



***Echoes From the Wall* Speakers Bureau Guidelines**

Thank you for joining the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's *Echoes From the Wall* Speakers Bureau for education. As the founders of The Wall, we believe the Memorial stands as a symbol of national dialogue regarding a divisive time in our nation's history. Our mission, which is to honor and preserve the legacy of service and educate all generations about the impact of the Vietnam War and era, is accomplished through programs like this that rely on individuals like you to share your stories and experiences.

GETTING STARTED

- Reach out to the schools in your area to see if any of their teachers would be interested in having a veteran visit their classroom. You may wish to send, in hard copy or via email, the sample letter that is included on page 3.
- Some schools may be particularly interested in having a veteran come in to speak around the Veterans Day and Memorial Day holidays. For planning purposes, try to get in touch with local schools at least 4-6 weeks in advance of those holidays.
- The length of time for each class period varies from school to school; the best option is to remain flexible on speaking anywhere from 30 minutes to 60 minutes. The *Echoes From the Wall* lesson plans ("In the Classroom") are designed so they can be completed within 30-45 minutes.

PITFALLS TO AVOID

- Remember you are representing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and its *Echoes From the Wall* curriculum. Our mission is to honor and preserve the legacy of service and educate all generations about the impact of the Vietnam era. **Encourage open dialogue and make sure to state that any personal opinions you might share are your own and do not necessarily represent the views of the organization.**
- Most students will have little familiarity with military-specific terms- be sure to define any of this language you may use, and avoid jargon as much as possible.
- Avoid detailed discussion of fatalities and injuries. However, if asked directly, gauge the students' willingness to engage and always opt for an honest answer.

HOW TO USE THE CURRICULUM

Echoes From the Wall is organized into four major arenas that encapsulate the legacy of the Vietnam War and era: Culture/Social Impact; Politics; Media; and Military.

Each arena includes a number of discrete lesson plans that trace a particular topic from Vietnam to today. Each lesson plan is organized into the following sections:



Pre-visit activity

In the classroom

Post-visit activity

We strongly suggest that you reach out to the teacher who will host you in his or her classroom and encourage him or her to complete the pre-visit activity for the lesson plan you plan to use; this will guarantee a foundation of understanding about the topic at hand.

When you are in the classroom, follow the “In the Classroom” section of the lesson plan you will use, in conjunction with its associated Powerpoint presentation. Each Powerpoint has images, audio, and video that correspond with the text in the lesson plan. Be sure to review both the Powerpoint and the lesson plan thoroughly in advance of your classroom visit. Because some include links to videos hosted online, you will need an internet connection on the computer you use to show the presentation. Be sure to confirm this with the teacher before your visit.

After you’ve completed your presentation and classroom visit, encourage the teacher you are working with to complete the “Post-visit activity” with his or her class as a way students to further digest the information covered, and to continue to build skills in source analysis.

EVALUATION

On the following pages (pages 4-5) is an evaluation form for the teacher to complete following your classroom visit. This evaluation helps VVMF to make adjustments to the curriculum or provide further instructions to speakers as necessary. Please have the teacher complete the form and return directly to: education@vmf.org.



SAMPLE LETTER TO SEND TO SCHOOLS

Dear Teacher or Administrator:

My name is [your name] and I would like to offer to come in to speak to your students through the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's Speakers Bureau. I served in Vietnam [include details of your service]. After returning to the U.S., I [details of your career and life after military service].

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) is the organization that established the Memorial on the National Mall in 1982. Since then, the mission of VVMF has been to honor and preserve the legacy of service and to educate all generations about the impact of the Vietnam War. Many students will never get the chance to visit the Memorial, and many may not be aware of the far-reaching impacts of Vietnam on their own lives and communities. By having the chance to interact with a veteran, students can learn about the impact of a divisive time in our nation's history and learn some of the values like courage and commitment to service that veterans have lived through firsthand experiences.

As part of the program, I can pass along activities and readings for classes to complete before my visit, as well as follow-up activities. During my time in the classroom, I can work with you [or your teachers] to focus on any one of a wide range of topics covered by VVMF's *Echoes from the Wall* curriculum, including for example: How War Is Initiated; Medical Advances in Wartime; Protests Against War; Motivations for US Involvement in Vietnam. I can also speak to my experience in Vietnam and answer questions from students about life in the Vietnam era.

All *Echoes From the Wall* lesson plans address NCSS C3 standards as well as History/Social Studies Common Core standards.

Thank you for your commitment to our youth and I hope we can be in touch to arrange a visit.

Best,

[your name]



EVALUATION FORM

VVMF *Echoes From the Wall* Curriculum and Classroom Visit Evaluation Form

Teacher Name: _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

Class/subject: _____

Grade Level: _____

Number of students in class: _____

Title of VVMF *Echoes From the Wall* lesson plan presented in the classroom:

Name of guest speaker: _____

Length of classroom visit/presentation: _____

Did you complete the suggested pre-visit activity? Circle one: YES NO

Did you complete the suggested post-visit activity? Circle one: YES NO

What aspects of the class presentation and discussion did you find most useful?

Did the presentation cover what you expected it to? If not, what were your expectations?

What aspects of the class presentation and discussion could benefit from adjustments?



How well do you think the speaker made the topic relevant to students?

If you completed either the pre- or post-visit activities, are there any suggestions you would make for changes?

Did you feel the VVMF materials provided to you by the guest speaker adequately prepared your class for his or her visit? Circle one: YES NO

If no, what changes or additions would have better prepared your class?

Overall, how would you rate this experience as benefitting your classroom goals? Please circle a number below.

(not beneficial) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (very beneficial)

Please email this form to education@vmf.org or mail to:

1235 South Clark Street, Suite 910

Arlington, VA 22202

THANK YOU!