

# Memorial Day

## The Last Monday in May

Memorial Day honors those who died while serving in the military. It was started after the Civil War. At first, it was called Decoration Day. People decorated graves with flowers. They said prayers to honor fallen soldiers. People celebrate this holiday in different ways. They go to cemeteries or memorials. Some communities have parades. People from the Army or Navy might march in a parade. There is a National Moment of Remembrance. This is a moment of silence to honor those who sacrificed their lives for our freedom.



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## Summary of Activities

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### Reading: Literature

*Fields of Poppies*—poem and a drawing activity

### Reading: Informational Text

*Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*—nonfiction passage with comprehension questions

### Writing

*Honoring Our Heroes*—activity in which students respond to a writing prompt

### Speaking & Listening

*Taps*—activity in which students listen to a rendition of “Taps” and observe a moment of remembrance

**Vocabulary:** admire, cemetery, cherish, engraved, foe, funeral, Korea(n), military, remembrance, sacrifice(s), tomb, valor, victory, Vietnam



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Fields of Poppies

**Directions:** Read the passage. Then listen as your teacher reads the poems aloud. Discuss with a partner the meaning of any words that are new to you. Work together with one or more classmates to draw pictures to illustrate the stanzas in the poem.

On Memorial Day, some people wear red poppies. Often the flowers are not real. They are made out of silk. The red poppy stands for the sacrifices of war. A lady named Moina Michael wrote a poem. Her poem honors people who died fighting for freedom.

We cherish too, the Poppy red  
That grows on fields where valor led,  
It seems to signal to the skies  
That blood of heroes never dies.

—*Moina Michael, 1915*

Michael got the idea for her poem from another poem.

### In Flanders Fields

In Flanders Fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place, and in the sky,  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.  
We are the dead; short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders Fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe!  
To you from falling hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high!  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders Fields.

—*John McCrae*



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

**Directions:** Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Washington, D.C. has a special cemetery. Arlington National Cemetery is for soldiers. On a hill, there is a white marble tomb. An unknown soldier is buried in the tomb. He fought in World War I. Three figures are engraved in the marble. They stand for peace, victory, and valor. We honor those who fought in wars for their courage. The stone also has words etched on it. This is what it says:

*Here rests in honored glory an American soldier known but to God.*

Other markers have been added to the memorial site. The markers are flat slabs made of white marble. They honor unknown soldiers from other wars. The soldiers fought in World Wars I and II, Korea, and Vietnam.

A guard watches the tomb every day of the year. There is a guard on duty day and night. They stand guard in all kinds of weather. The guard changes once an hour in the winter. In the summer, the guard changes every half hour. The guard marches 21 steps. He waits 21 seconds. Then he turns and waits another 21 seconds. The guard marches 21 steps again in front of the tomb. The highest military honor is a 21-gun salute. Volunteers serve as guards. They go through training. Part of their training is to learn the history of the cemetery. The guards think it is an honor to remember soldiers who served our country.

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1. Underline a sentence that helps you understand the meaning of the word *valor*.
  2. Which war is not remembered at this particular memorial?
    - a. Civil War
    - b. World War I
    - c. Korean War
  3. According to the passage, what is one thing the guards learn?
    - a. a 22-gun salute
    - b. how many steps they must run up
    - c. the history of the cemetery
  4. Why do you think these soldiers are "unknown"?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  5. On the back of the page, explain why it is important to honor and remember soldiers who fought for our freedom.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Honoring Our Heroes

There are many ways to celebrate Memorial Day. People do different things to honor and remember soldiers who served our country. To honor someone means to respect and admire him or her.

You can do these things to remember those who fought for freedom:

- Display a flag. It is proper to display the flag only halfway up the pole until noon.
- Visit a cemetery. Some people decorate the grave of someone they knew who fought in a war.
- Take part in the National Moment of Remembrance.
- Watch a parade.
- Get together with family members.
- Listen to memorial speeches.

Which way do you think is the best way to remember soldiers who fought in wars? Your idea might be from this list, or you may have another idea. Write about why this is a good way to honor heroes of our country.

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## Taps

On Memorial Day, we honor people who fought for freedom. We remember those who sacrificed their lives. Our country has a National Moment of Remembrance. In the afternoon, everyone stops what they are doing for a moment of silence. During this time, we remember those who helped our country.

Often at a soldier's funeral, a bugle plays the song "Taps." This song is also played at the end of the day. Some people think the song sounds sad. Other people think the notes are full of rest and peace. The song is an echo of the day that has just ended. At a memorial service, the notes linger, reminding people of a hero's life.

The Army says there are no set words for the song. Someone once wrote some words. You may have heard these words before.

**Directions:** Read the words to yourself as you listen to a recording of the song. Draw a picture as you listen. Explain to a classmate how your picture illustrates the song and its message. Observe a moment of silence to remember those who have fought for freedom for our country.



Fading light dims the sight,  
and a star gems the sky, gleaming bright.  
From afar drawing nigh. Falls the night.  
Day is done, gone the sun.  
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky.  
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.  
Then good night, peaceful night.  
Til the light of the dawn shineth bright;  
God is near, do not fear. Friend, good night.



# Answer Key (cont.)

## The Real Cinco de Mayo (page 49)

*Main idea:* history of Cinco de Mayo

*Details:* France's role, victory in battle at Puebla, U.S. support during the war

## A Colorful Festival (page 51)

amarillo (yellow)

anaranjado (orange)

azul (blue)

blanco (white)

marrón (brown)

negro (black)

rojo (red)

verde (green)

## Kate's Tea Party (pages 53-54)

1. scones, biscuits, tea, jam, cookies
2. biscuits, tea, jam, cookies
3. Answers will vary.

## Mother's Day Around the World (page 55)

Answers will vary; possible answers: give flowers, bake a cake, help with chores, have a special meal, give her a card, give a gift, make something homemade, raise money for a good cause

## Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (page 60)

1. We honor those who fought in wars for their courage.
2. a
3. c
4. Answers will vary; possible answers: Some soldiers could not be identified; some were missing in action.
5. Answers will vary.

## Fishing with Grandpa (pages 64-65)

*Characters:* Aiden, Tristan, Grandpa, Grandma, Mom

*Setting:* trout farm

*Main Idea:* fishing with Grandpa

*Problem:* The boys caught only two fish and that wouldn't be enough for dinner.

*Solution:* Grandma said they could get some more fish at the store if necessary; they had other things to have with the fish for dinner.

## Like Father Like Son (page 66)

1. c
2. c
3. opinion; answers will vary
4. Answers will vary.

## Khurram's Celebration (page 70)

1. He would celebrate Eid al-Fitr with his family and neighbors; Khurram put on his new shirt and pants; He didn't want to miss the morning snack to mark the end of the month of fasting before the family went to prayer service; "We have dates every year at the start of Eid al-Fitr, and every year you say they're your favorite"; He had saved money from his allowance; The money given today would be used to buy food for the poor; She made the best date-filled pastry called *klaicha*; It was fun to share the meal with family and friends; They would play and celebrate all day!
2. Drawings will vary.

## A Month of Fasting (page 71)

1. Muslims fast during the daylight hours; This means they do not eat or drink anything during this time; The Arabic word for fasting is *sawm*; it means to avoid something.
2. a
3. b

## Freedom (page 74)

1. Answers will vary; possible answers: hoofbeats, rifle, red, white, stars, blue, snow, boots, soldiers, smile, salute.
2. Drawings will vary.
3. Drawings will vary.

## Fourth of July Through the Years (page 75)

*Early Years:* ceremonies, military parades, bells, bonfires, games, sports, public readings, concerts, cannons and muskets fired, candles

*Over Time:* parades, concerts, fireworks, baseball games, picnics, barbecues, watermelon, hot dogs

*Today:* flags, concerts, parades, barbecues, picnics, decorated military ships, national anthem, fireworks

## Labor Day at the Beach (pages 79-80)

1. c
2. b
3. Answers will vary.

## An Explorer's Journal (pages 88-89)

Students should show main events in proper sequence.