Remembering Veterans' Day
Honoring All Who Served

Veterans Day is a public holiday, observed annually on November 11. Some people confuse Veterans Day with Memorial Day. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, "Memorial Day honors American service members who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans–living or dead–but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime."

The holiday started as Armistice Day on November 11, 1919 under President Woodrow Wilson to commemorate the one year anniversary of a cease fire between the Allied nations and Germany in World War I, then known as "the Great War." In 1926, Congress passed a resolution for an annual observance but it did not become a national holiday until 1938. After World War II and American forces fought in Korea, veterans service organizations urged Congress to change the word "Armistice" to "Veterans." President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the legislation on June 1, 1954, changing the holiday's name in order to honor all veterans. Typically, the day is celebrated with speeches and parades across the country.

Photo courtesy of Gene Loparco

The military men and women who have served and protected our country come from all walks of life; they are parents, children, grandparents, friends, neighbors and coworkers, and are an important part of their communities.

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For the student lesson plan: *Veterans Day and the meaning of sacrifice* by PBS go to www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/veterans-day/

For more info on Veterans Day go to the Veterans Affairs' website at www.va.gov/opa/vetsday/

Newspaper Activities:
- Search through recent editions of the newspaper (print or online) and other local news sources for stories about Veterans Day events. How is your community honoring our military servicemen and women?
- Find newspaper stories about veterans' military service. Also look for people who chose to fulfill their civic responsibility by serving in other ways such as firefighters, police, teachers, volunteers, etc. What is it about serving others that makes it stand out beyond being a typical job? What sacrifices may have been made as part of this service? Discuss ways that you and/or your class or family can serve your school or community.

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