



FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
[info@honoringveteranlegacies.org](mailto:info@honoringveteranlegacies.org)

HVL LESSON TITLE:

# CLEARING THE JUNGLE

DEVELOPED BY: ERIN COGGINS

## CLEARING THE JUNGLE

GUIDING QUESTION:

What were some of the hidden  
dangers in the jungles of  
Vietnam ?

### OVERVIEW:

This lesson will introduce some of the hidden dangers Vietnam soldiers faced in the lush, tropical forests of the country. Students will research these dangers to better understand the Vietnam's terrain.



**SUBJECT(S):**  
Science



**VETERAN(S):**  
Miller Brothers



**DURATION:**  
60 minutes

---

# CLEARING THE JUNGLE

DEVELOPED BY: ERIN COGGINS

---

“So they issued us machetes. We walked all night. As we got close to the edge of the mountains, we had to take machetes to cut our way through. You would take five and cut awhile and then five more.”

The Miller Brothers

## OVERVIEW:

This lesson will introduce some of the hidden dangers Vietnam soldiers faced in the lush, tropical forests of the country. Students will research these dangers to better understand the Vietnam's terrain.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

The American experience during the Vietnam War was especially difficult when it came to the environment – many soldiers were suddenly thrust into a deep jungle filled of unknown threats, ranging from Viet Cong sniper dens to venomous snakes.

## OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Define the Vietnam's terrain and ecosystems.
- Recognize the features of different habitats.

## STANDARDS:

### AL: Bio: 9

Obtain, evaluate, and communicate data or information on biodiversity in ecosystems.

### AL: Environmental: 9

Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information based on evidence to explain how key natural resources, natural hazards, and climate variability influence human activity and welfare.

# CLEARING THE JUNGLE

DEVELOPED BY: ERIN COGGINS



## MATERIALS & DOCUMENTS

[Miller Brothers HVL Video](#)

Entrance Ticket (Doc A)

It's the Jungle (Doc B)

Hidden Dangers (Doc C)

Internet Access

## PROCEDURES

### ACTIVITY 01

- Distribute the It's the Jungle (Doc A) to all students. Go over the definitions as a class. Inform students that one of the biggest obstacles for soldiers fighting in Vietnam was the lush, tropical rain forest that never stopped growing.
- Show the Miller Brothers HVL video. Ask students to pay particular attention to the brothers' statements on fighting in Vietnam, specifically their use of machetes.

### ACTIVITY 02

- Inform students that since they now know characteristics of the jungle and that soldiers were issued machetes during Vietnam to clear the bush, ask what types of dangers were lurking in those lush forests. Write responses on board and discuss.
- Distribute the Hidden Dangers worksheet (Doc B). This activity can be completed individually or in groups of two.
- Instruct students that will access the Internet to conduct the required research.

## METHODS FOR EXTENSION

- Have students conduct more in-depth research on one of the dangers or species and present a presentation to the class.

## **CLEARING THE JUNGLE**

### ENTRANCE TICKET

DOC A



## **ENTRANCE TICKET**

Describe Mr. Hoffman's entry into the military.

What was Mr. Hoffman's primary job in the military?

What types of things did Mr. Hoffman photograph while in the military?

If you were a war photographer, what types of things do you think you would have to photograph?



## IT'S THE JUNGLE

A jungle is defined as a large area of land that is overgrown with tangled or dense vegetation. A dense jungle is a tropical forest with trees and plants that grow very close together, making it hard to pass through.

### **Characteristics of a Dense Jungle:**

#### **Tangled vegetation:**

The vegetation is so dense that it can hinder human movement, requiring travelers to cut their way through.

#### **Limited visibility:**

Visibility is limited in a dense jungle.

#### **Rainfall:**

Dense jungle tracts can receive 3,000 to 3,800 mm of rainfall.

#### **Climate:**

A jungle usually has a tropical or humid climate.

## HIDDEN DANGERS

**Directions:** Research the following dangers that lurked in Vietnam's lush, tropical forests/jungles. For each hidden danger, list what species, why Vietnam's terrain is ideal for the species, and what specific dangers these species posed to soldiers.

Topic	Species	Terrain	Dangers
Venomous Snakes			
Aggressive Insects			
Killer Plants			

**CLEARING THE JUNGLE**  
HANDOUT

Man-Eating Animals			
The Enemy's Use of the Bush			