



MEMORIAL DAY

Objectives:

- Identify the different names used throughout history.
- Know when the first holiday was set and when the name changed.
- Display knowledge on the meaning of Memorial Day.

Preparation:

View stories of those killed in action on our tribute wall on carrytheload.org/tributes.

Invite a guest speaker to talk about the true meaning of Memorial Day. If you do not have a speaker who can come to the school, please feel free to reach out to Carry The Load, one of our ambassadors will try to assist. Feel free to review our ambassadors at carrytheload.org/ambassadors.

Activity:

As a group or individually, read the PDF provided about Memorial Day

Everyone should write down the names that are associated with this holiday and then write down the date when each holiday was created and who put forth the names and changes. Why do they think these people would give up their lives for their country?

Have a discussion about Clint Bruce video.

"Those who have long enjoyed such privileges as we enjoy forget in time that men have died to win them."
– Franklin D. Roosevelt

Additional Activities:

- Attend a Carry The Load event during Memorial May - find them at carrytheload.org/events
- Hold a moment of remembrance for those who gave their lives for our freedom.
- Hold a walk, write the names of those you are carrying and remember the bib.

Definitions:

Service: the action of helping or doing work for someone.

Sacrifice: give up (something important or valued) for the sake of others' consideration

Patriotism: the quality of being patriotic; devoting to and vigorous support for one's community and country.



MEMORIAL DAY HISTORY

Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. It was originally known as Decoration Day; its origins date back to the years that followed the Civil War and officially became a federal holiday in 1971. Many Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries or memorials, holding family gatherings, and participating in parades.

Early Observances of Memorial Day

The Civil War ended in the late spring of 1865 and claimed more American lives than any other war at 618,222. To put it into perspective, it is only slightly lower than every other war fought by the U.S.A combined at 618,245. This required the country to establish its first national cemeteries.

By the late 1860s, cities across America began holding springtime tributes to fallen soldiers, displaying flowers and other ornaments at their grave sites, and reciting prayers.

Each year on Memorial Day, a national moment of remembrance takes place at 3:00 p.m. local time. While lost in the history of where the traditions originated, numerous different communities may have started memorial gatherings at the same time. Some records show that one of the earliest Memorial Day commemorations was put together by a group of freed slaves in Charleston, South Carolina within a month after the Confederacy surrendered. However, in 1966, the federal government declared Waterloo, New York the official birthplace of Memorial Day. The first celebration was on May 5, 1866, and was chosen because it hosted an annual, community-wide event, during which businesses closed and residents decorated the graves of soldiers with flowers and flags.

History of Memorial Day

Memorial Day, as Decoration Day gradually came to be known, originally honored only those lost while fighting in the Civil War. But during World War I, the United States found itself embroiled in another major conflict, and the holiday evolved to commemorate American military personnel who died in all wars, including World War II, The Vietnam War, The Korean War, and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For just over a century, Memorial Day continued to be observed on May 30, the date Logan had selected for the first Decoration Day. But in 1968 Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which established Decoration Day as the last Monday in May in order to create a three-day weekend for federal employees; the change went into effect in 1971. The same law also declared Memorial Day a federal holiday.

Memorial Day Traditions

Cities and towns across the United States host Memorial Day parades each year, often incorporating military personnel and members of veterans' organizations. This time is designed to reflect on what brave men and women have done for their country; Many of whom, gave up their own lives in conflicts that preserved the rights we hold today.

Other lessons and resources are located at carrytheload.org/educate.