

**Lesson Plan 4:
Medal of Honor Recipients**

A Social Studies Lesson Plan developed for
Upper Elementary- Level Students (grades 4-6)

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Education Committee

Lesson Title: Medal of Honor Recipients

Grade Level: 4-6

Curriculum Area: Social Studies / Language Arts

Estimated Time: 90 minutes

Date:

Standards Connection:

Alabama Course of Study Social Studies Standards:

[SS 4.15] Identify major world events that influenced Alabama since 1950, including the Korean Conflict, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, and the War on Terrorism.

Alabama Course of Study English Language Arts Standards:

[RL.4.5] Explain major differences among poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.

[W.4.6] With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Analyze a photograph and a poem to describe veterans and how we remember and honor them.
- Identify and define the Medal of Honor.
- Write a biographical poem about a soldier from Alabama who received the Medal of Honor.

Evaluation of Learning Objectives:

Students will:

- Write a paragraph and share reflections on veterans and how we remember and honor them using an Alabama Veterans Memorial Park (AVMP) picture and a poem.

- Write a biographical poem about select Alabama soldiers who are memorialized in the Alabama Veterans Memorial Park, following a provided format and soldiers' background.
- Define and explain the Medal of Honor with 85% accuracy on the Exit Ticket.

Engagement:

The teacher will read or project on the screen the poems "The Forgotten Soldier" by Lisa Jean Pigliavent and "Name on the Wall" by Jimmy Fortune and John Rimel (http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/3aa6e6_0da7ddb8691847cfb2b795a62ddba79d.pdf). The poems may need to be read twice. Follow the reading with a class discussion of the students' impressions/interpretations of the poems.

Next the teacher will show the students a photo of students pointing at names on a wall (<http://www.alabamaveterans.org/hall-of-honor?lightbox=image1rf6>); ask what the students might be doing in this. After the students have discussed this picture and how it might relate to the poems that were just read, the teacher will need to give the students some information about the Alabama Veterans Memorial Park. This is a park in Birmingham near Liberty Parkway off I-459 that honors veterans. The picture was taken in the Hall of Honor at the Park. Written on the walls in the Hall of Honor are over 11,000 names of Alabama men and women who have been killed in wars since 1900.

The teacher will inform students that it is important to take time to remember the people who served our country and were so brave. The teacher will then ask the students to think about the families who have lost loved ones during our nation's wars and battles. Ask, "Do any of you have a family member who fought in a war?" "Do you know of anyone who has had a family member or friend to die in a war?"

After the discussion, the teacher will ask the students to write a 5-7 sentence paragraph describing their response to the poem and photo. The teacher will ask students to turn and talk to a partner about what they wrote in their paragraph.

Learning Design:

I. Teaching Script:

Language Arts

1. The teacher will read the objectives for this lesson:
 - a. To learn about a biographical poem and to create a poem
 - b. To learn about the Congressional Medal of Honor and research some Alabama soldiers who received this honor.
2. The teacher will then list the following characteristics of a biographical poem.
 - a. Bio poems are written about a person;
 - b. The poems generally do not rhyme; and
 - c. The poem uses adjectives to describe the person's life.

- d. There is no set length to the poem – some are very short and others are very long.
3. The teacher will then display two examples of a biographical poem ([Biographical Poem Examples](#)). The teacher or a student will read the poem and highlight some characteristics of the poem. The teacher can ask leading questions: “What are the names of the historical people that were written about in this poem?” “Where is the name written in the poem?” “What are the adjectives that describe each person?” The teacher will then display the [Formats for a Biographical Poem](#) and distribute a copy to each student. Discuss the meanings of each line. Remember that not all lines have to be used since there is no set length. For practice, the class with teacher guidance can do a poem together of a TV character or person they share in common or each student could write a poem about themselves. Explain that later in this lesson they will use one of these formats to write a poem about an Alabamian who has received the Medal of Honor.

The next 7 entries are instructions for writing a simile. The teacher can use this instruction if she/he wants the students to include a simile in their Medal of Honor poem.

1. The teacher will give an example of a simile. (Ex: That bird can fly as high as a comet)
The teacher will then ask the students if a bird could realistically fly as high as a comet.
2. Allow the students to explain their answers.
3. The teacher will then explain that the phrase “as high as a comet” is called a simile. (the definition of a simile: a simile is a figure of speech that compares two very different things, often in a phrase introduced by *like* or *as*). Give the examples below of making a simile into a complete sentence:
 - **as cute as a button** - That baby is as cute as a button. (comparing baby and cute as a button.)
 - **as boring as watching paint dry** - That TV show is as boring as watching paint dry.
 - **like a fish** - My brother can swim like a fish.

[Printable copy of Phrases for Similes](#) containing phrases below

4. Ask students to get with a partner and play with several of these phrases, making them into similes and complete sentences like the example above:

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • sweet as marshmallows | • slimy as a slug |
| • dark as midnight | • fragrant as flowers |
| • heavy as an anvil | • helpless as a newborn baby |
| • gentle as a lamb | • slithered like a snake |
| • wrinkled as a used tissue | • reliable as clockwork |
| • rises like the sun | • tall as a tree |
| • circled like vulture | • dropped like a rock |
| • fluttered like a butterfly | • white as snow |
| • small as a mouse | • old as dirt |
| • sleep like a baby | • good as gold |
| • fits like a glove | • light as a feather |

Phrases Courtesy of:



<http://wordlist.yourdictionary.com/yourdictionary/list-of-similes/#5qptXt1Mct341pec.99>

5. Allow the students to read some of their sentences to the class.
6. With another partner the students can create similes of their own.
7. The teacher will then encourage the students to share their completed similes with the class.

Social Studies

1. Display the Medal of Honor page from the Alabama Veterans Memorial Park web site (<http://www.alabamaveterans.org/medal-of-honor>). Point out the pictures of the three images of medals for the Congressional Medal of Honor.
2. The teacher will ask the students if anyone could identify these particular medals - (answers will vary; there is a particular video game with the same title as the Medal of Honor).
3. Point out the Medal of Honor definition. During this instructional section, the students will be required to notate during instruction.
4. Students will copy the definition of the Congressional Medal of Honor within their social studies notebook. (Medal of Honor definition: The **Medal of Honor** is the highest award for valor (definition of valor: *great courage in the face of danger, especially in battle*) in action against an enemy force which can be bestowed (definition of bestowed: *to give something as a gift or honor*) upon an individual serving in the Armed Services of the United States. It is generally presented to its recipient (definition of recipient: *a person who is awarded something*) by the President of the United States of America in the name of Congress.)
5. The teacher will allow to students to research and take notes on three Alabama Medal of Honor recipients on the AVMP website (<http://www.alabamaveterans.org/medal-of-honor>).

II. Opportunity for Practice:

The students can work by themselves to construct a poem with this information or with a partner. They can discuss what they found about the Medal recipients and use this information to construct a biographical poem together.

The teacher will refer to the "Format for Biographical Poems" that they received earlier in this lesson ([Biographical Poem Examples](#)). If possible, the students will type the poems and print them when finished.

III. Assessment:

The students will be formatively assessed throughout the lesson by teacher observation of group discussion contributions. The teacher will assess the biographical poems. The teacher will check students' [Exit Tickets on the Medal of Honor](#).

IV. Closure:

The teacher will place students in small groups and ask them to share their poems with the group. The teacher will ask students to complete the [Exit Ticket on the Medal of Honor](#).

Plans for Individual Learners and Differentiation Strategies:

ELL Students: ELLs can write or verbalize a response to the photograph and poem. The teacher can also modify the bio poem expectations depending on the student's understanding level and vocabulary depth. ELLs can spend more time understanding the poem "The Forgotten Soldier" and writing and/or illustrating a response to it as well.

Students with IEP: Expectations for the poem and photograph responses can be adjusted (verbal instead of written, list instead of paragraph, etc.). Bio poem format can be changed. Students can also write a bio poem about a soldier they know instead of research if reading non-leveled online material is too challenging.

Extensions: Students can find a photograph to include with their bio poem. Students can research more about the Medal of Honor. Students can read more poetry about veterans.

Reflection: To be completed after assessment