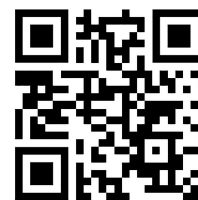




FOR MORE INFORMATION:
info@honoringveteranlegacies.org



SCAN ME TO VIEW LESSON

HVL LESSON TITLE:

BRINGING THEM HOME

DEVELOPED BY: ERIN COGGINS

BRINGING THEM HOME GUIDING QUESTION:

Why is it important to
memorialize fallen
soldiers?

OVERVIEW

This lesson utilizes primary sources to tell the story of the Battle of Tarawa and asks students to reflect on how to memorialize those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country's freedom.



Subject(s):
English
History



WWII Veteran(s):
John Kuhn



Duration:
80 min.

BRINGING THEM HOME

DEVELOPED BY: ERIN COGGINS

“Later, when the battle was over, and he was burying bodies on the beach, he recognized some of them.”

CHRIS BATTE - JOHN'S FRIEND

OVERVIEW

This lesson utilizes primary sources to tell the story of the Battle of Tarawa and asks students to reflect on how to memorialize those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country's freedom.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

On November 20, 1943, the Marine Corps faced the most fortified atoll that America would invade in the Pacific Theater. The battle, which lasted for three days, is known as the D-Day of the Pacific and one of the bloodiest battles of WWII. The Marines sustained multiple Japanese banzai charges to finally secure the island, getting one step closer to liberating the Philippines.

OBJECTIVES

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

- Understand the importance of capturing the island of Tarawa and its place in WWII battle history;
- Understand the importance of memorializing the fallen; and
- Utilize primary sources to obtain information about the Battle of Tarawa.

STANDARDS

CCSS. 11-12.RH.2.

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas

D2.His.3.9-12.

Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

CCSS: 11-12.RH.9.

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event.



MATERIALS & DOCUMENTS

DOCUMENT A:

Photo of John Kuhn (This Can Be Shown On A Projector)

DOCUMENT B:

Biography of John Kuhn

ATHENS NEW COURIER ARTICLE LINK:

Organization helps to heal senior veterans

https://www.encyclopedia.com/news/local-news/forever-young-organization-helps-to-heal-senior-veterans/article_1c139ce4-1adf-11ea-ab45-6bd6d67e090e.html

DOCUMENT C: BATTLE OF TARAWA ARTICLE LINK:

75 years ago, US Marines waded into 'the toughest battle in Marine Corps history' - Business Insider

<https://www.businessinsider.com/battle-of-tarawa-in-wwii-the-toughest-battle-in-marine-corps-history-2017-11>

WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL LINK:

Images of the World War II Memorial at National Mall & Memorial Parks in D.C.

<https://www.nps.gov/media/photo/gallery.htm?pg=2805814&id=DA51327D-CC8A-49B9-B24D-43E5981CDEC8>

DOCUMENT D:

Tarawa Activity Sheet

*Computers with Internet Access and a Projector
Drawing Paper and Colored Pencils or Markers*

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
email: info@honoringveteranlegacies.org

PROCEDURES

ACTIVITY 01 (10-15 minutes)

Getting to Know a Hero

- Project the photo of John Kuhn.
- Distribute the biography of John Kuhn. Have students read it or have the class read it together. Ask students why they believe John Kuhn had such a difficult time forgetting his experiences at Tarawa. Teachers can also read aloud the story at the Athens New Courier article link:

ACTIVITY 02 (30-45 minutes)

Looking into the Battle of Tarawa

- Direct students to Document C: 75 Years Ago, U.S. Marines waded into the toughest battle in Marine Corps history (Business Insider).
- Students will choose 3 photos from the article (inform them to choose a varied selection). They will answer the questions on each of the photos on Document D.
- After students have completed the analyzing the photographs. Stop and discuss, using these questions. What did you learn about Tarawa from these photos? What stands out the most in these photos? How do these photos help you understand John Kuhn's story a little more?

ACTIVITY 03 (15 minutes)

Memorializing Tarawa

Inform the students that 1,020 American soldiers died in the Battle of Tarawa. Many of those have still not returned home.

- Using a link to the National World War II Memorial Photo Gallery, project the images from the photo gallery. Go through the images and ask students to point out key elements of the Memorial that tells the story of sacrifice.
- Direct students back to Document D (Tarawa Activity Sheet). Read the directions out loud. Students will then answer the questions on the sheet and draw their own Memorial to those who died at Tarawa.
- Distribute drawing paper and colored pencils or markers to students to create their memorial.

DOCUMENT A:

Photo of John Kuhn (This Can Be Shown On A Projector)



PHOTO OF JOHN KUHN



Photo of John Kuhn

John Kuhn was born May 1, 1923 in Walling, Tennessee.

He served in the U.S. Navy in World War II where he participated in the Pacific Theater of Operation and was a hero of the Battle of Tarawa as he drove Marines ashore under fire.

While encountering the hazards of landing the Higgins Boats on the island, John experienced the grief of losing his fellow soldiers. He saw them drown in high waters, be shot by enemy fire, and other tragic ends. John buried some of his comrades in ponchos and placed them on higher ground to avoid the washing of the tide. This was something John lived with the remainder of his life--leaving his boys behind.

According to John's family, he suffered from terrible nightmares nightly, never forgiving himself for leaving the boys behind. He never married. He became a simple man who loved life and was dedicated to his family and beloved dogs.

John's friend, Chris Batte', co-founder of Honoring Veterans' Legacies, became witness to a change in John. While on a trip to Pearl Harbor with other vets through Forever Young Veterans, Chris overheard a conversation about the repatriation of soldiers (bringing them home) from Tarawa to the Punch Bowl Cemetery in Hawaii. Chris introduced John to the man and one thing led to another. John told of how he buried "his boys" in their ponchos. The man, astonished to hear this, asked John to help bring them home. He also learned about the other "boys" being brought home to rest.

Chris saw a change in John's eyes. The next morning, Chris asked John if he had any dreams the previous night. His response was "yes." He followed up with "but, they were good dreams." He did not have any more nightmares. He was at peace, healed. He helped bring his boys home.

Alternate or Additional Story: "Organization helps to heal senior veterans."

https://www.enewscourier.com/news/local_news/forever-young-organization-helps-to-heal-senior-veterans/article_1c139ce4-1adf-11ea-ab45-6bd6d67e090e.html

Name _____

Date _____

Bringing Them Home Activity Sheet

Document D 

The Battle of Tarawa

PART 1:

After reading the article, choose 3 photos to analyze. Answer the questions below for each photo you choose.

ARTICLE LINK

75 years ago, US Marines waded into 'the toughest battle in Marine Corps history'
<https://www.businessinsider.com/battle-of-tarawa-in-wwii-the-toughest-battle-in-marine-corps-history-2017-11>

1. What do you see? What four words would you use to describe what you see?

2. What emotions do you feel when you look at this photograph?

3. What does this photograph tell us about the Battle of Tarawa?

4. Put yourself in the shoes of an American Marine in the Battle of Tarawa. From this photograph what would you have experienced?

5. How does this photograph depict what you read in the article?

Name _____

Date _____

Bringing Them Home Activity Sheet

Document D



PART 2:

The Battle of Tarawa is considered a much bloodier battle than D-Day, yet it does not get the attention it deserves in our WWII history. After reading and analyzing some photographs from the battle, you will create a memorial to commemorate the Battle of Tarawa. Be as detailed as possible. Answer the questions before drawing your memorial.

1. What would your memorial be made of?

2. What words would be inscribed on the memorial?

3. What etchings/sketches would be on the memorial?

4. Where would your memorial be located?

5. What type of ceremony would you have to dedicate the memorial? Who is invited?

6. What would you include special to honor Mr. John Kuhn?