

Resources for Veterans & Their Families

Time Frame: 2-3 days (or more depending on options and level of students)

Author: Mark Heffington

Proven Practices

Service Learning

IL Social Studies Standards

SS.IS.4.9-12: Gathering and Evaluating Sources: Gather and evaluate information from multiple sources while considering the origin, credibility, point of view, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources.

SS.IS.6.9-12: Communicating Conclusions: Construct and evaluate explanations and arguments using multiple sources and relevant, verified information.

SS.IS.9.9-12: Taking Informed Action: Use deliberative processes and apply democratic strategies and procedures to address local, regional, or global concerns and take action in or out of school.

CCSS/ELA History/Social Studies Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas of information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.5

Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

Essential Question: How can we best meet the needs of veterans and their families?

Supporting Questions

- What can we do to help veterans and their families?
- What resources are available to veterans and their families on the world wide web?
- What is the purpose and intention of one resource?
- What is the targeted audience and who would benefit from the resource?
- How easy is the resource to navigate and accomplish user goals?
- What is the effectiveness of the resource? Is it credible?
- Are there any other interesting/noteworthy characteristics of the resource?

Resources Required

- Access to the internet
- Local newspaper willing to publish results on or near Veterans Day



Recommended Procedures

Start with a simple (mysterious) bell ringer: Decode the following--11-11-18. What does it mean to you? Discuss answers decoding the numbers. Gravitates to Veterans Day 2018, and what Veterans Day means to students, veterans, and families. If students are going to generate essential and supporting questions for the project, this discussion would segue into developing those questions. (During this discussion it would benefit the end-goal to identify differences in what veterans of different wars/eras might need or might find helpful, especially as relates to internet resources.) See assignment sheet below for target criteria.

OR

1. Distribute assignment sheet: Sample below

Veteran's Day Project

In observance of Veteran's Day and with an eye toward writing with the purpose of being published while taking action to address local veterans' concerns, we are going to compile a series of website reviews for Veterans and the families of Veterans.

Your assignment:

Search for and find a website that has something to do with Veterans. It could be an organization, a non-profit group, a club, or any number of related groups. Once you find a site you must claim your site on the Website Claim Form* (see me with the site address). Only one person will write a review of a particular site.

As you navigate your site you should determine:

1. Its purpose and intention
2. The targeted audience (who would benefit from the site—IL connection?)
3. Ease of navigation (is it easy to get around on the site)
4. Effectiveness (is it clear, usable, credible)
5. Any other interesting characteristics or aspects of the site

Use this information to write a short (250-500 word) review of the site. Be sure to include the site web address (homepage only) in your review so that interested parties (Veterans and their families) can check out the site.

2. Provide students time to find a site/resource online and claim it*. Each student will have an exclusive site. Keep record of sites claimed.
3. Help students navigate sites and resources available and remind them of audience (What do veterans and their families want to know? What are they interested in?).
4. Write reviews as needed to be copy ready for the newspaper and turn in.
5. Evaluate student reviews and provide feedback as a copy editor might do.*



Possible Service Learning Extensions

Service learning is the end goal of this lesson. Students will provide a service to veterans and their families by finding and reviewing websites that they may find beneficial. Students' reviews will direct veterans and families to resources that they may not realize exist and will also help veterans go directly to resources that will benefit them most.

Differentiation

- Two options on presenting the lesson lets teacher customize plan to individual students or classes.
- Group activity to devise questions and individual student discussions with instructor during research and review writing.

Possible Assessments

- Formative Assessments include:
 1. Discussion of websites when students claim site on Website Claim Form, as well as other discussions on focus and audience with individual students or groups;
 2. Copy-editing and feedback on rough draft version of website review.
- Summative Assessment is the 250-500 word review of the online resource. Students will be graded on appropriateness of website, relevant information summarized, clarity of review, elements of assignment included, and grammar/usage/mechanics or writing.
- Reflection: After reviews come out in the newspaper students should read all reviews, including their own, and reflect on how their work has helped veterans and their families. They should include what they've learned and how they feel about the project.

Other Considerations

- Students may peer workshop and discuss revisions to the website review before submitting. Likewise, students should make necessary corrections and revisions after teacher evaluation before preparing for submission to the newspaper.
- Teacher may find it beneficial to use sample reviews and/or a website review template with appropriate students.
- Students could present websites and their findings to the rest of the class in a brief presentation.
- If class is single semester, but takes place in both Fall and Spring semesters, the Fall semester could recognize Veterans Day (focus on veterans) and the Spring semester could recognize Memorial Day (focus on families).
- Evaluation Rubric could include the 5 criteria below:
 1. Its purpose and intention
 2. The targeted audience (who would benefit from the site—IL connection?)
 3. Ease of navigation (is it easy to get around on the site)
 4. Effectiveness (is it clear, usable, credible)
 5. Any other interesting characteristics or aspects of the site (+ grammar, mechanics, etc.)