

Patriotism-An American Tradition

Veterans Day TEMPLATE

Event Time: _____ **School:** _____

Duration of Presentation: _____

Thank you for volunteering to share your story and help educate our “Next Generation” of young student leaders about American Patriotism and Service. We hope this template will help you as you prepare your presentation.

It outlines a few administrative aspects to keep in mind as security at all schools has heightened since 9-11. The template will also touch on what we call the “**Educational Value to the Student**” of the Patriotism-An American Tradition program, as well as a “**Call to Action.**” We appreciate you weaving some of these “**Value-Ad**” aspects into your presentation as it will help to educate your audience about why we as a country celebrate our Veterans on Veterans Day. It will also help “Connect-the-Dots” on how each child can -- like you -- help make our nation stronger through the promotion of **selfless acts of service**. As an example:

- **What is your calling?**

-- Is it volunteering to help deliver meals to the old and infirm?

-- Is it mowing the lawn of someone who is disabled down the street?

**-- Whether you feel a specific calling today or not --
please remember to do your part -- to selflessly serve
others.**

ADMIN:

1) Arrival: Please arrive at the school a half hour prior to the event to check in at the front office. A PAAT Ambassador will notify the office and the event's POC of the Veteran's arrival. This person will guide the Veteran throughout his/her time at the school.

2) 60-second introduction: Veterans should provide their POC with a brief 60-second introduction (2 paragraphs), which can be used to introduce the Veteran to the audience.

3) A/V: If you will be needing any special Audio-Visual equipment (i.e., computer with PowerPoint, Projector, Overhead Projector, etc.), please be sure to contact your POC for the event and coordinate with them at least two days prior for the support.

EDUCATIONAL VALUE TO THE STUDENT:

INTRODUCTION OF VETERAN: *(Typically a school official/JROTC Cadet)*

VETERAN SPEAKER:

As I begin today, I'd like to ask everyone here to think about what Veterans Day means to them* ... (Pause for about 3-5 seconds....) ***Note: if the school is circulating a**

microphone for a Question & Answer session with you (at the end of your presentation), feel free to illicit responses from the audience and thank each person for their comments.

Before I share some personal stories about what Veterans Day means to me, I'd like to ask all of you who have ever had one of your family member's serve in the Military, to please stand and be recognized.*

*** Note: After leading the applause, begin with a history of Veterans Day (See Below):**

1) History of Veterans Day: (Please try to weave at least three of the following historical points into your presentation)

- When I was about your age, I learned we celebrate Veterans Day on the anniversary of the armistice that ended World War I, the armistice that began on the **11th hour** of the **11th day** of the **11th month**.

-- I also learned that every year after, the American people began celebrating what they then called "**Armistice Day.**" The resolution of the Congress which first proclaimed Armistice Day, described November 11, 1918, as the end of "**the most destructive, sanguinary and far-reaching war in the history of human annals.**" That resolution expressed the hope that the First World War would be, in truth, the war to end all wars. It suggested that those men who had died had therefore not given their lives in vain.

-- By 1938, Nov. 11th became a **national holiday** to pay tribute to **all** American veterans--living or dead--but **especially**

to give thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.

-- I also learned that in 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11th as “**Veterans Day**” and called upon Americans everywhere to rededicate themselves to the cause of peace.

- As the years past and I joined the military, the importance of celebrating this day with my fellow Veterans and our young people began to take on new meaning.

-- The timing of this holiday is quite deliberate in terms of historical fact but somehow it always seems quite fitting to me that this day comes **deep in autumn** when the leaves are changing colors and the days seem to invite contemplation. In fact, it seems the older I become, the more I want to **know about the sacrifices** of those who have served and share their stories with our **nation’s future – all of YOU!**

-- For example, I’ve learned that during World War I, **4,734,991** troops – about the population of S.C. today -- served during what was then called the “**Great War.**”

-- I’ve also learned that **53,402** of them never returned home from the battlefields of Europe to their families. To put that in perspective, if you’ve ever attended a football game at Carolina or Clemson, it’s the equivalent of **2/3rds** of the fans in attendance **not** coming home to their families.

-- I also learned that **204,002** of these troops were wounded in combat – which is approximately **30,000** more than the

number of fans we can fit into Williams-Brice and Memorial Stadiums (aka: Death Valley) combined!

2) WORLD WAR I VETERAN (SELFLESS SERVICE EXAMPLE):

(Speakers may feel free to use another S.C. Veteran example from World War I, keeping in mind our emphasis on South Carolina history).

- One of those brave men wounded was James Cordie Dozier, whose achievement during “**the war to end all wars,**” was selected by the U.S. government as one of the **12 most remarkable** exploits during World War I.

-- Born on Feb. 17, 1885, at **Galivants Ferry** near Myrtle Beach, Dozier was a descendant in a long line of **Palmetto State** Citizen-Soldiers who had served from the American Revolution, through the Spanish American War.

-- Dozier began his military career with the S.C. National Guard’s Company H, **118th Infantry Regiment** on Sept. 3, 1904. Over the years, he rose through the enlisted ranks to become a **First Sergeant** and by the time he boarded a ship for France in **May 1918**, he had risen to the rank of **First Lieutenant**.

-- Between **May and September 1918**, the 118th, trained and moved through the allied lines until it had the distinction of becoming the **FIRST American force** to face Germany’s “**impregnable**” Hindenburg Line on Sept. 27. Over the next month, the regiment advanced through 18,000 yards of enemy territory, **15,000 yards** of which was made while the regiment was in the front line **spearheading** numerous attacks.

-- It was at Montbrehain – helping to spearhead one of these attacks -- on **Oct. 8**, when Dozier became **ONE** of **SIX** S.C. National Guardsmen to receive the **Medal of Honor**. On Oct. 8, at five in the morning, G Company was ordered “**OVER –THE-TOP.**”

-- The unit advanced approximately one mile before its commander was wounded and **Dozier**, who had **already been shot** in the shoulder by a sniper, assumed command. Soon after, the Germans sent out **half a dozen machine gun crews** in advance of their line. According to Dozier, one was particularly well advanced.

“We could see men from my company and men of the other companies on our right and left falling from machine gun fire,” said Dozier.

-- Locating the source of trouble, Dozier signaled his company to **lie down** and seek as much concealment as possible. He then ordered a machine gun crew to fire just over the heads of the German gunners so they couldn’t look over the top of the pit in which they were concealed.

-- He and Pvt. Callie Smith advanced on the left flank of the machine gunners until they were within 20 yards of the enemy. Around 8:30 a.m. he signaled his machine gun crew to quit firing and **dashed** upon the Germans in the hole.

“One of the machine gunners was about to get me with his revolver when Callie Smith downed him,” said Dozier.

-- The two knocked out the **entire** squad of seven machine gunners in this advanced position. Dozier continued leading his men for the **next two and a half hours** until **all** the machine gun nests had been silenced and G Company’s objective had been taken.

-- He and the unit also captured approximately **470** prisoners. At this point, the “Great War” was over for Dozier. He spent the next **three months** in hospitals recuperating from his wound.



-- On **Jan. 21, 1919**, General John J. “Blackjack” Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force, pinned the **Medal of Honor** to Dozier’s chest. If you visit the **S.C. Military Museum**,

located across the street from Williams-Brice Stadium, you can see Dozier’s Medal of Honor and learn about other great S.C. Veterans from: **1670** (when our State was founded), to **today**.

3) PERSONAL STORY OF SELFLESS SERVICE BY VETERAN SPEAKER:

(The Veteran Speaker will share their personal story of selfless service with the



students)

CALL TO ACTION:

(Please weave at least one of the following into your presentation).

Some examples follow:

- Means of paying tribute vary.
 - Pausing for a few moments of personal silence is available to everyone.
 - When I see a military member in uniform, I try to always make it a point to walk up to them and shake their hand.
 - Over the years, I've noticed a lot more of our Veterans wearing baseball caps and hats signifying the war they served in or the Veterans organization they belong to. They always appreciate it when I come up to them and simply say "Thank you for serving."

- All across America, young people in JROTC programs (like this one here at _____), join Veterans, Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, civic groups and other concerned citizens to place flags at gravesites or memorials around the country.

- Other young people such as our Veterans Administration Student Volunteers here at the VA Hospital in _____ serve as liaisons with their communities and provide a valuable element of caring for our Veterans. It is an excellent opportunity for those interested in: exploring health care career options; gaining experience in a health care environment; learning new skills; and making new friends. In fact, the James H. Parke Memorial Youth Scholarship Award provides scholarship

opportunities to many of these students (across the country) who volunteer at VA medical centers.

- There are others such as the students and staff members at Richland Northeast High School in Columbia, who have teamed up with the S.C. National Guard, Veterans groups and S.C. ETV to interview over 350 veterans from the Greatest Generation to today's "Next Greatest Generation" of heroes. Thanks to their efforts, these Veterans stories have been documented and preserved so future generations of Americans can learn about these selfless acts of service.

CONNECT-THE DOTS:

(Please ask a question near the end of your presentation to invoke thought concerning the possible actions students can take to make a difference).

I'd like to leave you with a parting question(s): Some examples follow:

- Given what you may have learned today, has your knowledge and understanding of what Veterans Day means -- changed?
- Given what you may have learned today, how will you seek to honor the Veterans in your community?
- Given the sacrifice of those we honor today, how will you help to make this community, our state and nation, a safer, freer, stronger and better place for your children and grandchildren to raise their families in?
- **What is your calling?**

-- Is it volunteering to help deliver meals to the old and infirm?

-- Is it mowing the lawn of someone who is disabled down the street?

-- Is it helping the families of local Law Enforcement, Firefighters, EMS and our Military recover after they have been injured in the line of duty or made the ultimate sacrifice to protect you and me?

CONCLUSION:

Whether you feel a specific calling today or not -- please remember to do your part -- to selflessly serve others. (*The speaker will wrap up his/her conversation with the students with something poignant to them [perhaps a quote] concerning the importance of remembering our Veterans*).

EXAMPLES OF FAMOUS VETERANS DAY QUOTES:

“We celebrate this Veterans Day for a very few minutes, a few seconds of silence and then this country's life goes on. But I think it most appropriate that we recall on this occasion, and on every other moment when we are faced with great responsibilities, the contribution and the sacrifice which so many men and their families have made in order to permit this country to now occupy its present position of responsibility and freedom, and in order to permit us to gather here together.”

President John F. Kennedy

“It is, in a way, an odd thing to honor those who died in defense

of our country, in defense of us, in wars far away. The imagination plays a trick. We see these soldiers in our mind as old and wise. We see them as something like the Founding Fathers, grave and gray haired. But most of them were boys when they died, and they gave up two lives -- the one they were living and the one they would have lived. When they died, they gave up their chance to be husbands and fathers and grandfathers. They gave up their chance to be revered old men. They gave up everything for our country, for us.” **President Ronald Reagan**

“The nation owes a great debt to its veterans, whose service to the nation spans every decade, every year, every day of our country's existence. Through untold courage and sacrifice, America’s veterans have secured the liberty which the founding fathers sought to establish here in the new world.” **General Colin L. Powell**, U.S. Army, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

As I conclude today, I want to say thank you to everyone who helped make this event happen today. I also want to thank all of you students for making me feel so welcome here at (Name of School: _____). You are the future of our nation and I know you will make a difference!