

# NATIONAL D-DAY MEMORIAL

**Reflections on World War II  
from a Veteran's Perspective**

*Activity Packet*

Thank you for choosing to participate in a livestreaming program with the National D-Day Memorial, the only memorial in the United States dedicated to the valor, fidelity, and sacrifice of the Allied Forces on June 6, 1944.

One of the primary goals of the National D-Day Memorial is to educate students and the public about the role of individual service men and women during World War II, the sacrifices made by families and communities during the war, and the critical significance of D-Day for the 21st century.

This Activity Guide is designed to complement your livestreaming program and curriculum with activities and lessons that are engaging. As you go through these activities and prepare for the program, let us know if there is anything we can do to help!

Sincerely,

 NATIONAL D-DAY MEMORIAL

Education Department  
education@dday.org  
(800) 351 - DDAY



## Content:

- Glossary
- Pre-Program Activities and Lessons
- Post-Program Activities and Lessons

## Curriculum Standards Covered:

### Common Core:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2, 9-10.1-2, 11-12.1-3

### Virginia Standards of Learning:

USII.1.a, USII.1.d, USII.1.f, USII.1.g, USII.1.i, USII.7.b, USII.7.c, CE.3.c, WHII.1.a, WHII.1.b, WHII.1.d, WHII.1.f, WHII.1.g, WHII.11.c, WHII.11.e, VUS.1.a, VUS.1.e, VUS.1.f, VUS.1.g, VUS.1.i, VUS.11.a, VUS11.b, VUS11.c, VUS11.d, VUS11.f,



Classroom teachers may reproduce copies for classroom use only. The reproduction of any part of this packet for an entire school or school system is prohibited. No part of this material may be transmitted or recorded in any form without written permission of the National D-Day Memorial Foundation.

# REFLECTIONS ON WORLD WAR II: FROM A VETERAN'S PERSPECTIVE

## Glossary

### Allied Powers

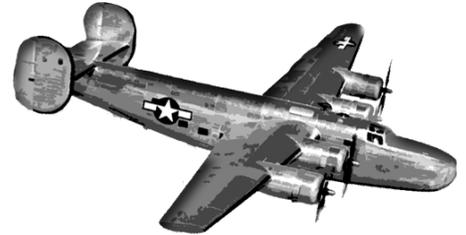
Countries that fought against the Axis Powers in World War II; most notably the United States, United Kingdom, and Russia.

### Army

The largest branch of the U.S. Armed Forces and performs land-based military operations

### Army Air Forces

The military aviation service of the United States during WWII, which fell under the Army during the war. It was not until after WWII that the Air Force was established as a separate branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.



### Axis Powers

The alliance of Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II.

### Churchill, Sir Winston

Prime Minister of Britain during World War II



### Coast Guard

A maritime branch of the U.S. Armed Forces responsible for enforcing law in international and domestic waters. During WWI and WWII, the branch operated as support for the U.S. Navy.

### Great Depression

Worldwide devastating economic downturn during the 1930's, between World War I and World War II.

### Hirohito

Emperor of Japan during World War II

### Hitler, Adolf

Nazi Party leader and German dictator from 1933 to 1945. He established the Third Reich, re-militarized Germany, enacted anti-Semitic laws and policies, and started WWII in Europe by invading Poland in September 1939.

### Home Front

A term used to describe the United States mainland during WWII.

### Isolationism

A foreign policy stance of remaining out of the affairs of other countries

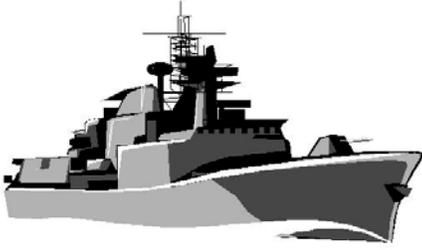


### Lend-Lease Act of 1940

An agreement made by the United States to provide money, weapons, and supplies to the Allied countries before the U.S. joined the war

## Marine Corps

The branch of the U.S. Armed Forces created to respond quickly, if not immediately, worldwide to protect national security interests by land, air, and sea.



## Merchant Marines

A military service that leads civilian ships used to transport both imports and exports during peacetime. During wartime, it operates under the U.S. Navy delivering both troops and supplies.

## Navy

The naval warfare branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.

## Nazi

Abbreviation for Hitler's National Socialist German Workers Party.

## Oral History

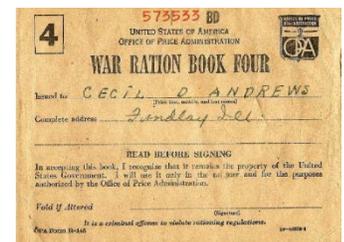
Studying and recording an interview of a person who witnessed a past event first-hand

## Propaganda

Information, typically distributed through books, posters, music and other artwork, that is designed to influence an audience to further an agenda. During WWII, the U.S. Government utilized propaganda.

## Rationing

The controlled distribution of scarce resources, goods, and services. During WWII, the United States rationed food, clothing, and more through a ration stamp system.



## Roosevelt, Franklin Delano

President of the United States from 1932 to April 1945, just a month before the end of WWII.

## Selective Training and Service Act of 1940

The first peacetime draft by the United States which required all men between the ages of 21 and 35 to register with local draft boards.

## Theater of Operations

A geographical area in which military operations take place during a war. In World War II, the two major theaters of operations were Europe and the Pacific.

# Pre-Inducation Exam for Military Service

Name of Recruit: \_\_\_\_\_

June 27, 1943

The following questions are designed to test a recruit's physical and mental abilities to determine if they are eligible for military service. Follow the directions below each test to ensure the correct results.

### Feet Test

To perform this exam, have recruit remove one shoe. Look to see if his feet have an arch or are flat – refer to the handout on the table to see what flat feet or arched feet look like. If they have flat feet, place an "X" in the right box.

*Pass*

*Fail*

### Dental Test

Check to see if the recruit is missing more than five teeth. If they are missing more than five teeth, put an "X" in the right box.

### Physical Test

Have recruit do 5 jumping jacks. If they cannot do 5 jumping jacks, put an "X" in the right box.

### Math Test

Read this problem to the recruit: If Billy has 4 apples and Jim has 6 apples, how many apples do they have together? If they answer 10, put an "X" in left box.

### Vision Test

Hold up vision card right in front of you. Have the recruit try to read the last line of letters "NPXTZFH." If they cannot read this line, put an "X" in the right box.

### Hearing Test

Have the recruit cover their left ear. You whisper the word "OMAHA." If they cannot hear you, put an "X" in the right box.

Have the recruit cover their right ear and you whisper the word "UTAH." If they cannot hear you, put an "X" in the right box.

.....  
If the recruit has passed 5 or more tests, then they pass inspection. Inform the recruit that they will be contacted in the coming weeks to report for induction into a branch of military.

Pass

Fail

# Thank You For Your Service!

**This activity allows students to reflect on what veterans have done for our country while brainstorming ways to thank them for their service.**

## Items Needed:

- ½ sheets of blue paper
- ½ sheets of red paper
- ½ sheets of green paper
- ½ sheets of white paper
- Markers and crayons
- Scissors
- Glue sticks



## **Poppy Cards Craft**

- Explain to students the importance of poppies in honoring our fallen veterans.
  - The wearing of poppies in honor of America's war dead is traditionally done on Memorial Day, not Veterans Day. The practice of wearing of poppies takes its origin from the poem "[In Flanders Fields](#)," written in 1915 by John McCrae.
- Allow students to make a card for veterans—they can make a poppy card or they can write a card to veteran thanking them for their service.
- While students are creating their cards, ask questions about why we should thank veterans and why they are thankful for their service to our country. Also, help them brainstorm ideas to honor our veterans in our everyday lives.



# EQUIPMENT OF A D-DAY SOLDIER

*Learn about what a soldier carried during the D-Day Invasion and then outfit your own soldier with the same equipment!*

## HELMET

A soldier's helmet is made of metal and painted "Olive Drab" to help him blend in with his environment. It does not protect his head from bullets, but it does protect him from shrapnel, pieces of metal or wood that fly during an explosion.



## UNIFORM

A soldier's uniform identifies him as an American. It is also "Olive Drab" to help him blend in with his environment, but made out of wool and khaki. The reason why it is made out of wool is because it is durable, helps to repel water, and will keep him warm in the winter.



## GAS MASK

During World War I, poisonous gas was used during warfare. Although it was against the law to use gas as a weapon in World War II, the Americans all had a gas mask just in case. It provided a filter for clean air in case poisonous gas was detected in the area. He would wear it on his chest for easy access.

## BACKPACK

A soldier kept most of his supplies in his backpack. Supplies included ration boxes of food, emergency drinking water in a can, bullets, grenades, and socks. Soldiers who landed on June 6, 1944 as a part of the D-Day invasion did not know when they would be resupplied so their backpacks weighed anywhere from 70-100 pounds!

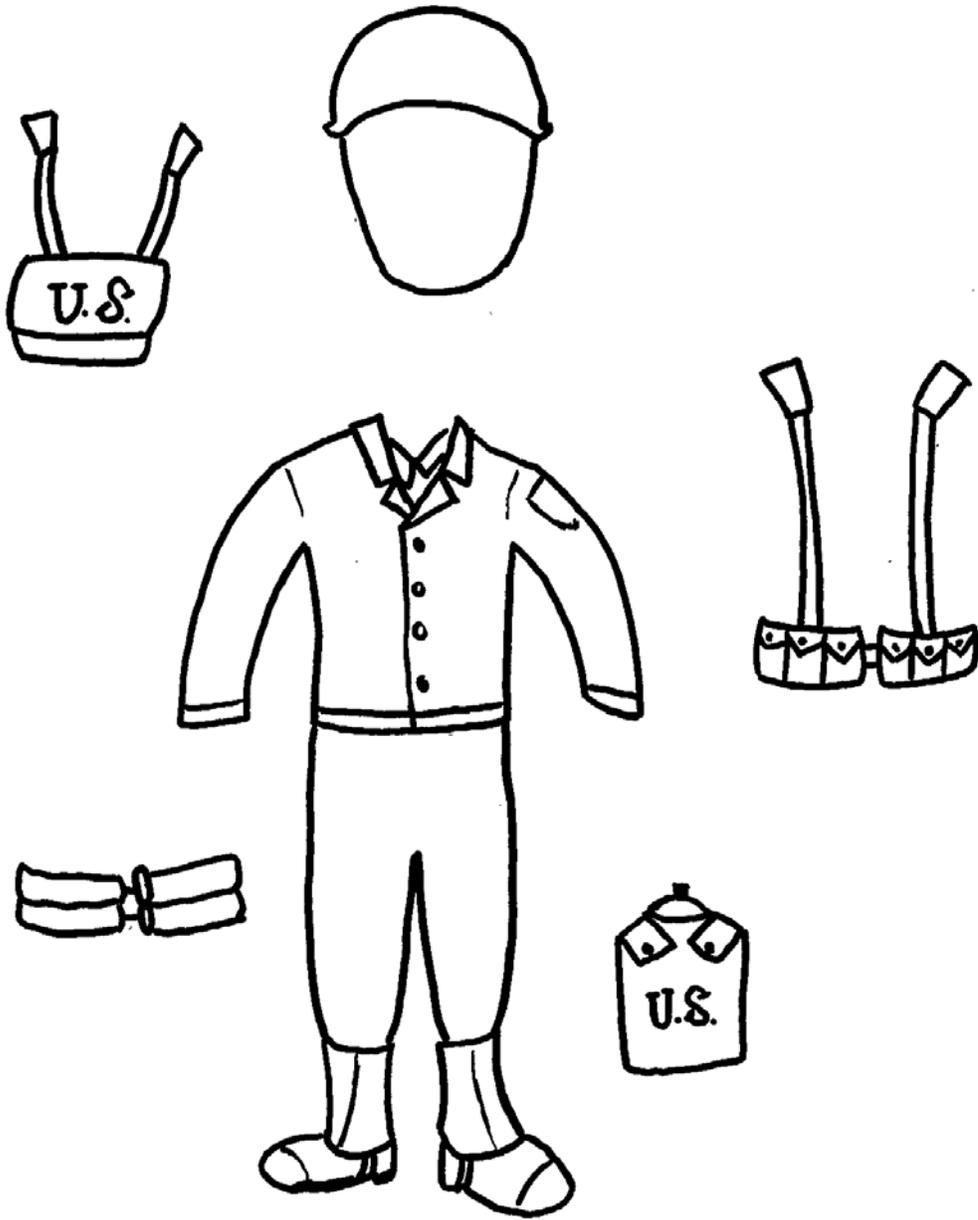
## LIFEBELT

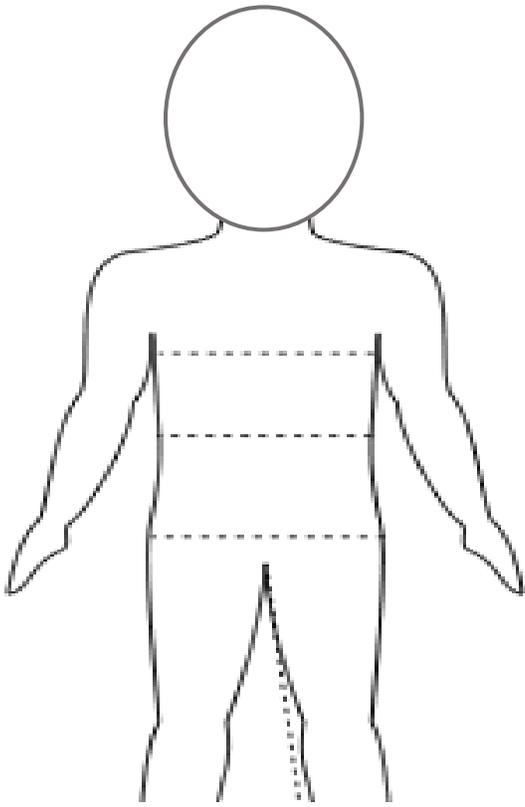
Instead of carrying a life vest that would go over his shoulders and cover his back and stomach, a D-Day soldier was given a life belt. Many soldiers assumed that it would go around their waists, but it was actually supposed to be worn under the armpits to keep one's head above water. When he wears it on his waist, he might flip over in the water because of the weight in his backpack.



## CANTEEN

A soldier carried a canteen of water that they would use for drinking water, similar to a water bottle. He would carry it on his belt.





## **Remembering the War**

### **Veterans Oral History Project**

Interviewing those who lived during a particular time period or event can make history come to life in ways textbooks cannot. The World War II generation is slowly passing on and with them, their accounts and memories of one of the most difficult times the world has ever known. Recording their stories now ensures we never forget the sacrifices and contributions they made.

#### **Grade 3-12**

**Anticipatory Set:** Ask students to think of someone in their family or in their community who lived during World War II. The person would have to be in their late sixties, seventies, or eighties. Ask them to write what they know about the person and what they would like to know concerning their experience during the war. (Introduction of this lesson should take place toward the end of the WWII unit so students can use their prior knowledge in developing questions and conducting the interview.)

#### **Objectives:**

- Students will learn how to conduct interviews in an attempt to record recollections of past experiences during a wartime situation
- Students will formulate questions about historical events, personages, etc...
- Students will develop a perspective of time and place
- Students will analyze and interpret primary sources to increase understanding of events during WWII

#### **SOLs:**

##### **History and Social Studies**

3.5, 3.6; VS.1; USI.1, USI.2; US II.1, USII.6, USII.7; CE.1; WHII.1, WHII.11; WG.1; VUS.1, VUS.10, VUS.11; GOVT.1, GOVT.17

##### **English**

3.1, 3.2, 3.7, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11; 4.1, 4.2, 4.7, 4.8; 5.2, 5.3, 5.7, 5.8, 5.9; 6.2, 6.6, 6.7; 7.1, 7.8, 7.9; 8.2, 8.7, 8.8; 9.2, 9.6, 9.7; 10.7, 10.8, 10.11; 11.7, 11.8; 12.1, 12.7

#### **Direct Teaching:**

1. Explain to student the meaning of oral history and why it is important. (information them that more than 1000 WWII veterans pass away each day. Without recording the stories of the WWII generation today, we will not have them to learn from tomorrow.)
  2. Explain each to them will find someone who lived during the war. The person may have served in the military or participated in activities on the homefront. The person may have been an adult during the war or a child with recollections from a
-

younger point of views. Students will then interview persons using a tape player or a video camera.

3. Pass out the oral history project rubric and discuss with the students. The completed project should include a title page; notes taken during the interview; a map pinpointing the location or locations of the interviewee during the war; a timeline illustrating significant events in the person's life during the forties; a photograph or drawing of the person interviewed; a labeled audio or video tape of the interview (not to exceed 60 minutes); a signed release form; a biographical data form; a written reflection including basic biographical data on the person, interesting facts or memories the respondent reveals, and personal reactions about the interview; and the rubric which should be turned back in to avoid having to make copies again.
4. Students should develop a proposal for their project for the teacher's approval. The proposal should include the name of the interviewee, a brief description of the person's activities during the war (one to two sentences – was the person in the service or on the homefront?), supplies needed, and the proposed date of the interview.
5. Provide a copy of interview questions and have students write several of their own. Discuss various tips.
6. Have students choose a partner to practice interviewing in class. (Students can use the attached practice questions).

**Check for Understanding:** Practice interviews during class. The proposal and oral presentation will serve as an additional check for understanding.

**Modeling:** Demonstrate to the students how to conduct an interview by interviewing a student in class using the suggested practice questions.

**Multi-modality:** Auditory learners benefit from the oral presentation, the lecture, and the practice interview with partners. Kinesthetic learners benefit from the development of maps and timelines. Visual learners benefit from the map and the timeline exercise.

**Independent Practice:** Students will conduct their interviews with individuals who lived during the war.

**Assessment:** The attached rubric can be used for evaluation.

---

# Oral History Rubric

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Period: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Rubric	5	_____
2. Proposal	5	_____
3. Cover Page	5	_____
4. Interview Notes	10	_____
5. Map	10	_____
6. Timeline	10	_____
7. Photo/Drawing	5	_____
8. Tape or Audio of Interview	5	_____
9. Signed Release Form	5	_____
10. Biographical Form	5	_____
11. Witten Reflection (two paragraphs)		
*Grammar	5	_____
* Content	10	_____
12. Oral Presentation		
* Communicated clearly	10	_____
* Well Organized (discussed map, timeline, photo, etc...)	10	_____
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100</b>	_____

Comments:

---

## Suggested Practice Questions with Students

Note: Have the students practice the first part of the interview by naming the date, place, and name of the person being interviewed. Afterward, they can follow through with their interview questions.

1. What is your name?
  2. Where and when were you born?
  3. Where do you live now?
  4. Do you have brothers or sisters?
  5. What are your hobbies?
  6. What is your favorite television show?
  7. Have you ever traveled to another state? If so, where? Did you like it? Why or why not?
  8. What occupation would you like to have when you get older? Why?
  9. Where would you like to live in the future?
  10. Who is your favorite singer or singers?
-

## **Interview Tips:**

- Prepare for your interview by reviewing notes on the war.
  - Have interviewee complete the biographical data sheet prior to the interview. For civilian respondents, only a portion of the form needs to be completed.
  - Try to avoid yes/no questions. Yes or no questions prevent the interviewee from going into detail with answers. Open-ended questions, however, encourage them to discuss answers in-depth which makes a more interesting interview and can lead to some fascinating stories and recollections.
  - Record an opening segment by naming the date, place, name of the person being interviewed, and the names of those attending the interview.
  - Questions written out beforehand are to provide guidance during the interview. Interviewers should remember to let the respondent tell his or her story. Not all of the questions have to be asked.
  - Do not be afraid of silence. Give the respondent time to think and answer questions completely.
  - Take notes.
  - Label the audio or videotape with the interviewee's name and date.
  - Have interviewee sign the release form.
  - Remember to send the respondent a thank you letter. Also, ask if the interviewee would like a copy of the interview to be sent to them when you finish the project.
-

The National D-Day Memorial is an official partner with the Veterans History Project and the Library of Congress. Sample questions for the students have been developed by the Veterans History Project team, working in coordination with the Oral History Association. A set of those questions are included – one for civilians and one for veterans. Students may add their own questions to the following lists.

### **Suggested questions for civilian interviews:**

#### **Segment 1: For the Record**

Record on tape the date, place of the interview, the name of the person being interviewed, and the names of the people attending the interview, including the interviewer and his or her affiliation. Ask the civilian what type of work he or she performed, and where he or she lived/worked during the war.

#### **Segment 2: Jogging Memory**

What is your name? For married women, what was your maiden name?

Age?

Where were you born and raised?

What was your family background?

What is your educational background?

What is your current occupation?

At the time of the war, were you in a relationship, married, or single?

What was your spouse/partner/fiancée's name and wartime occupation?

If married, when and where were you married?

Did you have children at any time during the war?

#### **Segment 3: Wartime Work**

Where did you live/work during the war?

What was your main wartime activity?

Were you employed outside the home? In industry?

Why did you choose that activity?

What kind of training were you given?

What kind of activities did you perform?

What was your specialty at work?

What did you like and dislike about it?

What special rules did you have to follow?

With whom did you work?

If you had children, was there child care at work?

If not, what arrangements did you make?

Were you unionized?

Were you an organizer?

How did you feel about the unions?

Did you develop friendships during training or the activity itself?

Did you have family and friends in the service or doing war work?

---

#### **Segment 4: Life During Wartime**

How did you feel about the war?

What were your family's or friends' feelings?

Did you live with family, friends, or coworkers?

In what ways did the war change your activities or habits?

Were you or other in your community treated differently because of your gender/ethnicity/race or other factors?

If so, how did you or other react?

What were some of the first changes in your life after the war started?

What different responsibilities did you have to assume?

What social activities were you involved in at work or after work with coworkers/friends?

How did you entertain yourself outside of work?

Did you or others get married during wartime? What were weddings like?

Did you worry about who would win the war?

Did you know anyone who was killed or wounded in the war?

Tell me about corresponding via letters or otherwise with friends or family in the service.

What effect did the war have on your physical and mental health or that of other you knew?

Do you think medical care changed because of the war?

What was your most memorable experience? Most humorous experience?

Have you visited any memorials or participated in any commemorations of the war?

How did your community respond to the war and civil defense or other homefront initiatives?

Tell me about shortages and rationing of food and gas. How did you cope with wartime shortages?

Did you have a victory garden or other ways to get enough food?

Talk about recycling of rubber, grease, or other commodities.

To what extent was there hoarding or black market activity in your area?

How did you feel about war news from newsreels or radio?

#### **Segment 5: Postwar Experiences**

How did you feel when the war ended?

What did you do when you heard the news?

How would you describe the ways the war changed lives?

Did you keep your job or continue other wartime activities after the war?

Is there one thought about your wartime experience you want to share with future generations?

#### **Segment 6: Closing Questions**

Is there anything else you want to add? *Thank the interviewee for sharing his/her recollections and have them sign the release form.*

---

The following questions were developed by the Veterans History Project team working in consultation with the American Folklife Center and the Oral History Association.

## **Sample Questions for Veterans**

### **Segment 1: For the Record**

Record on tape the date, place of the interview, the name of the person being interviewed, and the names of the people attending the interview, including the interviewer and his or her affiliation. Ask the veteran what branch of service he or she served, rank, and where he or she served during the war.

### **Segment 2: Jogging Memory**

Were you drafted or did you enlist?

Where were you living at the time?

Why did you join?

Why did you choose the service branch you joined?

Do you recall your first days in service?

What did they feel like?

Tell me about your boot camp/training experience(s).

Do you remember your instructors? Any of the men/women you trained with?

How did you get through it?

### **Segment 3: Experiences**

Where exactly did you go?

Do you remember arriving and what it was like?

What was your job/assignment?

Did you see combat?

Were there many casualties in your unit?

Tell me about a couple of your most memorable experiences.

Were you a prisoner of war?

If so, tell me about your experiences in captivity and when freed.

Were you awarded any medals or citations? If so, how did you get them?

Were you ever wounded in action? What were the circumstances?

### **Segment 4: Life**

How did you stay in touch with your family?

What was the food like?

Did you have plenty of supplies/

Was there something special you did for "good luck"?

How did individuals entertain themselves?

Were there entertainers?

What do you do when on leave?

Where did you travel while in the service?

---

Do you recall any particularly humorous or unusual events?  
What were some of the pranks you and others pulled?  
Do you have photographs?  
What did you think of officers or fellow soldiers?  
Did you keep a personal diary?

### **Segment 5: After Service**

Do you recall the day your service ended?  
Where were you?  
What did you do in the days and weeks afterward?  
Did you work or go back to school?  
Was it supported by the G.I. Bill?  
Did you make any close friendships while in service?  
Did you continue any of those relationships?  
Did you join a veterans' organization?

### **Segment 6: Later Years and Closing**

Did your military experience influence your thinking about war or about the military in general?  
If in a veterans' organization, what kinds of activities does your post or association have?  
Do you attend reunions?  
How did your service and experience affect your life?  
Is there anything you would like to add to this interview we have not covered?

*Thank the interviewee for sharing his or her recollections. Have the interviewee sign the release form.*

---

## Oral History Release Form

To be completed by veteran or civilian.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby give and grant \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ School my recorded memoir for use in scholarly and educational projects as the school deems appropriate. I understand my materials may be used for exhibition, presentation, or publication. I also grant my absolute and irrevocable consent for any photograph(s) provided by me or taken of me in the course of my interview to be used, published, and copied by the school and its assignees in any medium.

I agree the project may use my name, video or photographic image or likeness, statements, performance, and voice reproduction, or other sound effects without further approval on my part.

I release the school, and its assignees and designees, from any and all claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of such recordings, documents, and artifacts, including but not limited to, any claims for defamation, invasion of privacy, or right of publicity.

ACCEPTED AND AGREED

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

---