

TAKE A VETERAN TO SCHOOL DAY

★ ★ ★ PREP SHEET AND LESSON PLAN ★ ★ ★

Use this sheet in conjunction with materials you'll discover at veterans.com, where you'll find more program details, how-to guides and ideas for contacting veterans.

Important: Before setting a date, be sure to meet with school administrators and other officials to let them know your planning a day. They might have ideas on growing or publicizing the event in your community.



BEFORE THE DAY OF THE VISIT

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Describe **Take a Veteran to School Day** to students. Explain that a veteran will be making a special visit to your classroom, and tell them about the veteran, such as name and location of service. Ask students: What is a veteran? Do you know a veteran? What are the branches of the military? What kind of sacrifices do members of the military make? How do we show our appreciation to veterans? What are new ways to show that we value their service?

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

- **Service Research:** Break up students into groups and have them research the veteran's branch of the military. What is that branch responsible for? Who are its leaders? Have students present their findings in group reports.
- **Map It Out:** To put things in context, have students create regional maps that show both the veteran's hometown and the veteran's location(s) of service.
- **Brainstorm Questions:** Work with students to create a list of thoughtful, sensitive and well-researched questions. Start with more simple questions first. Each student should prepare three questions they would like to ask the veteran.
- **Welcome Signs:** Veterans will appreciate a warm welcome—and posters and small signs will help. Homemade bookmarks or treats commemorating the day are also good ideas.

THE DAY OF THE VISIT

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

- **Role Play:** Before the visitor arrives, reinforce good questioning and listening skills with students. Either you or a student should play the part of the veteran—now have students run through a few of their questions, remembering to listen carefully.
- **Salutations:** Prepare students to welcome the guest by practicing the veteran's name; write the visitor's name and rank on the board so that all students can clearly see them.
- **Enjoy The Day:** If you have more than one visitor for the day, be sure to leave enough time for the second veteran—even if the first veteran runs over his or her allotted time.
- **Writing Recap:** Immediately after the veteran has left the classroom, ask students to write a recap of what they remember about the visit. Was there something that surprised them? Is there something they would like to learn more about?

AFTER THE VISIT

DISCUSSION STARTERS

Ask students: What did you learn from the veteran? Did the veteran change your opinion about anything? What did you find most interesting about the visit? How can we show our appreciation to the veteran for coming to our school?

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

- **Thank You Notes:** Have each student write a thank you note to the veteran, showing appreciation for the veteran's time.
- **Plan Another Day:** With your students, brainstorm ideas for your classroom's next **Take a Veteran to School Day**. What will you keep the same? What will you add or do differently?

TAKE HOME ACTIVITY

- **On The Home Front:** Encourage your students to work with their families to get in touch with family members or friends who are veterans—and prompt them to conduct interviews with these veterans, which they can share with the class. Go to veterans.com for interviewing tips and examples of questions to ask.