

Building a Teacher's Toolbox  
Volume 2, Issue 9

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As promised, here is a more traditional newsletter.

It is at this time of year that I begin to think of summer vacation and trips to the beach. So, what do you think my husband and I do? Well, most of you probably thought that we would go to the beach, but no, not us. Before we head to the beach, we watch "Jaws"! Ever since I have known my husband, this is how we "kick off" our summer season! Why do we do this? I cannot tell you why, it is just something we do! When we finally arrive at the beach, all we are doing is scanning the coast line for sharks! Last year, we only went to the beach one time. It was Labor Day weekend, and the water was glorious. My older son kept going out deeper and deeper to "catch the waves". Of course, I had "Jaws" in mind as well as a factual news account that two great white sharks had been spotted off the coast of Cape Cod. I began to calculate how far away Cape Cod was from Hampton Beach! I have found that shark articles are fascinating to all of my students, regardless of their reading ability. I hope that you can use this at this time of year as a "break" and have a fun class.

Attached to this newsletter, you will find the regular newsletter attachment, and then also four PDF. Files. I did the shark attack story in September with my class of pre-GED readers, and one of the students had asked about if this was a true story. It is. The material that is enclosed in the pdf. Files come from the book, On the Edge: Against the Odds by McGraw-Hill/Contemporary's Book Company. All of the stories incorporated within the book are all true stores. I also enclosed an article about Phineas Gage, a man who suffered a traumatic brain injury in the 1800's. He traveled to Lebanon, NH! In this book, the stories are arranged by similarity. So in this case, you have the boy who survived a shark attack, and

a man who survived a traumatic brain injury. The worksheets are enclosed as well.

Since my student has asked if it was a true story, he wanted to know more about the boy who had survived the shark attack. I did a "Google" search and came up with lots of information. Those are attached as well. You have an article that was put on "Snopes", an analysis piece, and an update on Jessie Arbogast, the boy who survived the shark attack. Those of you that don't know "Snopes", it is a website where you can type in a fact, something you heard, something you want to verify, and it gives you the latest research or statements about that particular topic. Interesting reading on Jessie Arbogast. It is certainly a way to encourage "higher order thinking" in your class.

On pages 3-5, you will find the article on Memorial Day that you can use with your class.

On page 6, there is a website you can access filled with activities to do with your class.

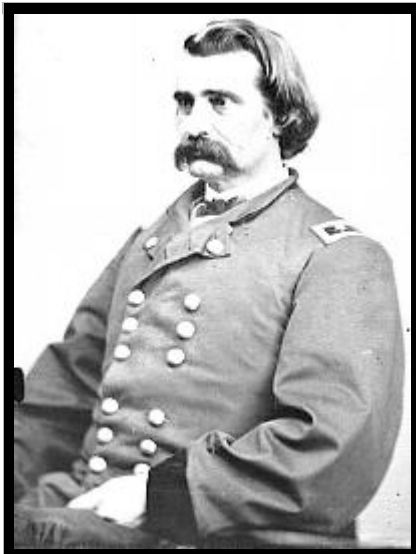
On page 7, I printed out a word search puzzle for you to do on Memorial Day.

On page 8, you can find another website that you can access for Memorial Day. I enclosed the table of contents of that website so you can see what it has to offer you.

Enjoy the last few classes with your students!

# Memorial Day History

**Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service.** There are many stories as to its actual beginnings, with over two dozen cities and towns laying claim to being the birthplace of Memorial Day. There is also evidence that organized women's groups in the South were decorating graves before the end of the Civil War: a hymn published in 1867, "Kneel Where Our Loves are Sleeping" by Nella L. Sweet carried the dedication "To The Ladies of the South who are Decorating the Graves of the Confederate Dead" (Source: Duke University's [Historic American Sheet Music, 1850-1920](#)). While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. It is more likely that it had many separate beginnings; each of those towns and every planned or spontaneous gathering of people to honor the war dead in the 1860's tapped into the general human need to honor our dead, each contributed honorably to the growing movement that culminated in Gen Logan giving his official proclamation in 1868. It is not important who was the very first, what is important is that Memorial Day was established. Memorial Day is not about division. It is about reconciliation; it is about coming together to honor those who gave their all.



**General John A. Logan**

Library of Congress, Prints &  
Photographs Division, [LC-B8172- 6403  
DLC (b&w film neg.)]

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his [General Order No. 11](#), and was first observed on 30 May 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war). It is now celebrated in almost every State on the last Monday in May (passed by Congress with the National Holiday Act of 1971 (P.L. 90 - 363) to ensure a three day weekend for Federal holidays), though several southern states have an

additional separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19 in Texas, April 26 in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10 in South Carolina; and June 3 (Jefferson Davis' birthday) in Louisiana and Tennessee.

In 1915, inspired by the poem "[In Flanders Fields](#)," Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

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.

She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. She was the first to wear one, and sold poppies to her friends and co-workers with the money going to benefit servicemen in need. Later a Madam Guerin from France was visiting the United States and learned of this new custom started by Ms. Michael and when she returned to France, made artificial red poppies to raise money for war orphaned children and widowed women. This tradition spread to other countries. In 1921, the Franco-American Children's League sold poppies nationally to benefit war orphans of France and Belgium. The League disbanded a year later and Madam Guerin approached the VFW for help. Shortly before Memorial Day in 1922 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies. Two years later their "[Buddy](#)" Poppy program was selling artificial poppies made by disabled veterans. In 1948 the US Post Office honored Ms Michael for her role in founding the National Poppy movement by issuing [a red 3 cent postage stamp](#) with her likeness on it.

Traditional observance of Memorial Day has diminished over the years. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day. At many cemeteries, the graves of the fallen are increasingly ignored, neglected. Most people no longer remember the proper flag etiquette for the day. While there are towns and cities that still hold Memorial Day parades, many have not held a parade in decades. Some people think the day is for honoring any and all dead, and not just those fallen in service to our country.

There are a few notable exceptions. Since the late 50's on the Thursday before Memorial Day, the 1,200 soldiers of the 3d U.S. Infantry place small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery. They then patrol 24 hours a day during the weekend to ensure that each flag remains standing. In 1951, the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts of St. Louis began placing flags on the 150,000 graves at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery as an annual Good Turn, a practice that continues to this day. More recently, beginning in 1998, on the Saturday before the observed day for Memorial Day, the Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts place a candle at each of approximately 15,300 grave sites of soldiers buried at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park on Marye's Heights (the [Luminaria Program](#)). And in 2004, Washington D.C. held its first Memorial Day parade in over 60 years.

To help re-educate and remind Americans of the true meaning of Memorial Day, the "[National Moment of Remembrance](#)" resolution was passed on Dec 2000 which asks that at 3 p.m. local time, for all Americans "To voluntarily and informally observe in their

own way a Moment of remembrance and respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or listening to ["Taps."](#)

The Moment of Remembrance is a step in the right direction to returning the meaning back to the day. What is needed is a full return to the original day of observance. Set aside one day out of the year for the nation to get together to remember, reflect and honor those who have given their all in service to their country.

But what may be needed to return the solemn, and even sacred, spirit back to Memorial Day is for a return to its traditional day of observance. Many feel that when Congress made the day into a three-day weekend in with the National Holiday Act of 1971, it made it all the easier for people to be distracted from the spirit and meaning of the day. As the VFW stated in its 2002 Memorial Day address: "Changing the date merely to create three-day weekends has undermined the very meaning of the day. No doubt, this has contributed greatly to the general public's nonchalant observance of Memorial Day."

On January 19, 1999 Senator Inouye introduced bill [S 189 to the Senate](#) which proposes to restore the traditional day of observance of Memorial Day back to May 30th instead of "the last Monday in May". On April 19, 1999 Representative Gibbons introduced the bill to the House (H.R. 1474). The bills were referred the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Government Reform.

To date, there has been no further developments on the bill. Please write  your [Representative](#) and your [Senators](#), urging them to support these bills. You can also contact [Mr. Inouye](#) to let him know of your support.

Visit our [Help Restore the Traditional Day of Observance](#) page for more information on this issue, and for more ways you can help.

<http://www.usmemorialday.org/backgrnd.html>

## Activities to do with your students for Memorial Day

Lots of puzzles for you to print out

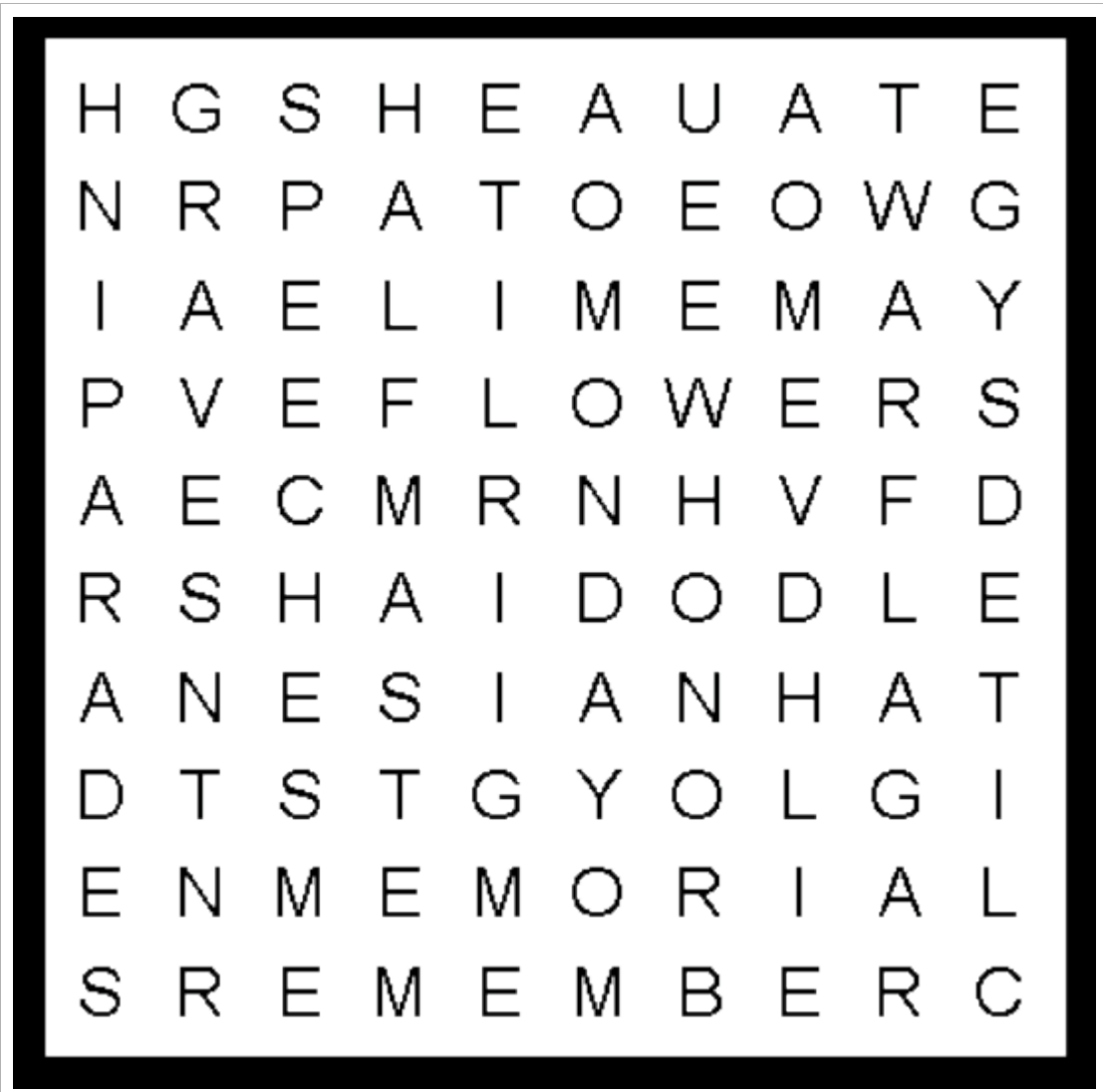
<http://www.usmemorialday.org/activities/>

I have printed one out for you. Please see the following page to get the word search puzzle.

**MEMORIAL**



**DAY KIDS Word Search**



<b>MAY</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>PARADES</b>	<b>GRAVES</b>
<b>FLAG</b>	<b>MEMORIAL</b>	<b>REMEMBER</b>	<b>HONOR</b>
<b>WAR</b>	<b>FLOWERS</b>	<b>SPEECHES</b>	<b>HALFMAST</b>

<http://www.usmemorialday.org/>

This is what this website can offer you. If you have access to computers, what a great way to spend some time learning about Memorial Day.



*In Memory of our Honored Dead*

[A Prayer](#)

[Calendar](#)

[E-Cards](#)

[Grief & Healing](#)

[History](#)

[How To Observe](#)

[Images / Videos / Music](#)

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Files](#)

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Sites](#)

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