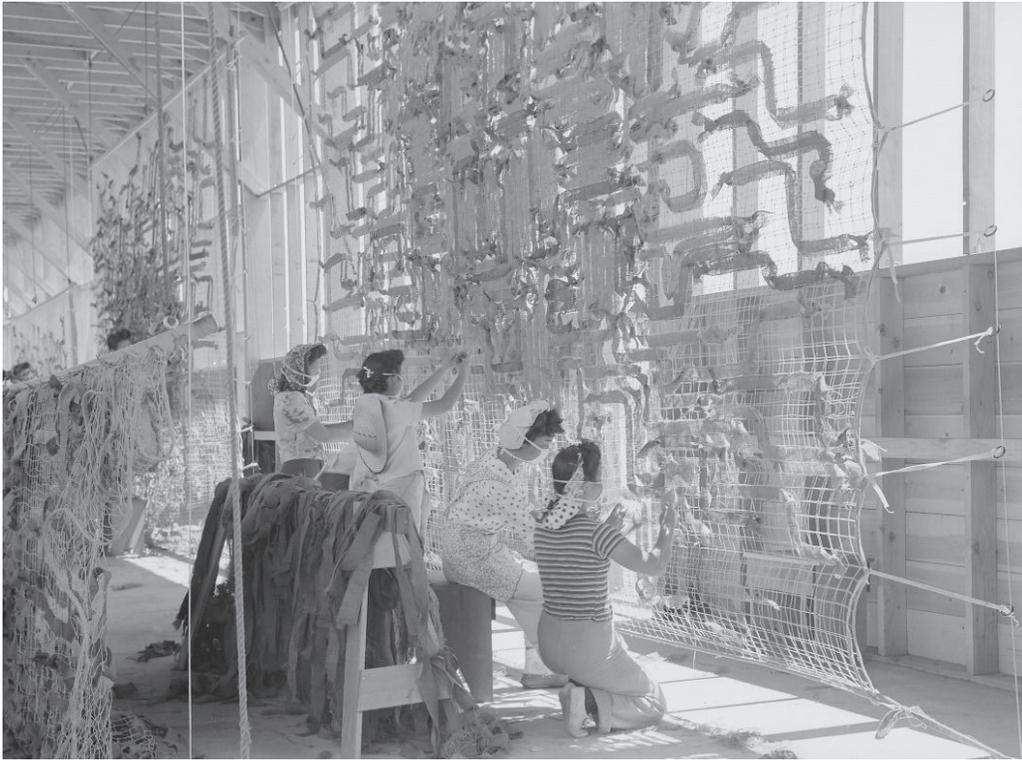
Many of the internees had relatives who served with distinction in the American Armed Forces in Europe and in the Pacific. . . .

Source: Transcribed from photograph in the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, February 26, 2017

#### *Key Words*

#### *Key Word Summary*

#### *In Your Own Words*



Dorothea Lange, "Manzanar Relocation Center, Manzanar, California. Making camouflage nets for the War Department," July 1, 1942 (National Archives)



Unidentified photographer, "Risa and Yasubei Hirano and their son, George, at the Colorado River camp with a photograph of their son Shigera" (National Archives)

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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## Identifying Japanese American Service and Military Contributions in World War II

Using quotations from Stanley Hayami’s diary, Senator Daniel K. Inouye’s interview, and the inscription from Santa Fe internment camp’s marker to support your arguments, answer the following:

Despite the obstacles they faced during World War II, Japanese Americans joined the military because

Japanese American soldiers contributed to the success of the US military because they

Japanese American soldiers have a history of being “unseen” because

## LESSON 4

# LATINA/O SOLDIERS: IN WORLD WARS I AND II

by Nathan McAlister

## OVERVIEW

This lesson focuses on the shared experiences of Latinas and Latinos who served their country during various conflicts. Many of these men and women have been honorably laid to rest in National Cemeteries across the country. Over the course of this lesson, students will examine, through close reading of newspaper articles, interviews, and government documents, the experiences of Latinas and Latinos who served in World War I and World War II.

## OBJECTIVES

- Analyze, summarize, and logically infer the essential message of a primary source using close-reading strategies
- Draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of primary sources through text-based evidence

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Despite the obstacles, why did these soldiers choose to serve?
- How did these soldiers contribute to the success of the United States military?
- Why were these soldiers “unseen”?

Note: You may want to adjust the questions slightly to recognize that Josephine Grima was not strictly speaking a soldier, but she was serving with the military as a nurse. In that case you may adjust the questions:

- Despite the obstacles, why did these men and women choose to serve?
- How did these men and women contribute to the success of the US military?
- Why were these men and women “unseen”?

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### The History of Latina/o Soldiers in the US Military

by Steven Rosales, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Soldiers, sailors, and explorers of Spanish and Latin American origin have a lengthy presence in the Western Hemisphere that dates to the “Age of Discovery” (1400–1600). Within the continental United States, the Spanish Borderlands, centered on Santa Fe, New Mexico (1598), was patrolled and regulated through a mixture of missions and presidios through the Mexican-American War (1846–1848). Individuals of Mexican ancestry served in the US Civil War and World War I, most notably from the Tejano community, including doughboys José de la luz Saénz and Marcelino Serna. The former became a co-founder of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the oldest Mexican American civil rights organization (1929), intent on combating the “Juan Crow” apparatus that had solidified throughout the American Southwest and that the first “Great Wave” (1900–1930) of Mexican migration encountered.

To combat varying forms of institutionalized discrimination, many marginalized communities have viewed military service as a type of social contract, one that offered avenues toward social, political, and economic advancement, epitomized by the “Double V” campaign of the Second World War by the African American community. This linkage between military service and citizenship was equally apparent to the Mexican American community in its own struggle for civil rights. Legally classified as White, the approximately half million Mexican American servicemen who served in World War II were spared the indignity of serving in segregated units endured by other marginalized communities. Racialized discriminatory treatment led a generation, from the Second World War through Vietnam, to see warfare as necessary to full citizenship. It was further influenced by traditional notions of masculine honor and behavior often associated with machismo. A type of “warrior patriotism” has typified the Mexican American drive to assimilate into the American mainstream, with historical antecedents in masculine codes of conduct within Mexico that celebrated the willingness to die in defense of “la patria” (fatherland).

Similar motivations, albeit within a colonial apparatus, can be found within the Puerto Rican community from the time of its acquisition in the Spanish-American War (1898) through its transition into an Estado Libre Asociado (Associated Free State) in 1952 and into the present day. Puerto Riqueños have provided dedicated military service in the continental US and in units specific to the island, including the renowned 65th Infantry Regiment, also known as the Borinqueneers, that experienced extensive combat during the Korean War (1950–1953).

More attention in recent decades, including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, has highlighted the diversity inherent in the Latinx community based on nationality (Cuban, Central American, Afro Latinx, etc.); issues of gender and sexuality (members of the LGBTQ+ community and the rising enlistment of Latinas); and political status (immigrant “Green Card” GIs). And as the community continues to increase demographically, so too will enlistment rates. As of 2020, the Latinx community constituted 18.7 percent of the US population and 16.2 percent of the US military.

*Steven Rosales is an associate professor in the History Department at the University of Arkansas Fayetteville, where he is also affiliated faculty in the Latin American and Latino/o Studies Program. His book, Soldados Razos at War: Chicano Politics, Identity, and Masculinity in the US Military from World War II to Vietnam, was published in 2017 with the University of Arizona Press.*

## MATERIALS

### Optional: Historical Background

- o “The History of Latina/o Soldiers in the US Military” by Steven Rosales, Associate Professor of History, University of Arkansas Fayetteville
- o Important Phrases activity sheet

### Latinos and Latinas in US Military Service activity sheets

- 1) Marcelino Serna (Born: Chihuahua, Mexico, April, 26, 1896; Died: February 29, 1992; Burial Site: Fort Bliss National Cemetery, El Paso, Texas)
  - o Spanish-language Newspaper Article: *La Prensa* (San Antonio, TX), June 15, 1919, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.
  - o Image: *Bisbee (AZ) Daily Review*, September 19, 1919, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.
  - o English-language Newspaper Article: *El Paso Herald*, August 21, 1919, *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*, Library of Congress.
- 2) Josephine Grima (Born: Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico, ca. 1892; Died: 1993; Burial Site: Mount Olivet Cemetery, Detroit, Michigan)



- o Image: Josephine Grima in the 1917 *Arbutus Yearbook*, Indiana University, page 247, Indiana University Archives.
  - o Service Account: Reserve Army Nurse's Corp, Indiana University War Service Register, 1920–1946, Women's War Service Register, 1922–1931, Indiana University Archives, archives.iu.edu.
- 3) David Bennes Barkley (Born: Laredo, Texas, March 31, 1899; Died: November 9, 1918; Burial Site: San Antonio National Cemetery, San Antonio, Texas)
- o Biography: "David Bennes Barkley" [11240], Texas State Cemetery. cemetery.tspb.texas.gov/pub/user\_form.asp?pers\_id=11240.
  - o Image: David Bennes Barkley, Congressional Medal of Honor website, cmohs.org/recipients/David-b-barkeley.
  - o Congressional Medal of Honor Account: *Company "A" 356th Infantry*, comp. by John H. Dykes (Tulsa, OK: Self, 1940), The National WWI Museum and Memorial, theworldwar.pastperfectonline.com/library.
- 4) Carmen Contreras Bozak (Born: Cayey, Puerto Rico, December 31, 1919; Died: January 30, 2017; Burial Site: Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia)
- o Interview: "Carmen Coneras Bozak," Interview, September 14, 2002, Voces Oral History Center, Moody College of Communication, The University of Texas at Austin, voces.lib.utexas.edu/collections/stories/carmen-contreras-bozak. The video is available here: vimeo.com/43191968.
  - o Image: "Carmen Contreras Bozak," US Latino & Latina World War II Oral History Project, The University of Texas at Austin, voces.lib.utexas.edu/collections/stories/carmen-contreras-bozak.

## PROCEDURE

1. This lesson is a "drill down" exercise into primary source documents. Students will learn about the contributions of Latina and Latino soldiers in wartime efforts. Then they will examine primary source accounts by and about two Latinas and two Latinos in WWI and WWII that highlight their experiences and identify the similarities and differences of this experience.
2. Review the history of Latinos and Latinas in the US military with the class based on the Historical Background. The Historical Background by Steven Rosales is intended as a teacher's resource, but you may choose to distribute it, along with the Important Phrases activity sheet, to the class to read and discuss. You may choose to share read the Historical Background as described in Lesson 1.
3. Place students into pairs or small groups and distribute the Latinos and Latinas in US Military Service activity sheets.  
  
Note: The primary sources for Marcelino Serna include a Spanish newspaper account (see citation in materials) of his service in World War I. This article has been included to support and engage Spanish-speaking English Language Learners.
4. You may wish to share read one of the documents with the students before they complete the rest of the activities as described in Lesson 1 and model the response to one of the questions.
5. When they have completed all four activity sheets, have the students share their answers, discuss their findings, and support their responses with evidence from the texts.
6. Have each student complete the Assessment Activity.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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To combat varying forms of institutionalized discrimination, many marginalized communities have viewed military service as a type of social contract, one that offered avenues toward social, political, and economic advancement, epitomized by the “Double V” campaign of the Second World War by the African American community. This linkage between military service and citizenship was equally apparent to the Mexican American community in its own struggle for civil rights. Legally classified as White, the approximately half million Mexican American servicemen who served in World War II were spared the indignity of serving in segregated units endured by other marginalized communities. Racialized discriminatory treatment led a generation, from the Second World War through Vietnam, to see warfare as necessary to full citizenship. It was further influenced by traditional notions of masculine honor and behavior often associated with machismo. A type of “warrior patriotism” has typified the Mexican American drive to assimilate into the American mainstream, with historical antecedents in masculine codes of conduct within Mexico that celebrated the willingness to die in defense of “la patria” (fatherland).

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### Important Phrases: “The History of Latina/o Soldiers in the US Military”

Which phrases or sentences in this essay about Latina/o soldiers in the US military are the most informative or important? Choose three and give the reason for each choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase informative or important?



## 1) Marcelino Serna's US Military Service

Se llama Marcelino Serna, y es mexicano.

Tiene el rostro moreno, los ademanes tardos, el gesto sencillo de un hombre sano y fuerte.

Viene de la guerra, y sobre el amarillo de su blusa de kaki, luce dos condecoraciones: la "Cruz Americana de Servicios Distinguidos" y la "Cruz Francesa de Guerra", las dos más altas condecoraciones de la época actual, las que constituyen para un soldado cualquiera el más preciado de los honores.

Sin embargo si alguien le pregunta a Marcelino Serna, qué hizo para merecer tan altas preseas, le dirá que nada, absolutamente nada, que ello fué un trivial incidente.

Y sonreirá, sencillo, e ingenuo—acaso irónico—y hablará de otra cosa.

Mas preguntadle a sus superiores, preguntad a sus compañeros de armas, y ellos os relatarán, llenos de entusiasmo, hazaña, apenas concebible, llevada a cabo por este mexicano, en los días trágicos de la guerra.

### *En St. Mihiel.*

El día 12 de Septiembre del año pasado, se combatía rudamente en el sector de St. Mihiel.

Marcelino Serna, un simple soldado, hacia un recorrido por el campo de combate, en servicio de patrulla, y a la cabeza de su compañía. Se le había visto combatir anteriormente y combatía como los más bravos.

Avanzó por el campo hasta llegarse a los bordes de una trinchera alemana, dentro de la cual arrojó dos granadas de mano. Los soldados teuto-

nes, desconcertados por el ataque inesperado, heridos por el estallar de las granadas, entre las nubes de polvo que ellas levantaban, quisieron huir de aquel sitio tan a merced del enemigo, pero ahí estaba Marcelino para impedirleslo.

El soldado mexicano les ordenó salir, y veinticuatro soldados—dos oficiales entre ellos—salieron de la trinchera, sin armas y con la cabeza baja y se constituyeron prisioneros suyos.

Dieciséis prusianos no salieron del fondo de la trinchera cuando Marcelino Serna lo ordenó... no porque se negaran a obedecerlo, sino porque habían sido muertos en el estallar de las granadas.

Dieciséis muertos y veinticuatro prisioneros, fueron la labor de aquel día, del soldado Marcelino Serna, quien condujo a sus prisioneros a milla y media detrás de la línea de fuego y los encerró tras una empalizada.

Algunos días después, Marcelino Serna se reunió con su división cansado de luchar mucho y de no hacer nada notable en St. Mihiel.

### *En el bosque de Argone.*

Pero no es esta la única hazaña digna del relato, entre las que llevara a cabo Marcelino Serna.

En el avance Meusse-Argone, Serna fué enviado como explorador, al frente de un reducido número de hombres, y antes de recorrer trescientas yardas hacia el frente de las líneas, pudo localizar una ametralladora alemana. Regresó a dar noticia del hecho al teniente jefe del cuerpo, quien regresó con él. Localizada de nuevo la pieza enemiga, se emplazó en sitio conveniente una ametralladora y se ordenó a Marcelino que hiciera fuego con ella sobre los alemanes.

Pero el fuego del soldado mexicano aparecía poco efectivo, por cuanto que no era aquella su arma, y desconocía casi por completo, el manejo de la ametralladora.

Desesperado de la inutilidad de su fuego, Marcelino Serna abandonó la ametralladora, y dijo al teniente:

—Coloque usted mi casco en el extremo de mi rifle, hágalo salir sobre la trinchera para que los enemigos me supongan aquí, disparando contra ellos, y yo, en tanto flanco el "nido" de la ametralladora alemana.

—¿Con qué armas...?

—Con granadas de mano.

Se hizo tal y como el soldado mexicano lo sugirió; se colocó el casco en el fusil, se sacó sobre la trinchera, y en tanto Serna se arrastró hasta flanquear a los alemanes de la ametralladora, sobre los que arrojó sus granadas de mano.

Todos los que la manejaban, percieron hechos pedazos por las granadas implacables de Marcelino Serna.

Su teniente había sido muerto, y Serna permaneció cuidando su cadáver durante nueve horas, bajo el fuego enemigo, hasta que los suyos llegaron.

### *Las Condecoraciones.*

Tales fueron algunas de las hazañas de Marcelino Serna, pagadas dignamente por Francia y por Estados Unidos.

En el mes de Abril, Serna, que había estado dos meses en el Hospital Militar número 53, curándose de las heridas que recibiera en la segunda de las acciones relatadas, fué condecorado con la Cruz Americana, por el mismo General Pershing.

Un mes más tarde, en Brest, mientras esperaba embarcarse rumbo a Estados Unidos, en el "Leviatán", el mismo General Foch prendió en su pecho, en una solemne ceremonia, la Cruz Francesa de Guerra.

### *Rumbo a Chihuahua.*

Serna, acaba de ser licenciado en el Camp Bowie, el lugar de desmovilización más cercano a su residencia.

Antes de enlistarse en el Ejército Americano, a raíz de la entrada a la guerra, de los Estados Unidos, Serna trabajaba en la ciudad de Dallas, en una casa empacadora.

Sus padres, viven en una población de Chihuahua, y en su busca va el hijo heroico, que tales honores ha logrado para su nombre.

GRE.

## NERVIOSA

arros, Eczema, Hervor de Sangre,  
e no cicatrizan, Supuración en los  
ria, de Sueño o de Apetito, Ma-  
los Riñones, etc.

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## Find Mexican Who Won Many Honors In War

### Gen. Erwin Will Present Three More Medals To Marcelino Serna.

Marcelino Serna, the 24 year old Mexican hero for whom the military authorities have been hunting for several days, in order that they might decorate him with three more medals, was located Thursday by Maj. A. A. King, recruiting officer. Arrangements have been made with Brig. Gen. James B. Erwin, commanding the district, to formally decorate Serna.

In addition to the *croix de guerre* and the distinguished service cross, which he received in April, 1919, Serna is to be decorated with the French *medaille militaire*, the Palm of the *croix de guerre* and the Italian war cross for merit.

The *croix de guerre* which he already has, was given to Serna by marshal Foch, personally. The dis-

tinguished service cross was presented by Gen. Pershing personally. The three citations to be made are to be done in the name of the French and Italian military commanders.

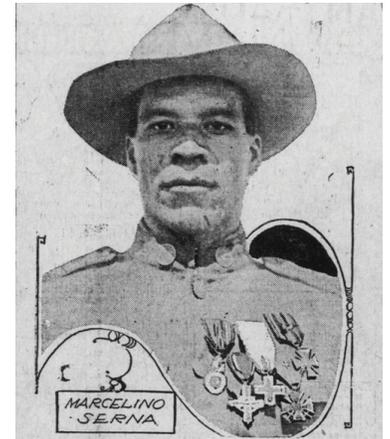
The *medaille militaire* is the highest French military medal awarded to an enlisted man.

Serna was born in Chihuahua City. He spent 11 months and 22 days in Europe. He was in the 89th division, 355th infantry, company B.

The hero received his distinguished service cross in Drier, Germany, after valiant service in the last part of the war. He got his *croix de guerre* in Brest.

Serna won his decorations for acts of heroism shown in the battle of the Argonne Woods in the late fall of 1918. The 355th infantry had taken up a sector and was advancing through the woods of the Argonne. A withering fire was sent against the 355th as it went over the top and advanced through the dense woods toward the enemy lines.

Company B of this fighting regiment was in the center of the charge and it was with this fighting unit, composed of selective service men from Arizona, New Mexico and other western states, that Serna charged through the dense underbrush toward the hidden German machine gun nests. Serna charged single handed into a band of Germans and is officially credited with having killed sin-



*Bisbee (AZ) Daily Review*,  
September 19, 1919 (Library of Congress)

into a band of Germans and is officially credited with having killed single handed 24 of the enemy.

Serna volunteered for the regular army early in the war. He enlisted at Denver, Colo., and was later transferred to the 355th infantry, 89th division, which was trained at Camp Funston, Kan., and went overseas in midsummer of 1918. The 89th division was engaged in the Argonne-Meuse offensive and later went into Germany as a part of the American army of occupation.

Serna's home is in Chihuahua City.

*El Paso Herald*, August 21, 1919 (Library of Congress)

How did Marcelino Serna contribute to the success of the US military? Cite evidence from the newspaper articles to support your answer.

Draw Conclusions: Why isn't Serna's story well known? Cite evidence from the newspaper articles to support your answer.



## 2) Josephine Grima's US Military Service

INDIANA UNIVERSITY                      OFFICE OF ALUMNI SECRETARY

Information for the War Service Register of  
Alumni and Former Students

No. 19118:....

Kind of service *Reserve nurse Army nurses Corp.*  
(Army, Navy, Welfare, Non-military government service)

Name in full *Miss Josephine A. Grima R.N.*

Degrees *Graduate nurse* Class of *1917*

Date and place of entry into service *April 8, 1918* Age *24*

Date of discharge *Nov. 17, 1919*

Rank or position held at time of separation *Hospital nurse*

Record. (Organizations, promotions, foreign service, decorations, wounds, major engagements, interesting incidents, etc. Remember that this information is for a permanent University record. It is requested that information under this heading be as complete as possible.)

*Was assigned to duty at U.S. Army General Hosp. No. 17  
Max. Station Pa. where our unit was taken care of  
by Fred T. D. Soldiers from overseas. On Sept 20  
I was ordered to rest of our unit transferred to  
U.S. Army Base Hospital at Camp. Jones, Mass.  
We report at the base hospital where we had  
15 beds. I was of pneumonia & influenza  
where we had to suffer bad accommodation  
and had prepared food. We were on duty  
to get persons from food to stand in line  
three times a day for our needs, our beds  
remained during the epidemic of straggled  
two A.D. blankets to a sanitary pad. There was  
no place to accommodate 750 nurses that  
answered the call of the epidemic and for that reason  
we had to use for beds rooms for garage  
the furniture etc. We had a great deal of work  
and responsibility but after the epidemic was over we  
had good food, fresh rooms and good money  
and we were ready for us in our first  
wound we were. The 26 aviation hospital had  
arrived in our quarters from overseas.*

PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN IMMEDIATELY

Women's War Service Register, 1922-1931 (Indiana University Archives)

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NAME PERIOD DATE

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KIND OF SERVICE: Reserve Nurse Army Nurses Corp

NAME IN FULL: Miss Josephine A. Grima R.N.

DEGREES: Graduate Nurse Class of 1917

#### RECORD

I was assign to duty at US Army General Hosp no 17 Marpleton Pa where our unit was taken care of the first T.B. soldiers from overseas. On Sept 20 I was with the rest of our unit transferred to US Army Base Hospt. at Camp Devens Mass. We report at the Base Hospt. where we had 15,000 of Cases of Pneumonia & Influenza where we had to suffer bad accommodation and bad prepared food. We were on duty many hours and had to stand in line three times a day for our meals, our beds consisted during the epidemic of straw tikets, two O. D. [olive drab] blankets & a sanitary cot. There was no place to accomodate 750 nurses that answer the call of the epidemic and for that reason we had to use for bedrooms the garage, the farmhouse, etc. We had a great diel of work and responsibility. . . .



(Indiana University Archives)

Source: Excerpts from Reserve Army Nurse's Corp, Indiana University War Service Register, 1920–1946, Women's War Service Register, 1922–1931, Indiana University Archives, archives.iu.edu.

How did Josephine Grima contribute to the success of the United States military? Cite evidence from her record to support your answer.

Draw Conclusions: Why isn't Grima's story well known? Cite evidence from her record to support your answer.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### 3) David Bennes Barkley's US Military Service

DAVID BENNES BARKLEY (1899–1918). Medal of Honor recipient David B. Barkley was born in Laredo, Texas, on March 31, 1899, to Josef Barkley, who was stationed there with the U.S. Army, and Antonia Cantu, a Mexican American native of South Texas. The family moved to San Antonio in 1904 after the birth of Barkley's sister, Amelia. Josef Barkley abandoned his family, forcing his son to drop out of school at age 13 to work a series of odd jobs to support his mother and sister.

David Barkley enlisted in the Army at 17 and was sent to France during World War I. Throughout his service in the Army he kept his Hispanic heritage a secret for fear of being kept from serving on the front lines (at the time, segregation in the Army kept minority soldiers from serving in combat). Barkley instructed his mother in a letter not to use her maiden name in letters to prevent his removal from combat.



(Congressional Medal of Honor website)

Source: Texas State Cemetery. [cemetery.tspb.texas.gov](http://cemetery.tspb.texas.gov)

CORPORAL, then Pvt. 1st Cl. DAVID B. BARKELEY  
The Congressional Medal of Honor  
Awarded Posthumously "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity, above and beyond the call of duty, in action with the enemy, near Pouilly, France, 9 November, 1918. When information was desired as to the enemy's position on the opposite side of the River Meuse, Private Barkeley, with another soldier (Harold I. Johnston) volunteered without hesitation and swam the river to reconnoiter the exact location. He succeeded in reaching the opposite bank, despite the evident determination of the enemy to prevent a crossing. Having obtained his information, he again entered the water for his return but before his goal was reached he was seized with cramps and drowned."

John H. Dykes, *Company "A" 356<sup>th</sup> Infantry*, Tulsa, 1940 (National WWI Museum and Memorial)

How did David Bennes Barkley contribute to the success of the US military? Cite evidence from his record to support your answer.

Draw Conclusions: Why isn't Barkley's story well known? Cite evidence from his record to support your answer.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4) Carmen Contreras Bozak's US Military Service

Excerpts from an interview with Carmen Contreras Bozak conducted September 14, 2002 by Vivian Torre:

“It was December of 41 right 41 and just 6 months later a lot of the women—there was such a hype about the war and, and patriotism and all that—a lot of the women that were with me joined the service, so I figured, well, I might as well go too.

When we were WAAC, September 1st, 1943, they dropped the ‘A,’ we were no longer auxiliaries. We were then regular army, which was good because we had no benefits at all when we were WAAC.

And on the 13th of January the first company of WACs went overseas. I was only out of basic training not even two months and I’m overseas already; I was so happy.

And we got our job assignment and I never got to be a stenographer and I never got to be an interpreter, but they put me in the Signal Corps. I was a teletype operator. We used to send the messages in code from Algiers to Tunisia where the fighting was going on.

The other soldiers didn’t like the WAC. The generals didn’t want us there for nothing. They couldn’t see us replacing a soldier so he could go to war so he could be in combat. There was a lot of discrimination. And then the women at home you know, wives and girlfriends, they used to badmouth the WACs.”



© U.S. LATINO & LATINA WORLD WAR II ORAL HISTORY PROJECT, THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN.  
(Voces Oral History Project, The University of Texas at Austin)

Source: Interview with Carmen Contreras Bozak, Voces Oral History Center, Moody College of Communication, The University of Texas at Austin, [voces.lib.utexas.edu](http://voces.lib.utexas.edu). Video available at [vimeo.com/43191968](https://vimeo.com/43191968).

How did Carmen Contreras Bozak contribute to the success of the US military? Cite evidence from her interview to support your answer.

Draw Conclusions: Why isn’t Bozak’s story well known? Cite evidence from her interview to support your answer.



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### Assessment Activity

In one word (and only one word) summarize how these Latina and Latino soldiers contributed to the success of the US military:

Cite evidence from the readings to support your answer.

How are their stories similar? Cite evidence from the readings to support your answer.

## LESSON 5

### WOMEN IN SERVICE: HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

by Gena Oppenheim

This lesson focuses on the shared experiences of women who served their country during various conflicts. Many of them are honorably laid to rest in National Cemeteries across the country. Over the course of this lesson, students will analyze and assess an affidavit, a diary entry, and a letter by American women who served in the Civil War, World War I, and World War II. The objective is to have students recognize the similarities and differences in the experiences of three women who served. Then students will examine what common threads connected these women across a century and why they decided to serve despite many obstacles.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Analyze, summarize, and logically infer the essential message of a primary source using close-reading strategies.
- Draw conclusions and demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of primary sources through text-based evidence

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Despite the obstacles, why did these soldiers choose to serve?
- How did these soldiers contribute to the success of the United States military?
- Why were these soldiers “unseen”?

Note: You may want to adjust the questions slightly to recognize that some of the women in this lesson were not strictly speaking soldiers, but they were serving with the military:

- Despite the obstacles, why did these women choose to serve?
- How did these women contribute to the success of the US military?
- Why were these women “unseen”?

#### MATERIALS

- Optional: Historical Background
  - “The History of Women in the US Military” by Lynn Dumenil, Robert Glass Cleland Professor of American History, Emerita, Occidental College
  - Important Phrases activity sheet
- Analyzing Women in Service activity sheets
  - Introduction: Excerpts from “Women in the Army,” US Army, [army.mil/women/history](http://army.mil/women/history).
  - Harriet Tubman’s Pension Claim, ca. 1898, RG 233, Records of the US House of Representatives, National Archives, [archives.gov/legislative/features/claim-of-harriet-tubman](http://archives.gov/legislative/features/claim-of-harriet-tubman).



- Excerpt from the diary of Ella Jane Osborn, July 18, 1918, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC06570.
- Excerpts from a letter by Adaline Blank, July 21, [1943], Texas Woman's University Library, Woman's Collection, Women Airforce Service Pilots Digital Archive, D810.W7 B52 2002, twudigital.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p214coll2/id/8528/rec/1.

## PROCEDURE

1. This lesson is a “drill down” exercise into primary source documents. Students will learn about the contributions of American women in wartime efforts. Then they will examine primary source accounts by three individuals who served in the Civil War, World War I, and World War II.
2. Review the history of women in service with the class based on the Historical Background. The Historical Background by Lynn Dumenil is intended as a teacher's resource, but you may choose to distribute it, along with the Important Phrases activity sheet, to the class to read and discuss. You may choose to share read the Historical Background as described in Lesson 1.
3. Place students into pairs or small groups and distribute the Women in Service activity sheets (the introduction and the three primary source texts).
4. You may share read the documents with the students before they begin the activity.
5. After reading the documents, the groups will work on the answers to the Guiding Questions and the Essential Question. They must use textual evidence to support their responses.
6. When they have completed the activity sheets, have the students discuss their findings and support their decisions citing evidence from the texts.
7. You may choose to have the students write a brief essay answering one of the Essential Questions, supporting their responses with evidence from the texts:
  - Despite the obstacles, why did these soldiers [or women] choose to serve?
  - How did these soldiers [or women] contribute to the success of the US military?
  - Why were these soldiers [or women] “unseen”?

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### The History of Women in the US Military

by Lynn Dumenil, Occidental College

The history of American women in the military begins in the colonial past when Native American women such as Iroquois elders could initiate wars to avenge deaths in their families and when many colonial wives accompanied their husbands throughout the American Revolution, serving informally as cooks, laundresses, and nurses. But eventually, women took on more formal military roles. In later wars the federal government employed women in non-combat jobs allied to but not officially in the military. Women first became inducted into the Navy and the Army in large numbers during World War II, and in the Afghanistan and Middle East wars of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries women for the first time took on combat roles and widely served in leadership positions.

Women who served the nation in wartime faced significant challenges, most importantly the deeply ingrained assumption that men's claim to full citizenship rested on their exclusive ability to risk their lives on behalf of their country. This view would be challenged as the nature of war changed in the twentieth century and as new technologies made service less dependent on physical strength. But as their presence in the military expanded, so did sexual discrimination as well as sexual harassment and assault.

During the United States' engagement in World War I (1917–1918), women served abroad primarily with voluntary associations, such as Salvation Army workers. The US Army also employed women civilians abroad, most notably the "Hello Girls" in the Signal Corps, telephone operators who performed a vital function, but a function that built upon the feminized work of telephone operators at home. More than 10,000 White nurses worked abroad, either through the Red Cross, a quasi-governmental agency, or through the Army Nurse Corps. Although the latter were part of the military, they were not given "rank."

No African American women served as Hello Girls. And, initially, it appeared they would be excluded from nursing as well, which for most American wars had been the main avenue for female military service. After much protest, the Army permitted African American women to join its nursing corps, but none served overseas.

In World War II, the US military avidly recruited nurses; over 76,000 served in the Army or Navy. Black women served in segregated units throughout the war, mostly in the Women's Army Corps (WAC), and were often assigned the most menial of tasks. In contrast to WWI, all nurses were accorded rank and were entitled to full benefits. Nursing continued to be the main way in which women served in the military during the Korean (1950–1953) and Vietnam Wars (1955–1975).

World War II also led to women serving in the military in non-combat roles, with the expectation that the 240,000 women in the WAC and the Navy's Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) would perform clerical and manual labor that would free men for combat. The other major innovation was the Women's Airforce Service Pilots, who flew non-combat operations in the United States. Although the women expected to be "militarized," or afforded military status and benefits, they were refused. It was not until the 1970s, in part because of the feminist movement, that both the WASP and the World War I Signal Corps women were finally acknowledged as military personnel and accorded the privileges of Veterans.

In the 1990s, with the First Gulf War (1990–1991), women's participation in the military began to change significantly, in part because the United States relied upon voluntary enrollment rather than the draft, a policy that created demand for enlistments. This development also increased opportunities for women of color. In 1993, the Department of Defense permitted women to fly combat planes and in 2013, almost all military positions were opened to women. An estimated 300,000 women served during the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (2002–2021), and many US women continue to be deployed throughout the world, part of a volunteer army that is dramatically different from the one women "volunteers" participated in through America's earlier wars.

*Lynn Dumenil, Robert Glass Cleland Professor of American History, Emerita, Occidental College, is the author of The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I (2017) and American Working Women in World War II (2019).*



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## Important Phrases: The History of Women in the US Military

Which phrases or sentences in this essay about women in the US military are the most informative or important? Choose three and give the reason for each choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase informative or important?

## Introduction: Women in Service from the Civil War to World War II

<p><b>THE CIVIL WAR</b></p> <p>During the Civil War, women stepped into many nontraditional roles. Many women supported the war effort as nurses and aides, while others took a more upfront approach and secretly enlisted in the Army or served as spies and smugglers. In fact, more than 400 women disguised themselves as men and fought in both the Union and Confederate Armies.</p>	 <p>Susie King Taylor served as a nurse in the Union Army. (Library of Congress)</p>
<p><b>WWI</b></p> <p>Roughly 25,000 American women between the ages of 21 and 69 served overseas during World War I. Although the largest number served as nurses, women acted in numerous other capacities – from administrators to operators to architects. Many women continued to serve long after Armistice Day, some returning home as late as 1923. The service of these women helped propel the passage of the 19th Amendment, June 4, 1919.</p>	
<p><b>WWII</b></p> <p>During World War II women worked in hundreds of fields such as military intelligence, cryptography, parachute rigging and maintenance. Additionally, more than 60,000 Army Nurses served around the world and over 1,000 women flew aircraft for the Women’s Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs). Through the progression of the war, 140,000 women served in the U.S. Army and the Women’s Army Corps, proving vital to the war effort.</p>	<p>Grace Banker was one of the so-called “Hello Girls,” telephone operators for the US Army Signal Corps. Often operating near the front lines, Banker was awarded the Army Distinguished Medal for her service. (National Park Service)</p>

Source: “Women in the Army,” US Army, [army.mil/women/history](http://army.mil/women/history)



## Harriet Tubman's Pension Claim, ca. 1898

During the Civil War, the abolitionist Harriet Tubman served the Union Army as a scout, nurse, cook, and spy. After the war she received a pension as the widow of Union veteran Nelson Davis, who had served as a private in the US Colored Infantry. Tubman petitioned Congress for additional benefits for her own service and submitted this affidavit, which outlines her responsibilities during the war.

**GENERAL AFFIDAVIT**

State of \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_, ss:

In the matter of \_\_\_\_\_

ON THIS \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A. D. 18\_\_\_\_, personally appeared before me \_\_\_\_\_ in and for the aforesaid County, duly authorized to administer oaths.

aged \_\_\_\_\_ years, a resident of \_\_\_\_\_ in the County of \_\_\_\_\_, and State of \_\_\_\_\_

whose Post-office address is \_\_\_\_\_

aged \_\_\_\_\_ years, a resident of \_\_\_\_\_, in the County of \_\_\_\_\_, and State of \_\_\_\_\_, whose Post-office address is \_\_\_\_\_

well known to be reputable and entitled to credit, and who, being duly sworn, declared in relation to aforesaid case as follows:

(Note.—Affiants should state how they gain & knowledge of the facts to which they testify.)

*My claim against the U.S. is for three years service as nurse and cook in hospitals, and as commander of several men (eight or nine) as scouts during the late war of the Rebellion, under directions and orders of Edwin M. Stanton Secretary of War, and of several Generals.*

*I claim for my services above named the sum of Eighteen hundred dollars. The annexed copies have recently been read over to me and are true to the best of my knowledge information and belief.*

I further declare that I have ~~no~~ interest in said case and ~~am~~ *am* not concerned in its prosecution. and allowances

*Wm M. Carty*                      *Harriet X Davis*  
*W. Elsie M. Carty*                *Salt Harriet Tubman*  
(If Affiants sign by mark, two witnesses who write signs here.)                      (Signatures of Affiants)

Harriet Tubman's Pension Claim, ca. 1898, RG 233, Records of the US House of Representatives (National Archives)




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 NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PERIOD \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_
 

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### General Affidavit

My claim against the U.S. is for three years services. As Nurse and cook in hospitals, and as commander of Several Men (Eight or Nine) as scouts during the late war of the Rebellion, under directions and orders of Edwin M. Stanton Secretary of War, and of several Generals.

I claim for my services above named the sum of Eighteen hundred dollars

The annexed copies have recently been read over to me and are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.

Orin McCarty  
 M. Elsie McCarty  
 (If Affiants sign by mark, two witnesses  
 who write sign here.)

her  
 Harriet X Davis  
 \_\_\_\_\_mark\_\_\_\_\_  
 Sate Harriet Tubman  
 (Signature of Affiant.)

### Guiding Questions

1. What services to the United States does Tubman assert as the basis for her pension claim? Cite textual evidence to support your answer.
2. What is she specifically requesting in this document? Cite textual evidence to support your answer.
3. Do you think Tubman deserves the sum she is asking for? Cite textual evidence to support your answer.

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*Essential Question*

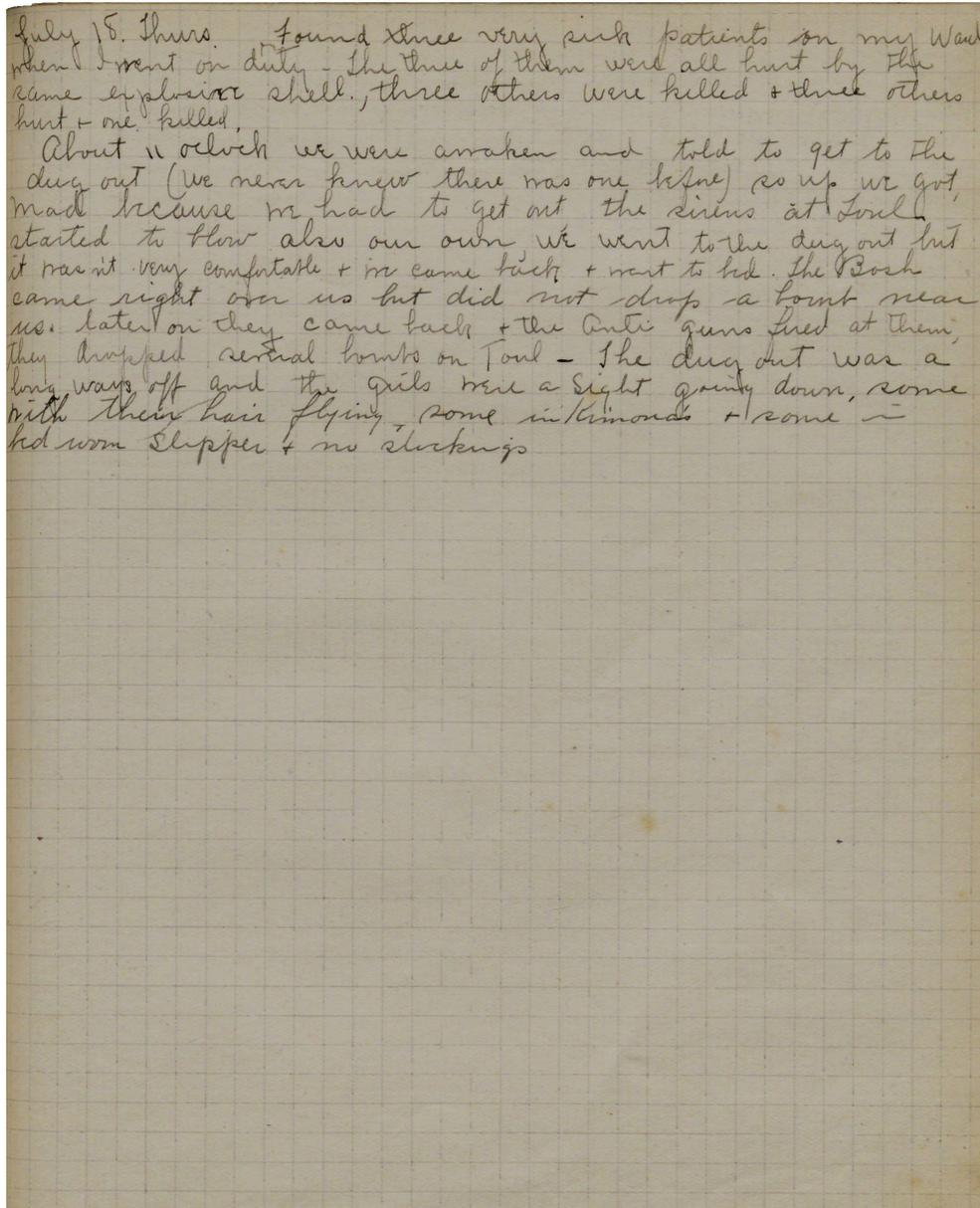
Despite the obstacles, why did Tubman choose to serve?



Harriet Tubman, ca. 1868 (Library of Congress and the Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institute)

## Ella Jane Osborn's Diary, 1918

*At the outbreak of World War I, Ella Jane Osborn was a surgical nurse at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. In January 1918, she volunteered to serve with the American Expeditionary Forces as a member of the Red Cross's nursing service in Europe. Osborn documented her experience in the diary she kept for the duration of her service (January 18, 1918–April 3, 1919).*



Ella Jane Osborn's diary entry for July 18, 1918  
 (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC06570)



## Adaline Blank's Letter Home, 1943

July 21 [1943]

*In the summer of 1943, a group of pioneer women fliers who had been transporting planes for the Air Transport Command were given a new name, WASPs—Women's Airforce Service Pilots. One of those women was Adaline "Spook" Blank of Tulsa, Oklahoma. While stationed at Avenger Field in Texas, Blank wrote letters to her sister about life at the base. She reported on the routines that the trainees had to follow each day and the stress that the trainees were under when it came to such duties as flying, cleaning, studying, or coming up for a check ride. She also told of the growing love she had for flying.*



WASP members on duty (US Air Force photo)

Dearest Sis,

I surely was glad to receive your letters. The boys overseas have nothing on us as far as craving mail is concerned. Honestly, our life is so filled with flying that we lose touch with everything outside of Avenger Field. We think, talk, live FLYING. Sometimes, I dream flying.

Yesterday I soloed the PT. You'll never know what a thrill that was. The excitement of it and the knowledge that I simply had to make good on that first ride alone gave me a feeling that is absolutely indescribable. Today, my instructor said my spins were all right and that I could practice them solo. I'm beginning to build up a good reserve of confidence now and from the way things are going I'll need it; so many of the upper classes are being "washed out" that it frightens us . . . Our first "check rides" will be coming up soon. The first one is a "civilian check" given by one of the instructors who has not taught you. If you pass that one, an "army check" soon follows; it is given by a commissioned army pilot. If the first check is unsatisfactory it is repeated after a few more hours training. Then, if the second "civilian check" is bad you get the "army check" anyway. That one usually means a "wash out". At this point we are all still in various stages of a disease known as "checkitis" . . .

The rumour is that we are being considered as a branch of the Army Air Corps. However, it appears that the superior powers are still somewhat dubious about this feminine flying. I will admit that it does take a great deal of physical stamina. Every night we just fall in bed; I have never been so literally and completely tired in all my life. It's a strenuous life—but worth it.

I haven't even washed my hair since I got here. Can you imagine my going more than two weeks without a shampoo?

Love, Spook



## OPTIONAL UNIT ASSESSMENT

The students will write a brief essay developing a viewpoint and using direct evidence from the documents they examined throughout this unit to support their arguments covering one of the essential questions:

- What obstacles did these soldiers overcome?
- How did these soldiers contribute to the success of the United States military?
- Why were these soldiers “unseen”?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

### *ACTIVITY 1: Civic Activity (Follow up to Lesson 1)*

One hundred and seventeen years after Henry Ossian Flipper’s undeserved dishonorable discharge from the US Military Academy at West Point, he was posthumously pardoned by President Bill Clinton. The phrase “Justice delayed is justice denied” is certainly applicable, but it should not remove the responsibility of correcting past wrongs.

Charles Young was an outstanding officer and soldier who overcame the onerous twin obstacles of racism and prejudice to earn the rank of colonel. However, his promotion to brigadier general was denied due to the color of his skin. We have an opportunity to correct past wrongs. In 2020, Kentucky governor Andy Beshear posthumously promoted Charles Young to the honorary rank of major general in the state of Kentucky. On February 1, 2021, Governor Beshear sent a letter to President Joe Biden urging him to do the same on the federal level.

To support federal action to award Col. Young the rank he was denied, students can send letters to their representatives in Congress, urging them to participate in the quest to promote Col. Young to general or create resources like posters, exhibitions, news articles, or other means to inform the public about Charles Young’s life and career.

You may choose to have the students research other “unseen” soldiers who are buried in a National Cemetery or who come from your students’ communities and advocate for them to receive recognition that they deserved during their lifetime. You could create a memorial wall at the school or online to draw attention to their achievements in the US Armed Forces.

### *ACTIVITY 2: Digging Deeper*

Since the Civil War, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have made lasting contributions to America’s wartime efforts. Consider exploring some of the following resources to learn more about the loyalty and service of these brave men and women and develop ways to inform fellow students or the wider community about Asian American and Pacific Islander Veterans. In keeping with the theme of the Asian American lesson, you may ask students to develop a memorial to honor the service and sacrifice of these service men and women.

- Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders served during the Civil War, mostly for the Union but also for the Confederacy. The National Park Service published research identifying the names and brief biographies of Service Members with ties to China, India, Japan, the Philippines, and Guam. Primary source documents are also provided. See *Asians and Pacific Islanders in the Civil War*, <https://americasnationalparks.org/asians-and-pacific-islanders-in-the-civil-war/>.
- During World War II, approximately 18,000 Japanese Americans served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, which is considered one of the most highly decorated units in American history given its size and duration of service. Both Stanley Hayami and Senator Daniel K. Inouye were servicemen in the 442nd. The Go For Broke



National Education Center offers oral histories and online educational resources to learn more about their service at <https://www.goforbroke.org/>.

- During World War II, more than 260,000 Filipinos fought alongside American soldiers. They were eventually awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2017. The Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project offers oral histories and educational material about their contributions and their efforts for recognition at <https://filvetrep.org/>.
- Approximately 35,000 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders served in the Vietnam War. Their experiences with racism often compounded their trauma from the war. PBS Learning Media for *Asian Americans Serving and Fighting in the Vietnam War* provides several class activities at *Asian Americans Serving and Fighting in the Vietnam War*.
- The Library of Congress's *Asian Pacific Americans: Going for Broke* shares stories from Asian Pacific Americans who contributed to wartime efforts in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq. Resources include primary sources such as oral history interviews, images, and documents at <https://www.loc.gov/vets/stories/ex-war-asianpacific.html>.

### ***ACTIVITY 3: Telling a Soldier's Story***

Using the resources of the National Cemetery Administration as well as local and state resources, students will apply what they have learned from these lessons to research the history of a local Service Member or Veteran buried in a National Cemetery. In a step-by-step process, individual students or student groups will apply research skills, work with and organize data, analyze and access primary and secondary sources, and write a memorial to honor the service of their chosen “unseen” Service Member or Veteran. This activity has been designed in the hopes that students will visit the National Cemetery to honor their chosen Service Member or Veteran while they learn about the service and sacrifice of Service Members and Veterans from their own communities.

#### **PROCEDURE**

1. To prepare for this activity, visit your local National Cemetery to collect names or contact local historical societies and libraries, read obituaries in historical newspapers, contact local Service Members or Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) and Veteran social groups. We strongly suggest you base this extension activity on soldiers from the “unseen” groups discussed in these lessons: African Americans, American Indians, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Latinas and Latinos, and women. However, some students may have family members or otherwise have a personal, family, or community connection with a specific Service Member or Veteran or their family and they may prefer to choose that individual.

Some students may find lots of information and others may find little. In the latter cases, it may be appropriate for students to research the time period and world events that would have affected this Service Member or Veteran and write a tribute based on what their experiences might have been: What would they have felt, thought, heard, experienced?

2. You may choose to have students work independently or in pairs or small groups.
3. You may assign a Service Member or Veteran to each student or group, allow them to choose from your prepared list, or have them conduct research to identify a local Service Member or Veteran buried in a National Cemetery on their own.
4. Conducting Research
  - You may wish to conduct research into a few of the Service Members or Veterans first, in order to help students find the most fruitful sources.



- Once the students have examined online sources such as the ones provided below, you may find it useful to work with state and local historical societies. Often these organizations will have digitized useful information, catalogued historical photographs or newspapers or developed projects focusing on soldiers from your state or community.
- Below are a few websites that could prove useful for researching soldiers' stories. Please be aware that websites like Ancestry, Family Search, Fold3, Newspapers.com and others may require payment, but it is worth checking whether your school or local library system provides free access to those sites.
  - US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) resources
    - National Gravesite Locator: <https://gravelocator.cem.va.gov>  
  
Search for burial locations of Service Members or Veterans and their family members in VA National Cemeteries, state Veterans cemeteries, various other military and Department of Interior cemeteries, and for Service Members or Veterans buried in private cemeteries when the grave is marked with a government grave marker.
    - Veterans Legacy Memorial: <https://www.vlm.cem.va.gov/>  
  
The Veterans Legacy Memorial (VLM) is an online memorial space for Service Members and Veterans managed by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) of the US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). NCA manages 140 National Cemeteries as shrine spaces to honor our Nation's Service Members and Veterans and extends memorialization of the 3.7 million Service Members and Veterans interred in NCA cemeteries to this digital memorial space, providing a VLM profile page for each. Interment location and headstone data fields can be helpful when trying to locate obituaries, which often contain more leads into the life of the Service Member and Veteran.
  - Veterans History Project: [loc.gov/vets/](http://loc.gov/vets/)  
  
To use this collection, follow these steps:
    1. Search the Veterans Collection
    2. Browse by race/ethnicity
  - Armed Services websites
    - US Army Heritage and Education Center: [ahec.armywarcollege.edu/](http://ahec.armywarcollege.edu/)
    - Naval History and Heritage Command: [history.navy.mil/](http://history.navy.mil/)
    - Marine Corps History Division: [grc-usmcm.libguides.com/marine-corps-archives/main](http://grc-usmcm.libguides.com/marine-corps-archives/main)
    - Air Force Historical Research Agency: [afhra.af.mil/](http://afhra.af.mil/)
    - US Coast Guard Historian's Office: [history.uscg.mil/](http://history.uscg.mil/)
  - Other useful websites
    - Library of Congress Veterans History Project: [loc.gov/vets/](http://loc.gov/vets/)
    - National Archives: [archives.gov/research/military/veterans/online](http://archives.gov/research/military/veterans/online)  
  
Most of the military records at the National Archives are not online, but you may find some useful records here that have been digitized.



- Military Indexes: [www.militaryindexes.com](http://www.militaryindexes.com)

This site is run by an individual genealogist. Select the war you are researching and scroll down to the “Records by State” section.

- Find a Grave: [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

This website is run by private individuals and compiles crowd-sourced information.

- [Familysearch.org](http://Familysearch.org)

This site is free but requires an online account.

5. As they conduct their research, the students will need to keep a record of where they acquired their knowledge, take careful notes, and organize and verify their data through a variety of sources. When all information has been confirmed, the students will write their Service Member’s or Veteran’s story, being certain to use their own words. Construction of the story should follow the simple format below.
  - The first paragraph should cover the Service Member’s or Veteran’s military service, including
    - Name and other names or spelling of names the person went by
    - Rank(s), company, regiment, and state(s) of service
    - Battles the unit fought in and any honors received
  - The second paragraph should cover the Service Member’s or Veteran’s personal information, including
    - State of birth or residence
    - Relatives/family
    - Occupation
    - Burial location
  - To make the research more engaging for the students, encourage them to add a statement of honor or some personal information about the Service Member or Veteran that the student found compelling.
  - The last component is a complete list of the student’s sources.
6. If possible, bring the class to the National Cemetery and have the students present their stories at the Veteran’s gravesite. This activity could include students’ families, Veterans’ families, and other community members. If it is not possible to visit the Cemetery, the presentations could be done in school or at a memorial or monument in the community.
7. An example of a World War II soldier’s story with sources:

*Cmdr Beatrice V. Ball served in World II. Ball initially enlisted in the U.S. Naval Women’s Reserve (known as the WAVES) in 1942. She soon transferred to the Coast Guard after it formed the first SPAR company. SPAR was the U.S. Coast Guard women’s reserve, which was formed to help ease workforce shortages. She was the first SPAR member assigned to intelligence work.*



*Beatrice Ball was born in Oklahoma on December 2, 1902. After the war was over, Ball returned to civilian life when the Coast Guard disbanded SPAR. During the Korean War, however, Ball re-enlisted in the regular Coast Guard. She was promoted to the rank of commander in 1956 and remained until her retirement in 1961. She is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.*

Sources:

- Arlington National Cemetery, <https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Notable-Graves/Women>
- Find a grave, [https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/7393/beatrice-v\\_-ball](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/7393/beatrice-v_-ball)