ECHOES FROM THE MALL
A Teachers’ Guide to visiting the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) produced this guide to enrich your visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. In addition to The Wall, this Memorial includes the Three Servicemen Statue, the Vietnam Women's Memorial, and the In Memory Plaque. All activities included in this guide may be modified and adapted for students in grades K-12.

The key below indicates different skills addressed in each of the activities in this guide:

- Question mark for REFLECTION
- Capital S for SPEAKING
- Capital R for READING
- Capital H for HANDS-ON
- Capital W for WRITING

Also included are a number of activities which you can pursue in your classroom using VVMF’s comprehensive Hometown Heroes curriculum guide. Hometown Heroes includes a series of projects which engage students in the research and preservation of history relating to Vietnam veterans, the Vietnam War, and the legacy of the Vietnam era.
PREPARING FOR A VISIT

Before your visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, you and your students may wish to explore the following resources:

READ
- *The Wall* by Eve Bunting
- *Vietnam: A History* by Stanley Karnow
- *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History* by Mark A. Lawrence
- *Matterhorn* by Karl Marlantes
- *The Things They Carried* by Tim O’Brien
- *To Heal a Nation* by Jan Scruggs and Joel Swerdlow
- *Letters on the Wall* by Michael Soffarelli
- Primary source documents from the Vietnam era, available in the *Echoes From the Wall Teachers’ Guide* and the *Hometown Heroes* curriculum guide on www.vvmf.org

WATCH
- *To Heal a Nation*, the story of Jan Scruggs and his efforts to build the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- *Maya Lin: A Strong, Clear Vision*, a documentary about the designer of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- *Gold Star Children*, a documentary about American children who have lost loved ones to war
- *The Sixties*, a CNN documentary series on the events of the decade

VISIT
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund at www.vvmf.org/vvmf-education
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial at www.nps.gov/vive

DOWNLOAD
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Wall app - Search “VVMF Wall”
  Apple App Store - www.vvmf.org/wall-app
  Android - www.vvmf.org/wall-app

We hope your visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is educational and thought-provoking. Please remember that many visitors to the Memorial may have lost friends or family who served in the war; discuss with your students appropriate behavior to display while visiting the Memorial:

- Speak in a quiet voice
- Walk at all times
- Do not eat at the Memorial
- Do not litter; put trash and recycling in appropriate containers
- The Memorial is designed so that it can be touched, but please refrain from sitting or climbing on The Wall or the related statues
- Do not step on the grass above The Wall, or in the roped off areas throughout the Memorial grounds

@vnveteransmemorial
@VVMF

Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund
The Memorial to the 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

Three Servicemen Statue

In Memory Plaque

Future Site of the Education Center at The Wall

Map courtesy of the National Park Service
1. Vietnam Veterans Memorial - “The Wall”
2. Future Education Center at The Wall
3. Three Servicemen Statue
4. In Memory Plaque
5. Vietnam Women’s Memorial
The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was created to honor those who served with the US Armed Forces during the Vietnam War. Because there was much dissent about involvement in Vietnam, some veterans who returned home felt scorned, and not welcomed back to the country they had served. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial serves as a place of healing, and place to remember and honor the nearly three million who served in the Vietnam War. Today, the memorial receives more than 5.6 million visitors annually.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) was formed in 1979 to establish a national memorial for those who served with the US Armed Forces during the Vietnam War. Jan Scruggs, an infantry corporal in the war, conceived the idea to build this memorial.

In 1981, VVMF held a contest to select a design for the memorial. The winning entry was submitted by Maya Ying Lin, a 21-year old Chinese-American student at Yale University. She chose polished black granite for the walls, reflecting the images of the surrounding nature, monuments, and visitors. The walls point to the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, linking the Vietnam War to earlier divisive events.

Reading the Symbols

- A diamond (♦) means the person's death was confirmed
- A cross (+) means the person remains missing in action
- A diamond on a cross (♦) means the person was once missing but remains have been accounted for
- A circle on a cross (✪) would mean a person who was once missing has returned home alive. This symbol has never been used.

*The Wall app available for free in the iTunes store and Google Play can help you locate individual names on The Wall.*
Invite your students to share thoughts about the following, either through discussion, writing, and/or drawing:

- What are your first impressions of The Wall?
- Maya Lin described The Wall as “a rift in the earth, a long, polished, black stone wall, emerging from and receding onto the earth.” What effect does her design have on you? Do you like it or dislike it?
- How does The Wall make you feel?
- Write a poem, a song, or create a drawing to express how you feel at The Wall
- Write a letter to leave at The Wall

In the classroom:
To extend this activity into the classroom, check out Lesson Plan D of the Hometown Heroes curriculum guide- Understanding Healing Through Memorials- www.vvmf.org/hometown-heroes

Maya Lin’s winning design drawing for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is ONE of 1,421 design-competition submissions documented in the Library of Congress as part of the Papers of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund.

Work in teams or groups to locate names of people on The Wall from your city, county, or state:

- Students can identify service members from their city, county, or state whose names are on The Wall by visiting www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces
- The Wall app available on Google Play and Apple app store can help you locate specific individual names on The Wall
- Have students copy down the name, the casualty date, and the panel where the name can be found

In the classroom:
To extend this activity into the classroom, check out Lesson Plan A of the Hometown Heroes curriculum - Remembering Those Who Sacrificed During the Vietnam War - www.vvmf.org/hometown-heroes

When you are trying to find a name, you can use a quicker method to find the row location.

At the beginning or end of the rows, you can find a small circle and between each circle are 10 rows. So if you are looking for row 43, you can find the 4th circle and then count three rows below that.
ON SITE ACTIVITY: REMEMBRANCES AT THE WALL

Every day, people leave remembrances at The Wall. Items left behind include teddy bears, baseball gloves, photo albums, wedding rings, letters, and even a motorcycle. Each night, the National Park Service collects and catalogues the items that have been left at The Wall. The items comprise the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection, which numbers over 400,000 objects.

Use the following questions to engage your students in a discussion on the remembrances left at The Wall:

- Why do you think people leave remembrances?
- What sorts of items do you think former servicemen might leave?
- What sorts of items do you think family members might leave?
- What would you leave?

ON SITE ACTIVITY: MAKE A NAME RUBBING

The Wall is designed so that people can get very close to it, even touch it. One way to take a memento home is to create a name rubbing:

- Locate a name or names (perhaps a name from your state or city) that your class can make rubbings of
- Use a graphite pencil and paper available at the National Park Service kiosk, or from a Park Ranger or Memorial volunteer. Please do not use pens or crayons, as they can damage the memorial.

DID YOU KNOW?

The phenomenon of leaving offerings at The Wall started in the summer of 1982. A U.S. Navy officer walked up to where the concrete for the foundation of The Wall was being poured. He stood over the trench for a moment, tossed in his brother’s Purple Heart, and saluted.

This was the first offering.

DID YOU KNOW?

More than 400,000 items have been left at The Wall and selection of these items will be part of the future Education Center at The Wall. You can browse parts of the Collection at www.vvmf.org/items.
ON SITE ACTIVITY: MEMORIAL SERVICE

Your class can hold a memorial service to honor and remember those who served in Vietnam—from your community and beyond. Your class may hold a memorial service on the knoll area east of The Wall (consult the map). Please obtain a permit to hold this service (there is a small fee) by contacting the National Park Service at least 48 hours prior to the ceremony.

Contact information: 202-245-4715 or visit www.nps.gov/nama/planyourvisit/permits

Some activities to do in a memorial service:

- Read the names on the Wall from your community. You can log on to www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces to locate people from your area.
- Leave notes, drawings, flowers, or other items in remembrance
- Sing America the Beautiful, or play Taps

In the classroom:
To extend this activity into the classroom, check out Lesson Plan C of the Hometown Heroes curriculum- Commemorating Our Veterans - www.vvmf.org/hometown-heroes

ON SITE ACTIVITY: HOW MANY NAMES?

As of Memorial Day 2016, 58,315 names are inscribed on The Wall. If deemed appropriate, additional names will be added in the future.

- What fraction of the total number of names on The Wall does your class represent?
- How much space on the National Mall would be filled if there was a person for every name on The Wall? More than 150,000 men and women were wounded during their service in Vietnam. How much space on the National Mall would those veterans fill?

In the classroom:
To extend this activity into the classroom, check out Lesson Plan B of the Hometown Heroes curriculum - Preserving Veterans' Personal Stories www.vvmf.org/hometown-heroes

DID YOU KNOW?

Since the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in 1982, more than 300 names have been added to The Wall. You can learn how a name is added at www.vvmf.org/adding-a-name
Maya Lin’s design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was controversial. People were accustomed to white, majestic monuments depicting leaders on horseback and soldiers performing acts of heroism. As a result, some veterans referred to Maya Lin’s nontraditional design as “a black gash of shame.” These veterans garnered support for a more traditional memorial, and the Secretary of the Interior delayed construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial until their concerns were addressed.

A compromise was eventually reached. Frederick E. Hart was chosen to design and sculpt a traditional statue to be included as part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, along with a flagpole. In 1984, The Three Servicemen statue was dedicated.

ON SITE ACTIVITY: STUDENT REFLECTIONS

Invite your students to share thoughts about the following, either through discussion or through writing:

- Look closely at the statue. What details do you notice? What is happening in this scene?
- How does this statue make you feel? What do you think the soldiers are feeling?
- Why do you think the sculptor chose to depict soldiers of different races?
- Divide the class into two groups. Have one group imagine this scene represents the beginning of a story. Ask students to continue writing the story. Ask the other group to imagine this scene represents the end of a story. Ask those students to write the story up to this point. In other words, what led to this scene?

DID YOU KNOW?

More than $8,000,000 was raised by VVMF to build The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, all of which came from private sources. No government funds were used in the construction of the Memorial.
DID YOU KNOW?

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund honors those who died as a result of the Vietnam War, but whose deaths do not fit the Department of Defense criteria for inclusion on The Wall, through its In Memory program.

Every year VVMF hosts a ceremony to pay tribute to these men and women who sacrificed so much for their country. Families from all over the country travel to Washington, DC to join VVMF in honoring their loved ones. If you have a loved one who may qualify, you can apply for the program by visiting: www.vvmf.org/InMemoryProgram

The In Memory Plaque is located adjacent to the Three Servicemen Statue. The Plaque is set in the ground.

ON SITE ACTIVITY: STUDENT REFLECTIONS

Invite your students to share thoughts about the following, either through discussion or through writing:

- What hardships, physical and emotional, do you think a veteran may have to deal with after leaving the battlefield?
- What obligation do you think a government has to take care of its military after period of service has ended?
- What can you do to assist veterans injured physically or psychologically as a result of service?
- Beyond serving in the military, in what ways can you serve your country or community?

In the classroom:
To extend this activity into the classroom, check out the Hometown Heroes curriculum guide: www.vvmf.org/hometown-heroes:

Lesson Plan B - Preserving Veterans’ Personal Stories
Lesson Plan C - Commemorating Our Veterans,
Lesson Plan D - Understanding Healing Through Memorials
More than 8500 women served in the war in Vietnam as members of the US Armed Forces. Eight lost their lives, and their names are inscribed on The Wall. In addition to serving in the military, women worked as civilians- as nurses, USO workers, map makers, intelligence specialists, photographers, journalists and air traffic controllers. In 1983, Diane Carlson Evans, who served in Vietnam as an Army nurse, and now chairs the Vietnam Women’s Memorial Project, began turning her dream of a memorial for all the women who served into a reality.

Glenna Goodacre of Santa Fe, New Mexico, was chosen to design the Vietnam Women’s Memorial as a tribute to the many women who served in Vietnam. This memorial was dedicated on November 11, 1993, ten years after the idea was first conceived.

Invite your students to share thoughts about the following, either through discussion or through writing:

- Look closely at the statue. What details do you notice? What is happening in this scene?
- How does this statue make you feel? What do you think the women in the statue might have been feeling?
- Discuss the many roles that women played in Vietnam. Why do you think women volunteered to serve in Vietnam?
- Divide the class into two groups. Have one group imagine this scene represents the beginning of a story. Ask students to continue writing the story. Ask the other group to imagine this scene represents the end of a story. Ask those students to write the story up to this point. In other words, what led to this scene?

DID YOU KNOW?

The four figure bronze sculpture, honoring the 265,000 military and civilian women who served during the Vietnam era, stands 6’8” tall and weighs one ton.
Join the Hometown Heroes Teachers Network!

By signing up, you can: connect with other teachers who teach on Vietnam; learn more about VVMF curriculum, programs, and resources; and serve as a local teacher ambassador for VVMF.

Based in Arlington, Virginia, VVMF (the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund) is the nonprofit organization authorized by the U.S. Congress in 1980 to build a national memorial dedicated to all who served with the U.S. armed forces in the Vietnam War. Incorporated on April 27, 1979 by a group of veterans led by Jan C. Scruggs, the organization sought a tangible symbol of recognition from the American people for those who served in the war.

The result was the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (commonly referred to as The Wall), which has become one of the most visited memorials in Washington, D.C. with an estimated 5.6 million annual visitors.

Since the dedication of The Wall, VVMF has pursued a mission of preserving the legacy of The Wall, promoting healing and educating about the impact of the Vietnam War. Our latest initiative is the campaign to build the Education Center at The Wall. The Education Center will show the pictures and tell the stories of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam, provide a rich educational experience on the Vietnam War, show some of the more than 400,000 items left at The Wall, and celebrate the values exhibited by America’s service members in all wars.

Links to VVMF on Social Media

Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/VietnamVeteransMemorialFund

Instagram - @vnveteransmemorial
http://instagram.com/vnveteransmemorial

Twitter - @VVMF
https://twitter.com/VVMF

Pinterest
http://www.pinterest.com/vvmf/

YouTube
http://www.youtube.com/VVMFEducationCenter

HistoryPin
http://www.historypin.com/channels/view/56433

VVMF’s “Your Stories. Your Wall” Blog
http://vvmf.wordpress.com