



# VETERAN'S DAY

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## **Objectives:**

- What is Veterans Day?
- Understand the difference between Veterans Day and Memorial Day.
- Why is it important to honor those who have served?

## **Activity:**

Discuss either in a group or individually the attached information about Veterans Day. Hold a discussion on the difference between Veterans Day and Memorial Day. Discuss why it is important to honor those who have served our country.

## **Additional Activities:**

- Hold a Veterans Day celebration at your school or in your community.
- Invite a Veteran to come and speak about why they chose to serve.
- As a group, write thank you notes or cards to Veterans and deliver to local veterans home or hospitals



# VETERAN'S DAY HISTORY

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The purpose of Veterans Day is the celebration and honoring of America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good. To honor all living or deceased people who are no longer serving in the military, regardless of rank or branch. Through their sacrifice we are able to enjoy the freedoms we enjoy now.

Veterans Day was not always called by this name. It was once called Armistice Day, which commemorated the end of World War I.

Even though World War I officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, the fighting actually ended seven months before. This was when the Allies and Germany set into effect the armistice on the eleventh hour, on the eleventh day, of the eleventh month. That is why Nov. 11, 1918, was largely considered the end of WW1 and dubbed Armistice Day. In 1926, Congress officially recognized it as the end of the war, and in 1938, it became an official holiday, primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I.

But then World War II and the Korean War happened, so on June 1, 1954, at the urging of veterans service organizations, Congress amended the commemoration yet again by changing the word “armistice” to “veterans” so the day would honor American veterans of all wars. For a while, Veterans Day’s date was also changed, confusing everyone.

Congress signed the Uniform Holiday Bill in 1968 to ensure that a few federal holidays, Veterans Day included would be celebrated on a Monday. Officials hoped it would spur travel and other family activities over a long weekend, which would stimulate the economy. The bill originally set Veterans Day commemorations for the fourth Monday of every October.

On Oct. 25, 1971, the first Veterans Day under this new bill was held. We’re not sure why it took three years to implement, but not surprisingly, there was a lot of confusion about the change, and many states were unhappy, choosing to continue to recognize the day as they previously had — in November.

Within a few years, it became clear that most U.S. citizens wanted to celebrate Veterans Day on Nov. 11, since it was a matter of historic and patriotic significance. So, on Sept. 20, 1975, President Gerald Ford signed another law (Public Law 94-97), which returned the annual observance to its original date starting in 1978.