

# Lesson Plan

**Lesson:** Veteran's Day

**Length:** Approximately 30-45 minutes

**Age or Grade Level Intended:** 1<sup>st</sup> grade

**Academic Standard(s):** Social Studies 1.1.5: Identify people and events observed in national celebrations and holidays.

English/Language Arts 1.5.5: Write for different purposes and to a specific audience or person.

**Performance Objective(s):** Given background knowledge on Veteran's Day and who veterans are, students will write a thank-you letter to a veteran, giving at least 2 reasons why veterans are so important.

**Assessment:** The student will write a letter to a veteran. The teacher will check to ensure that the student has thanked the veteran and has listed at least 2 reasons why veterans are important to our country.

## Advance Preparation by Teacher:

- Obtain a copy of the book The Wall by Eve Bunting
- Write the questions, "Why do we celebrate Veteran's Day?" and "What is a veteran?" on the front board for children to write about for bell work.
- Have writing paper for each student.
- Identify a local agency that serves veterans and would be willing to receive letters from the students, such as a Veteran's hospital.
- Get a big envelope and postage to send the students letters, unless you are planning on hand delivering the letters to the agency.

## Procedure:

**Introduction/Motivation:** Before students come into class in the morning, write the questions "Why do we celebrate Veteran's Day?" and "What is a veteran?" on the board (students should already be aware of the procedures for bell work: as soon as they enter the classroom and have their things put away, they should get out their writer's notebooks and quietly begin to write an answer to the question). The teacher will assess the students prior knowledge by checking to see how many students already knew the answers to these questions.

## Step-by-Step Plan:

1. The teacher will ask students the question, “Who knows what today is?” (This lesson is intended to be given on Veteran’s Day. If Veteran’s Day falls on a Saturday or Sunday, or if the teacher is giving the lesson on a different day, the question will have to be adjusted accordingly.) (**Bloom: Knowledge**)
2. Explain to the students that Veteran’s Day is a very important holiday. It is the day that we honor the men and women that have fought for our country. Ask students to quietly raise their hands if they have a relative or a family friend that has served in the military.
3. Introduce the story The Wall by Eve Bunting by explaining that it is a story about a little boy whose grandfather was killed in the Vietnam War.
4. Read the story The Wall to students. (**Gardner: Visual/Spatial**)
5. Tell the students that “the wall” that they referred to in the story is a real place in Washington D.C. It lists the names of over 58,000 soldiers who lost their lives in the war.
6. With students, generate a list on the board of reasons why the men and women in the military are so important to our country (these should be things such as “They keep us safe” and “They give us our freedom”). (**Gardner: Intrapersonal**) (**Bloom: Comprehension**)
7. Tell students that it is important that we thank our veterans for everything that they have done for us. Have students write a letter to a veteran thanking them for serving our country. In the letter, have students include 2 reasons why veterans are such important people for us to honor. For safety reasons, make sure that children only sign the letter using their first name. (**Gardner: Interpersonal, Verbal/Linguistic**) (**Bloom: Synthesis**)
8. Collect the letters and make sure that students have included their two reasons of why veterans are important. Also, make sure that the letters are appropriate and are only signed using the child’s first name. Send or hand deliver the letters to an agency that serves veterans, such as a Veteran’s hospital.

**Closure:** Tell students that they are going to make the veterans who receive these letters very happy. Explain to students that although Veteran’s Day is a special day set aside to honor our veterans, we should still honor them every day and thank them every chance that we get. Encourage students to call and thank the veterans that they know personally (grandfathers, uncles, moms and dads, etc.). (**Bloom: Application**)

## Adaptations/Enrichment:

**Student with ADHD:** Allow this student to pass out and collect the letters from his or her peers, so that they are able to get up and move around.

**Student classified as MoMD:** Allow the student to verbally tell the teacher, aide, or a peer what they want in their letter, while that person records what the student has said.

**Gifted and Talented Student:** Allow this student to record what a student with lower ability (such as the student classified as MoMD) says and to assist them in writing the letter.

**Student with an orthopedic impairment:** For a student who has difficulty with holding/gripping a pencil or difficulty with handwriting, allow them to type out their letter on a computer.

**Self-Reflection:** Did the students meet the performance objectives? Do the students seem to have an appreciation for veterans? Did the students already know what Veteran's Day was, based on the pre-assessment? What could I do to improve this lesson the next time I teach it?