

DEFENDERS OF FREEDOM

OVERVIEW

"The cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender, or submission." – John F. Kennedy

"Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty." – John F. Kennedy

"It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth." – Abraham Lincoln

From the moment the minutemen stood in defiance of tyranny at Lexington Green, Americans have been willing to fight for and defend their freedom. Millions of men and women have served proudly in the U.S. military for over 240 years. They helped give birth to this country at Yorktown. They bled at Gettysburg to keep the country together. They suffered unspeakable horrors of the trenches on the Western Front. They stormed the beaches of Normandy. And, many have given their "last full measure of devotion" to defend freedom in other countries across the world. Their contributions are deserving of more recognition than just medals and monuments.

In this lesson, students will be immersed in the experiences of the American soldier. What is it like to be a defender of freedom? Why do they do it? What has it meant to this country? Through video clips and primary sources, students will explore these questions and more.

Goals/Objectives

To describe and explain the sacrifices, hardships, and experiences that goes into defending freedom:

- Empathize with the men and women in the U.S. military.
- Analyze primary sources (oral histories, memoirs, journals).
- Conduct interviews with veterans from the community to add to the historical record.

Standards

Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Time Required

1-2 days

Recommended Grade Level

7-12

Topics/Eras

- Experience of Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces
- World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War, War in Iraq, War in Afghanistan
- U.S. Military History

Materials:

- Lincoln's Legacy Oral Histories (http://lfg.com/misc/legacy/Oral_Histories.html)
- LCD Projector for PowerPoint
- Defenders of Freedom PowerPoint
- Instructions for Interviews (PDF)
- Video Cameras or cell phones