

# Month of the Military Child

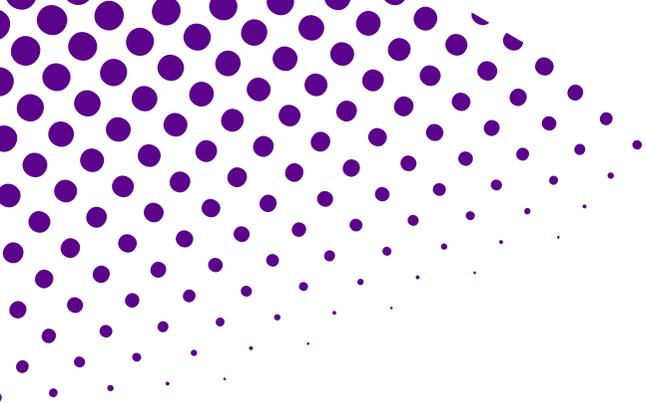
## Army National Guard Child & Youth Services

### *Educator Resource Guide*



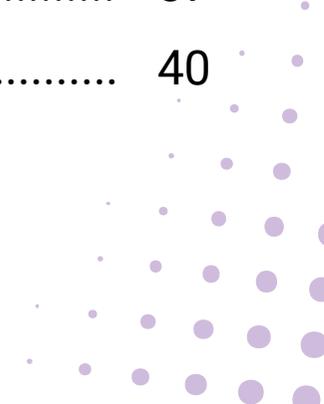
APRIL 2026

[WWW.ARNGCYS.COM](http://WWW.ARNGCYS.COM)



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# Thank You!

Letter from National Guard Bureau

1 APRIL 2026

Dear Educator,

Military-connected children are often called our “junior heroes” because they quietly share in the service and sacrifice of their families—moving frequently, managing long separations, and staying strong and resilient through constant change. Each April, during Month of the Military Child, schools and communities set aside time to recognize these young people for their courage, adaptability, and important contributions to our nation.

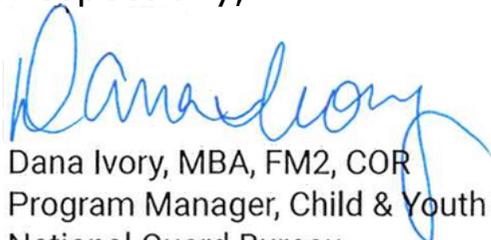
Educators play a vital role in this recognition because classrooms can be a safe, stable place where military youth feel seen, supported, and understood. By maintaining caring routines, creating welcoming environments, and connecting students with needed resources, you help military children navigate transitions, cope with the stress of deployments, and stay on track academically and emotionally.

During this Month of the Military Child, you are warmly invited to join in celebrating these junior heroes—tell their stories, honor their sacrifices, and highlight their resilience through classroom conversations, projects, and schoolwide activities. Whether you write letters to deployed service members, invite military family members to share their experiences, or simply make space for students to talk about their lives, your efforts help ensure military youth know their service matters.

This guide is designed to provide valuable information on military youth, deployment, and many of the emotions experienced as a result of prolonged separations. You will also find practical classroom resources and simple activities for use in your classroom, building, and school district. For even more information, please contact your local Army National Guard Child & Youth Services Team. Their contact information is available on our website under the “My Local CYS Program” page or by clicking the following link: <https://arngcys.com/my-local-cys-program>.

To every educator: thank you for all you are doing to support the military youth in your classroom and school. Your understanding, flexibility, and advocacy make a profound difference in the lives of these children—not just this month, but all year long.

Respectfully,



Dana Ivory, MBA, FM2, COR  
Program Manager, Child & Youth Services  
National Guard Bureau

# Program Mission

The mission of Army National Guard (ARNG) Child & Youth Services (CYS) is to promote and sustain the quality of life and resilience of Army National Guard dependent children and youth by providing secure, timely, flexible, high-quality support services and enrichment programs.

# Program Goals

**Education:** Provide developmentally-appropriate life skills education to National Guard youth

**Access:** Provide information on access to Federal and State/Territory benefits that support National Guard children and Families, including: counseling, education, child care, and other resources needed to foster a healthy, stable and secure family environment

**Opportunity:** Create partnerships for opportunities to participate in programs, events, and activities geared toward the behavioral and physical health and welfare of children and youth that are available across the spectrum of Government, community, and private sectors

**Communication:** Build a sense of belonging to the Army National Guard Community by creating secure opportunities to network with other youth, parents/legal guardians, and ARNG CYC Coordinators in one's community, state/territory, and across the nation

**Resilience:** Infuse resiliency and leadership skills and techniques into all Army National Guard child and youth programming

**Outreach:** Build and sustain contact with parents/legal guardians, and children of the National Guard in order to create awareness of available support services and programs, while being mindful of age, location, military and civilian mindsets

# Educator Resource Guide Overview

Educators play an important role in promoting the health, resilience, and academic success of military-connected youth, especially during the stress of deployment and separation. The purpose of this educator resource guide is to help school staff better understand military culture, the deployment cycle, and the many supports available to military and military-connected youth and their families.

## **EDUCATORS ARE KEY PARTNERS IN MILITARY YOUTH SUCCESS**

Every day, educators play a vital role in the lives of military-connected students. They are often among the first adults outside the family to notice changes in behavior, mood, or academic performance that may stem from deployment-related stress. By creating a stable, caring school environment and working collaboratively with families, counselors, and community partners, educators become a critical source of strength and encouragement for these students.

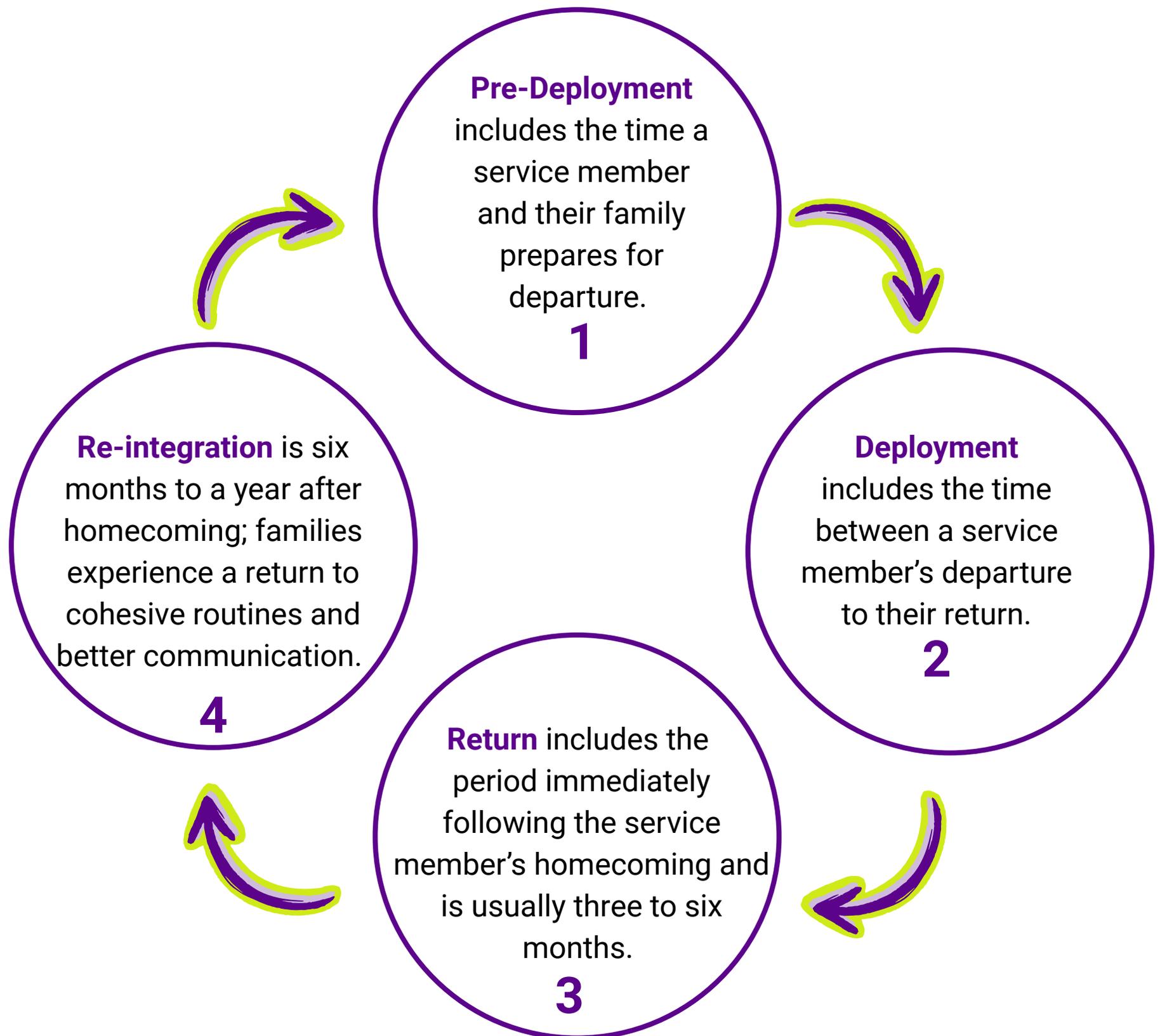
For National Guard families in particular, the support of local schools is especially important. Unlike active-duty families who often live near military installations, Army National Guard families reside in communities large and small across the country. This means educators are key members of the support network surrounding Guard youth, helping ensure they feel understood, valued, and connected.

By working together, we can equip our military youth with the tools, training, and resources they need to remain resilient and continue to grow as leaders within their schools and communities. This guide offers educators insights into the Army National Guard, the deployment cycle, and resources available to support military children and their families. It also includes booklists and activities designed to enrich the learning environment.

On behalf of all Army National Guard youth and their families, we invite you to take part in our 2026 Month of the Military Child celebrations. For information about upcoming events and local resources, please contact your [Army National Guard Child and Youth Services \(CYS\) Team](#) and subscribe to our [ARNG CYS Website](#) to receive monthly newsletters and information!

# The Deployment Cycle

The stages of a soldier's deployment starting up to a year prior to deployment and ending approximately 6-12 months after their homecoming.



Deployments have four phases: pre-deployment, deployment, reunion, and re-integration. Each phase has unique challenges that require the proper interventions. Although the emotional impact of each phase of the deployment cycle has been carefully documented and studied, it is important to remember that no two students will react the same way. Individual responses depend on a variety of factors such as age, maturity, gender, parent-child relationships, and coping skills of the caregiver during separation.

# Emotional Impact of the Deployment Cycle

## **PRE-DEPLOYMENT PHASE**

The family is preparing for their service member to be deployed to another location in the US or abroad. This is followed by feelings of general shock and disbelief for the spouse and children. Students will ponder questions such as “How could this happen to me?” The order, security and safety of their lives and the lives of their family members will feel temporarily shattered.

## **DEPLOYMENT PHASE**

As the troops leave and the emotional impact of that separation continues with the passage of time, the involvement of the community and those less affected by the event fades. The students and their families are left with feelings of loss and grief to manage on their own. The struggle with new and increased roles and responsibilities may cause conflicts to surface. During this phase, children and families of deployed military members reach different levels of adjustment. Some have developed or improved coping skills and are ready to resume their lives with renewed resiliency and hope. Some struggle with past problems and new conflicts. Others may continue to suffer from feelings of depression. Actively reaching out to children and families who are experiencing deployment difficulties during this phase can be helpful, especially if support includes the teaching of new coping skills in relation to specific problems. The majority of families reach a “new normal” in daily life activities without the deployed spouse or parent.

## **REUNION**

Typically experienced as euphoria and joy when the military parent returns. Hidden beneath the surface are normal life issues that must be re-addressed and resolved as the family works to re-incorporate the returned family member. The joyous return from the family’s perspective may bring challenges to the new equilibrium established while the service member was gone.

## **RE-INTEGRATION**

Children may have operated with a new independence that is not easily surrendered. Old and new conflicts may arise over roles and responsibilities. Family counseling, support and assistance may be needed to reconstruct family interaction. This phase brings different risks and challenges and the opportunity to negotiate stronger and improved family relations.

# Emotional Impact of the Deployment Cycle

## The Emotional impact of the Deployment Cycle on students and their learning

Deployment and the period after deployment affect learning by creating instability in the lives of individual students as well as the classroom. Stressed students have difficulty concentrating, learning new concepts and controlling emotional expression. Some students may become very quiet and withdrawn while other may become disruptive and overly active. Their academic functioning may be impaired. Studies have shown that prolonged stress alters brain chemistry and function, causing students to have difficulty with concentration, memory, behavior and control of emotions.

It is important for educators to become involved for two reasons. First, studies have shown that the way in which an adult responds to individuals and groups after a crisis can significantly affect the outcome of the student's experience. Through supportive interventions, delayed or prolonged stress responses can be minimized and learning can resume. Second, the process of effective intervening with individuals or groups of children can create a sense of class cohesiveness and help to re-establish the student's sense of security and belonging in class. Schools can be one place where stability and normal routine can provide an anchor for children during the challenges of deployment and the resulting disruptions to daily life. The predictability of the classroom helps to cushion the impact of deployment that often includes changes in psychological equilibrium and disruption of individual behavior and coping skills.

As an educator, you play a critical role in the life of each student. You are a significant and valuable resource and support as the children affected by deployment learn to cope and also to grow during this time of change. We have provided some suggestions and strategies you can use in your classroom as appropriate. Remember to rely on your own wisdom and knowledge of childhood development to help each child and to assess their individual needs and the needs of the other children in your classroom.

# Intervention Strategies for Educators

## GENERAL STRATEGIES

- Focus on students and the classroom learning environment
- Provide structure
- Maintain objectivity
- Reinforce safety and security
- Be patient and reduce student work load as needed
- Listen
- Be sensitive to language and cultural needs
- Acknowledge and validate feelings
- Reinforce anger management

## ELEMENTARY

- Engage in play activities
- Paint or draw pictures reflecting feelings and thoughts about how to make things better
- Write in a journal
- Read and discuss stories about children in conflict and children as problem solvers
- Write cards or letters to the deployed family member
- Make a memory book or calendar reflecting positive thoughts and actions
- Take part in individual and group counseling when problems arise

## MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL

- Keep a journal
- Engage in art activities
- Write poetry
- Write stories
- Write cards or letters to the deployed family member
- Relax by doing deep breathing and muscles relaxation exercises
- Learn problem-solving strategies
- Participate in small group discussions
- Participate in support groups
- Exercise Listen to music
- Take part in individual and group counseling when problems arise

# History of the Dandelion

Why the Dandelion?

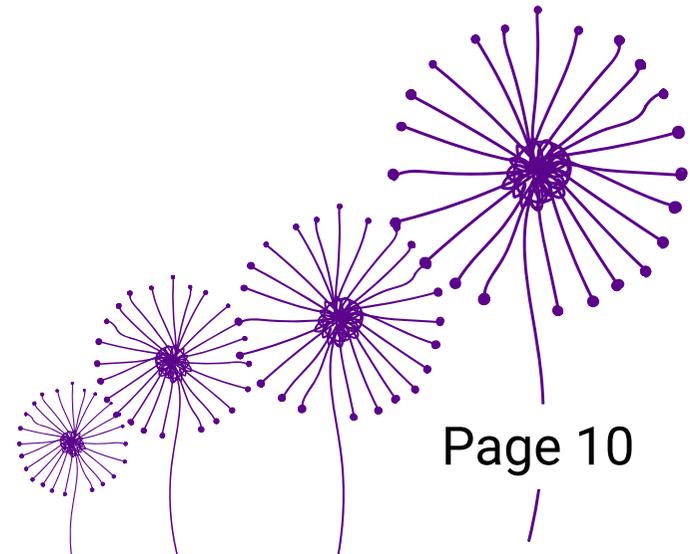
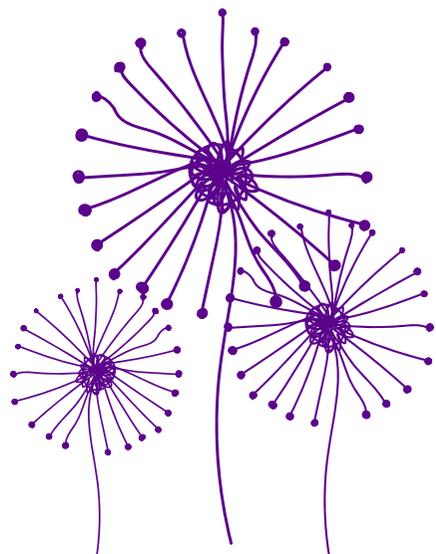
Military children have learned from an early age that home is where their hearts are, that a good friend can be found in every corner of the world, and that education doesn't only come from school.

The dandelion was created as the official flower of the military brat back in 1998. It is a symbol for adaptability, resilience, and strength of military children. All of whom, like the flower, "bloom wherever the wind carries them".

*The official flower of the military child is the dandelion.*

**The dandelion is a survivor in a broad range of climates.**

The dandelion plant puts down roots almost anywhere, and it's almost impossible to destroy. Just like the dandelion, Military children bloom everywhere the winds carry them. They are hardy and upright. Their roots are strong, cultivated deeply in the culture of the military, planted swiftly and surely. They're ready to fly in the breezes that take them to new adventures, new lands, and new friends.



# Month of the Military Child

## What is MOMC?

The Month of the Military Child (MOMC) was established in 1986 by the Department of Defense to recognize the important role military-connected children play in supporting our nation's service members. Observed every April, MOMC highlights the unique experiences, challenges, and sacrifices faced by military children and honors the strength, resilience, and adaptability they demonstrate as part of military life. Every April, the Army National Guard Child and Youth Program proudly joins this nationwide observance to celebrate and uplift military-connected children. While they may not wear a uniform, military children serve in their own meaningful way—navigating frequent moves, long deployments, and separations from loved ones with courage and grace.

As part of the Month of the Military Child, the Army National Guard Child and Youth Program celebrates Purple Up Day on the second Friday of April. Purple Up Day encourages everyone to wear purple—a color representing all branches of the military—to recognize the strength, resilience, and sacrifices of military-connected youth. While other military components and community partners may observe Purple Up Day on different dates throughout the month, the message remains the same: military children serve, too. Military children develop a strong sense of adaptability and a global perspective shaped by their experiences. These qualities, forged through the challenges and triumphs of military life, reflect their remarkable strength and resilience.

Throughout MOMC, families, communities, and organizations are encouraged to show appreciation for the military children in their lives and to foster the supportive connections that help them thrive. Schools, businesses, and community organizations are encouraged to participate by wearing purple, hosting events, and sharing messages of appreciation to show military children that their sacrifices do not go unnoticed. Across the country, Army National Guard Child and Youth Programs in every state and territory host special activities throughout MOMC. From community events and youth workshops to recognition ceremonies and day or overnight camps, these programs provide meaningful opportunities for military children to be celebrated, supported, and connected.

Join us in celebrating the incredible military children in our communities—honoring their strength, recognizing their sacrifices, and reminding them that their service truly matters.

# Month of the Military Child

April 2026

Calendar & Suggested Activities

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
29	30	31	1 White, Red, & Blue Wednesday	2 Thankful Thursday+	3 RED Friday***	4
5	6	7	8 White, Red, & Blue Wednesday	9	10 ARNG Purple Up Day**	11 MCEC Purple Up Day**
12	13	14	15	16 Thankful Thursday+	17 RED Friday***	18
19	20	21	22 White, Red, & Blue Wednesday	23	24 RED Friday***	25
26	27	28	29	30 Thankful Thursday+	1	2

\*\*Wear Purple to show your support for military-connected youth! Purple represents military youth because purple combines all the colors of the military branches!

\*\*\* Wear RED to "Remember Everyone Deployed"

+Practice gratitude by writing down or telling others things you are thankful for

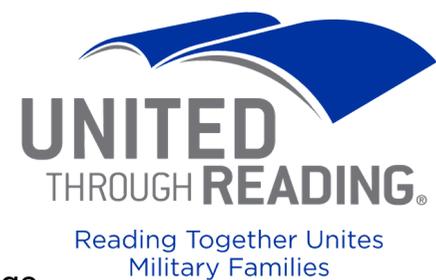
# Military Resources for Educators

As an educator, you play a vital role in helping support military and military-connected youth. In those times when youth are experiencing many changes at home, educators provide the safety, consistency and security youth often need. Beyond this, educators force-multiply the ARNG CYS Program's efforts to connect military youth and families with available resources. The following resources are available to military families and may prove beneficial as we all work together to support our military youth.

## **UNITED THROUGH READING**

Being read to by a parent helps military children feel like their parents are closer to home, reducing stress and anxiety levels and making it easier to cope while their parents are away. United Through Reading provides benefits for all military family members, not just children. Through these story time video recordings, service members are also able to maintain close emotional bonds with their families at home, reducing feelings of separation or loneliness and helping them reintegrate to home life when they return. United Through Reading's free program is available to all branches of the military, regardless of duty status, including Veterans.

WEBSITE: <https://unitedthroughreading.org/>



## **TUTOR.COM**

Tutor.com is dedicated to promoting equity, opportunity, and achievement for all learners. They partner with colleges and universities, K-12 schools and districts, public and state libraries, employee benefit programs, and the U.S. Military to provide 24/7, on-demand tutoring and homework help in more than 250 subject areas.

WEBSITE: <https://military.tutor.com/home>



## **MILITARY CHILD EDUCATION COALITION**

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) is a professional coalition with a diverse community consisting of public school districts, private schools, colleges and universities, as well as businesses and organizations all coming together to provide services to military youth, their families and the educators who support them.

MCEC is dedicated to ensuring inclusive, quality educational experiences for all military-connected children affected by mobility, family separation and transition.

WEBSITE: <https://www.militarychild.org>



## **OUR MILITARY KIDS**

Our Military Kids® is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit offering extracurricular activity grants to children and teens of deployed National Guard, deployed Reserve, or post-9/11 combat wounded, ill, or injured Veterans in treatment. OMK activity grants build the children's self-confidence, enhance family wellness, and strengthen a shared sense of community.

WEBSITE: <https://www.ourmilitarykids.org/>



# Military Resources for Educators

## **4-H MILITARY PARTNERSHIPS**

4-H Military Partnerships creates opportunities and provides support to military connected youth whether they live on or near an installation, in our communities, or on overseas installations. 4-H clubs provide consistency in belonging and an opportunity to develop life skills through a positive youth development framework.

WEBSITE: <https://4-hmilitarypartnerships.org/>



## **BGCA - MILITARY PARTNERSHIP**

Provide a world-class Club Experience that assures success is within reach of every young person who enters our doors, with all members on track to graduate from high school with a plan for the future, demonstrating good character and citizenship, and living a healthy lifestyle.

WEBSITE: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/external/boys-girls-clubs-of-america-military-partnership/>



## **BLOOM - EMPOWERING THE MILITARY TEEN**

Bloom is the place you can find comfort and advice about everything military kid related: from moving tips to the top things to do at your duty station. You can also read posts from our featured authors, often other military kids who want to share their stories and connect with their community. They all offer a different perspective on military life. Bloom also highlights all the cool things military brats are doing around the world, like writing songs about their life and winning awards.

WEBSITE: <https://www.bloommilitaryteens.org/>



## **ZERO TO THREE**

Coming Together Around Military Families has a training curriculum for professionals serving military families. It was developed by Zero to Three, a national nonprofit organization that informs, trains, and supports professionals, policymakers, and parents in the lives of infants and toddlers.

WEBSITE: [www.zerotothree.org/about-us/funded-projects/military-families](http://www.zerotothree.org/about-us/funded-projects/military-families)



**ZERO TO THREE**  
Early connections last a lifetime

## **MILITARY SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Scholarships for Military Children Program was created in recognition of the contributions of military families to the readiness of the fighting force and to celebrate the role of the commissary in the military family community. It is the intent of the program that a scholarship funded through contributions be awarded annually for each commissary operated by the Defense Commissary Agency.

WEBSITE: <https://www.fisherhouse.org/programs/scholarship-programs/>



# Military-Themed Booklist

We have compiled some of many themed books for you.  
For more books please check out this resource: [militaryfamilybooks.com](http://militaryfamilybooks.com)

**A Good Day** By Kevin Henkes; Published by Greenwillow Books

**A Very Long Time** By Jeri Timperley and Nikki Arro; Published by Interface Media Partners

**A Year Without Dad** By Jodi Brunson; Published by Ithaca Press

**America's White Table** By Margot Theis Raven; Published by Sleeping Bear Press

**Countdown 'til Daddy Comes Home** By Kristin Ayyar; Published by Elva Resa Publishing

**Daddy Got His Orders** By Kathy Mitchell; Published by T.J. Publishing Company

**Daddy You're My Hero** By Michelle Ferguson-Cohen; Published by Little Redhaired Girl Publishing

**Deployment: One of Our Pieces is Missing** By Julia Cook; Published by the National Center for Youth Issues

**Heroes** By Ken Mochizuki; Published by Lee & Low Books

**I Miss You** By Beth Andrews; Published by Prometheus

**I'll Lend You My Daddy** By Becky King; Published by Starts With Us

**I'm Still Scared** By Tomie DePaola; Published by Putnam Juvenile

**Love, Lizzie: Letters to a Military Mom** By Lisa Tucker McElroy; Published by Albert Whitman & Co.

**Mommy You're My Hero** By Michelle Ferguson-Cohen; Published by Little Redhaired Girl Publishing

**My Daddy is a Soldier** By Kally Mayer; Published by CreateSpace Ind. Publishing

**My Hero: Military Kids Write About Deployment** Edited by Alan Appel and Mike Rothmiller; Published by St. Martin's Press

**My Mommy Wears Combat Boots** By Sharon G. McBride; Published by Author House

**My Red Balloon** By Eve Bunting; Published by Astra Young Readers

**My Story** By Michelle D. Sherman, PhD, DeAnne M. Sherman; Published by Beaver's Pond Press, Inc.

**Never "Goodbye." Always "See You Later!"** by Valerie McNulty; Published by Silent Rank Press

**Night Catch** By Brenda Ehrmantraut; Published by Elva Resa Publishing

# Military-Themed Booklist

Beyond the learning environment, many of these books are great recommendations for families to have at home!

<b>On The Wings of Heroes</b> By Richard Peck; Published by Puffin Books
<b>Soldier Mom</b> By Alice Meadn Published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux
<b>Sometimes Apart, Always in my Heart</b> By Tish Raben, Published by Silver Dolphin Books
<b>Star's Purpose: A Military Mission</b> By Krista Betcher; Published by Elva Resa Publishing
<b>Tear Soup</b> By Pat Schwiebert and Chuck DeKlyen; Published by Grief Watch
<b>The Bravest of the Brave</b> By Shutta Crum; Published by Knoph Books for Young Readers
<b>The Hero in My Pocket</b> By Mariene Lee; Published by Early Light Press, LLC
<b>The Impossible Patriotism Project</b> By Linda Skeers; Published by Puffin Books
<b>The Invisible String</b> By Patrice Karst; Published by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers
<b>The Kissing Hand</b> By Audrey Penn; Published by Child Welfare League of America
<b>The Next Place</b> By Warren Hanson; Published by Waldman House Press
<b>The Soldier's Night Before Christmas</b> By Trish Holland and Christine Ford; Published by Golden Books
<b>The Soldier's Tree</b> By Stephanie Pickup; Published by T A O Army Kids Pub.
<b>The Wishing Tree</b> By Mary Redman; Published by Elva Resa Publishing
<b>Thumbs up to RED, WHITE &amp; BLUE!</b> By Michelle Bain; Published by Pixie Stuff™ L.L.C.
<b>To Keep Me SAFE!</b> By Sarah R. Jones, M.S.; Published by State of Growth Publishing
<b>We Serve Too</b> By Kathleen Edick and Paula Johnson; Published by Wee the People Publishing
<b>What Will I Do If I Miss You?</b> By Melissa Shultz; Published by Familius
<b>When Dad's at Sea</b> By Mindy Pelton & Robert Gantt Steele; Published by Albert Whitman & Co.
<b>While You Are Away</b> By Eileen Spinelli; Published by Hyperion Book CH
<b>You and Your Military Hero</b> By Sara Jensen-Fritz, Paula Jones-Johnson, and Thea L. Zitzow; Published by Beaver's Pond Press

# ARNG CYS 2026 Theme

## *National Guard Kids: Mission Possible*

The 2026 theme, highlights the strength, adaptability, and capability of National Guard youth. It reframes their unique lifestyle through a lens of confidence and adventure, recognizing military children as active participants in the Guard mission—“special agents” of resilience within their families and communities. This approach shifts the narrative from endurance to empowerment, celebrating skills such as adaptability, problem-solving, and teamwork developed through military life.

“Mission Possible” reminds us that while military life brings challenges like deployments and transitions, Guard youth have the strength to turn obstacles into opportunities. These children are not simply along for the ride; they are vital contributors to the National Guard story, equipped with the tools to navigate change and succeed.

The theme reflects the core pillars of connecting, inspiring, and empowering, emphasizing how creativity and resilience help youth achieve “Mission Accomplished” moments. It also serves as a call to action for communities to support military children by ensuring they have the resources needed to reach their goals.

Ultimately, “Mission Possible” reinforces the Child and Youth Program’s commitment to fostering growth, resilience, and opportunity—ensuring every military child’s journey remains a mission they are fully prepared to accomplish.

## **Classroom Activities For MOMC**

The Army National Guard Child & Youth Program has put together a variety of classroom activities we think educators can utilize in their classrooms. We hope that with these activities you can bring the joy of honoring all the resilient military kids not just in your classroom but throughout our nation. Through everything, Military Kids Serve Too!!! So with that, let’s put on our spy gear educators and bring the MONTH of THE MILITARY CHILD straight to your educational domains. Check out the suggested activities on the next few pages, and bring your students in on Mission: Possible 2026!



# Student Aptitude OPERATION: CAREER RECON

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Educators: Expand your students' knowledge of career paths that may be right for them. Let them explore and learn about new career fields and what they require. Check out the National Guard's career page here: <https://www.nationalguard.com/careers>

## LESSON PLAN

Soldiers are so much more than they appear. There is a variety of career paths a soldier can choose, and the military offers training in many areas of concentration that can teach the technical skills necessary in many civilian careers as well. Which career path might be right for you?

Activity Idea: Career Aptitude Test

Have students complete the career aptitude test and view their results. Then, allow them to search at the National Guard's web site, or others, to find which career fields might be similar and fit well to their strengths. Then, do the opposite - what careers might not be the best choice for them based on their results, and why?

Bonus Activity: Have students choose a career path and research it, explore the steps of getting into that career, and consider other related careers and how to move up in the industry.

### Paper Career Aptitude Test:

Check out the next two pages for a printable version of a youth aptitude test!

### Check out one of these free kids career aptitude tests:

<https://take.quiz-maker.com/cp-np-find-your-dream-job-what>



<https://take.quiz-maker.com/cp-np-aptitude-test-for-kids-r>





# Career Interest EXPLORER ASSESSMENT

for Elementary Students



**Step 1:** Read each list below and place a check mark beside any of the questions you answer yes.

\_\_\_ R

- \_\_\_ Do you like to work or play outside?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to build things?
- \_\_\_ Would you like to learn how to fix your bike?
- \_\_\_ Are you good at figuring out how things work?

\_\_\_ A

- \_\_\_ Do you like music, theatre, or art classes?
- \_\_\_ Do you like writing stories or poems?
- \_\_\_ Can you play a musical instrument?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to make up games when playing with friends?

\_\_\_ I

- \_\_\_ Do you like math or science classes?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to invent new things?
- \_\_\_ Are you good with computers?
- \_\_\_ Do you like working by yourself to solve problems?

\_\_\_ S

- \_\_\_ Do you like to help your friends solve problems?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to care for sick people?
- \_\_\_ Do you enjoy having lots of friends in your class?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to work in a group or a team?

\_\_\_ E

- \_\_\_ Do you like to lead others?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to finish projects that you start?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to compete in school or in sports?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to pick what your friends play?

\_\_\_ C

- \_\_\_ Do you like to be prepared for school?
- \_\_\_ Do you like math or computers?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to keep track of your money and spending?
- \_\_\_ Do you like to keep your room or desk organized?

**Step 2:** Count the number of check marks in each section and write the number on the line beside the letter at the beginning of the section. Circle the letter(s) with the highest number of check marks.

**Step 3:** Take a look at the list of careers under your top letters. Mark any that you like.

**R = Realistic (hands-on):**

- You enjoy building things
- You enjoy working outdoors
- You enjoy using tools to help fix things

Realistic Jobs:

- Firefighter
- Chef
- Farmer
- Zookeeper
- Police Officer
- Mechanic

**A = Artistic (creative/inventive):**

- You like to create new things
- You like using your imagination
- You like to express yourself

Artistic Jobs:

- Reporter
- Photographer
- Fashion Designer
- Musician
- Author/Writer
- Actor/Actress

**I = Investigative (thinker/detective)**

- You like to work on your own
- You enjoy using science and math
- You like to help solve problems

Investigative Jobs:

- Doctor
- Veterinarian
- Pharmacist
- Researcher
- Astronomer
- Detective

**S = Social (helper):**

- You like to help your friends
- You get along well with others
- You like working with people

Social Jobs:

- Nurse
- Teacher
- Counselor
- Animal Trainer
- Principal
- Judge

**E = enterprising (inventive/imaginative):**

- You like to lead others
- You are energetic and active
- You like competition

Enterprising Jobs:

- Coach
- Lawyer
- Hairdresser
- Business Owner
- Hotel Manager
- Tour Guide

**C = Conventional (organizer)**

- You are organized and like a schedule
- You like to keep your things neat
- Your friends can rely on you

Conventional Jobs:

- Pilot
- Banker
- Nurse
- Librarian
- Security Guard
- Secretary

Which career seems most exciting to you, and why?

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Which do you think is actually the best fit for you? Why?

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### **PERSONAL ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS:**

- What's the best piece of advice you have ever been given?
- If you had to teach a class on one thing, what would you teach?
- Would you rather be the funniest or smartest person in the room?
- What's the best advice you've ever heard?
- What would you like to be known/remembered for?
- What sport would you compete in if you were in the Olympics?
- If you could magically become fluent in any language, what would it be?
- What is your favorite time of the day and why?
- Are you a sunrise, daylight, twilight, or night? Please share why you picked your time of day.
- Are you summer, fall, spring, or winter? Please share why.
- If you could pick up a new skill in an instant, what would it be and why?
- What skill do you think everyone should have?
- How would you change your life today if the average life expectancy was 400 years?

### **HOBBY ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS:**

- What is your favorite hobby?
- What is your favorite thing to do by yourself?
- What is your favorite sport or physical activity?
- What crazy activities do you dream of trying someday?
- What is your idea of fun?
- What two things do you consider yourself to be very good at?
- What two things do you consider yourself to be very bad at?
- If money and time were no object, what would you be doing right now?
- What is something you hate doing? Why?
- What is something you love doing? Why?
- Do you have any hidden talents? What can you do?
- What was one new experience you tried that was completely unknown or uncomfortable to you at the time you tried it?



### **QUIRKY ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS:**

- If you could hang out with any cartoon character, who would you choose and why?
- If you could add a word to the dictionary, what would you add and what would it mean?
- If you could meet any living person for dinner, who would you pick and why?
- What is your most used emoji?
- Would you rather have invisibility or flight?
- Teleportation or flying?
- Would you rather be invisible or be able to read minds?
- If you could be an animal, what animal would you be and why?
- If you could bring back any fashion trend, what would it be?
- If you had to delete all but three apps from your smartphone, which ones would you keep?

### **FOOD & DRINK ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS:**

- If you had to eat one meal every day for the rest of your life, what would it be?
- What's the weirdest food you've ever eaten?
- What are your three favorite foods?
- What's your favorite breakfast cereal?
- What is your favorite restaurant?
- What is your favorite candy or treat?
- Sweet, salty, or sour?
- What is something you are great at cooking?
- What is something you can't cook?
- What is your favorite dessert?
- If you could eliminate one food so no one could eat it ever again, what would you destroy?
- What is your favorite breakfast? Lunch? Dinner?

# *Know Your Team* **BUILDING CONNECTIONS**

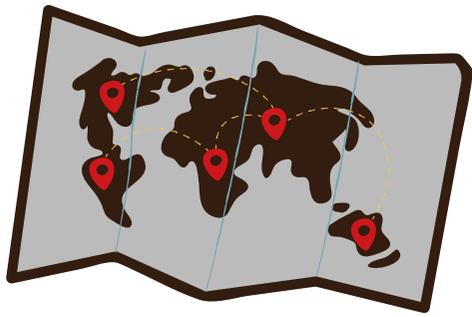


## **ENTERTAINMENT ICEBREAKER QUESTIONS:**

- If you could be in any movie, what would it be and what character would you play?
- Which actor would you want to play you in the movie about your life?
- If you were a wrestler what would be your entrance theme song?
- What fictional world or place would you like to visit?
- What is your favorite TV show?
- What are you reading right now?
- What movie have you seen recently that you would recommend and why?
- What is your favorite sport to watch and why?
- If you could see one movie again for the first time, what would it be and why?
- If you had to play one album forever which one would it be?
- Which song can you listen to all day long?
- What is your favorite TV show/series?
- What type of music do you like to listen to?
- What is one movie you could watch over and over again?
- If you could be any fictional character from TV or movies, who would it be and why?

## **HAVE YOU EVER ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS:**

- Have you ever been out of the country?
- Have you ever ridden on a motorcycle?
- Have you ever lived in another state?
- Have you ever met a celebrity?
- Have you ever been to Disney Land or Disney World?
- Have you ever planted a garden?
- Have you ever experienced a natural disaster like a hurricane or tornado?
- Have you ever won a contest?
- Have you ever eaten a whole pizza by yourself?
- Have you ever done any extreme sports like skydiving or bungee jumping?



# Where in the World? GLOBAL FOOTPRINTS



## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Agents within our ranks have been stationed in multiple locations across the world. Establish a large world map where students and staff can identify past assignments and share their unique global experiences. This operation strengthens unit cohesion, builds trust among agents, and reinforces a strong sense of belonging within the organization.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### 1. Secure the Command Center:

- The lead agent (teacher) will post a large world map in a central, high-traffic location such as a hallway, library, or common area where all operatives can access it.

### 2. Distribute Mission Tags:

- Provide each student and staff member with tags and push pins. These tags will be used to mark locations where they have previously lived or served.

### 3. Log Vital Intel:

- On each tag, agents will record approved mission details:
- See next page for optional template or create your own!

### 4. Mark the Map:

- Agents will pin their tags to the corresponding locations on the world map, visually revealing the global reach of the school community.

### 5. Cultural Briefings

- Agents who have lived in each region will assist teacher in planning themed events throughout the month, highlighting the culture, traditions, and daily life of their former assignments.
- For example, a focused mission on Japan might include: Cultural tastings (food), Traditional attire briefings (clothing), and Intercepted sound files (music).

## INTEL EXCHANGE

Use these coded prompts to help agents (students and staff) connect based on shared missions and global experiences:

- What was the biggest culture difference that surprised you in [location]?
- What was your favorite unique local food when you lived in [location]?
- What was it like starting in a school when you moved the first time versus the most recent move?
- How have you been able to keep in touch with people from [last location] after moving here?
- What do you miss most from [location]?

# MISSION INTEL TAGS

Print on different color paper to identify various groups



MARINES



AIR FORCE



ARMY



COAST GUARD



NAVY



SPACE FORCE



NATIONAL GUARD



CIVILIAN

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duty location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Favorite Memory: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duty location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Favorite Memory: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duty location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Duty location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Favorite Memory: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duty location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Favorite Memory: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duty location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Favorite Memory: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





# CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE

Agents will use creative expression to declassify personal experiences connected to service, family, and resilience. Through written and visual intelligence, students share their stories and strengthen understanding across the unit. This operation gives agents a voice, honors creativity, and highlights the strength and adaptability of military-connected students—reinforcing pride, connection, and belonging across the school community. Activities are adapted for different age groups.

## Possible Recognition & Rewards:

- Top submissions earn prizes
- Featured in the school newsletter
- Selected works may be submitted to a local news outlet for public release



## OPERATION: VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Agents are invited to submit essays, art or poetry for review by the Intelligence Council (teacher or panel of judges). Use templates below or create your own submission format.



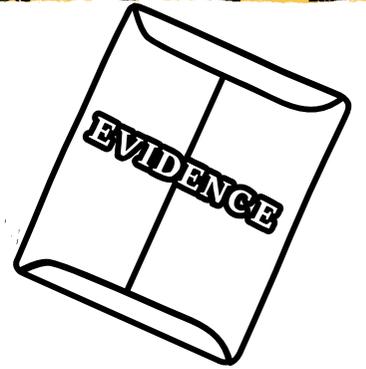
## OPERATION: SECRET SERVICE SHOWCASE

Agents will join their troop (class) to design and decorate their classroom door based on approved mission themes that represent their experience as a military-connected student. Themes highlighting service, sacrifice, and resilience include, but are not limited to:

- The Military Child
- Relocation & New Assignments
- Life During a Parent's Deployment
- Reunion & Homecoming
- Global footprint (places we've lived)

# Voices From The Field

## CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE



Agents will provide a short brief in the space provided. Agents are expected to follow approved intel prompts in essay, art or poetry formats for review by the intelligence council.

**ELEMENTARY - DRAW AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT A HOME IS.**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin brown border, intended for drawing an example of what a home is.

**HIGH SCHOOL - WHAT DOES THE WORD "HOME" MEAN TO YOU?**

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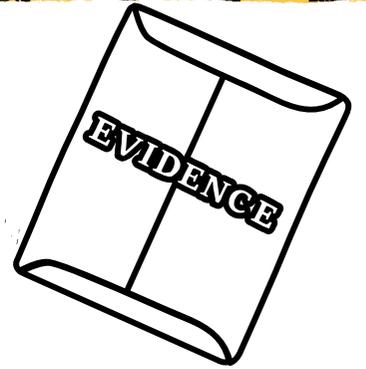
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# Voices From The Field

## CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE



Agents will provide a short brief in the space provided. Agents are expected to follow approved intel prompts in essay, art or poetry formats for review by the intelligence council.

**ELEMENTARY - DRAW YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY WITH THE SERVICE MEMBER IN YOUR FAMILY WHERE YOU LEARNED SOMETHING FROM THEM.**

**HIGH SCHOOL - WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED FROM THE SERVICE MEMBER IN YOUR FAMILY?**

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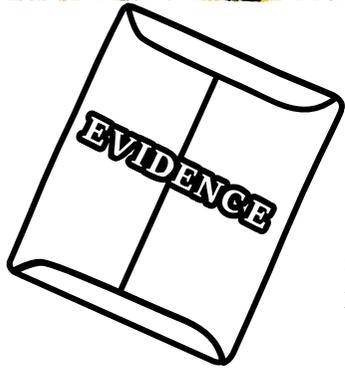
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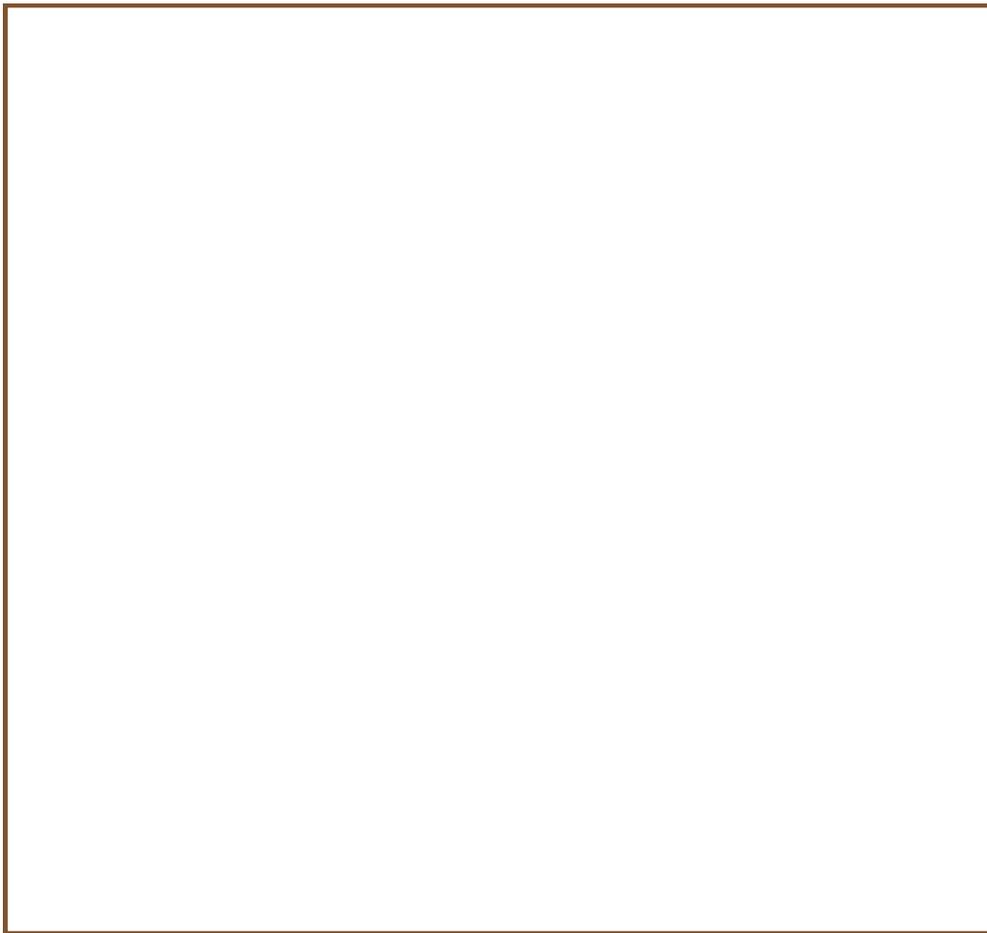


# Voices From The Field

## CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE

Agents will provide a short brief in the space provided. Agents are expected to follow approved intel prompts in essay, art or poetry formats for review by the intelligence council.

**ELEMENTARY - DRAW WHAT MAKES YOU STRONG. THEN, FILL IN THE BLANKS WITH WORDS RELATED TO CHANGE, GROWTH, AND FLEXIBILITY.**



A \_\_\_\_\_  
D \_\_\_\_\_  
A \_\_\_\_\_  
P \_\_\_\_\_  
T \_\_\_\_\_  
A \_\_\_\_\_  
B \_\_\_\_\_  
I \_\_\_\_\_  
L \_\_\_\_\_  
I \_\_\_\_\_  
T \_\_\_\_\_  
Y \_\_\_\_\_

**HIGH SCHOOL - WHAT HAS A FAMILY MEMBER'S DEPLOYMENT TAUGHT YOU ABOUT STRENGTH, ADAPTABILITY, OR PERSEVERANCE?**

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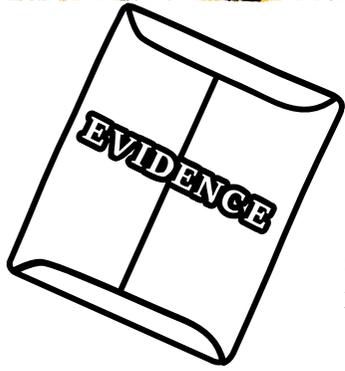
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# Voices From The Field

## CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE

Agents will provide a short brief in the space provided. Agents are expected to follow approved intel prompts in essay, art or poetry formats for review by the intelligence council.

**ELEMENTARY/HIGH SCHOOL - DRAW A TRADITION IN YOUR FAMILY THAT KEEPS YOU CONNECTED, EVEN WHEN MILES APART.**

**HIGH SCHOOL - DESCRIBE A TRADITION IN YOUR FAMILY THAT KEEPS YOU CONNECTED, EVEN WHEN MILES APART.**

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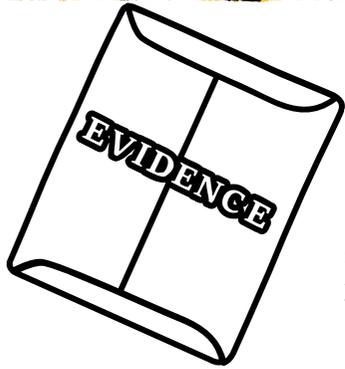
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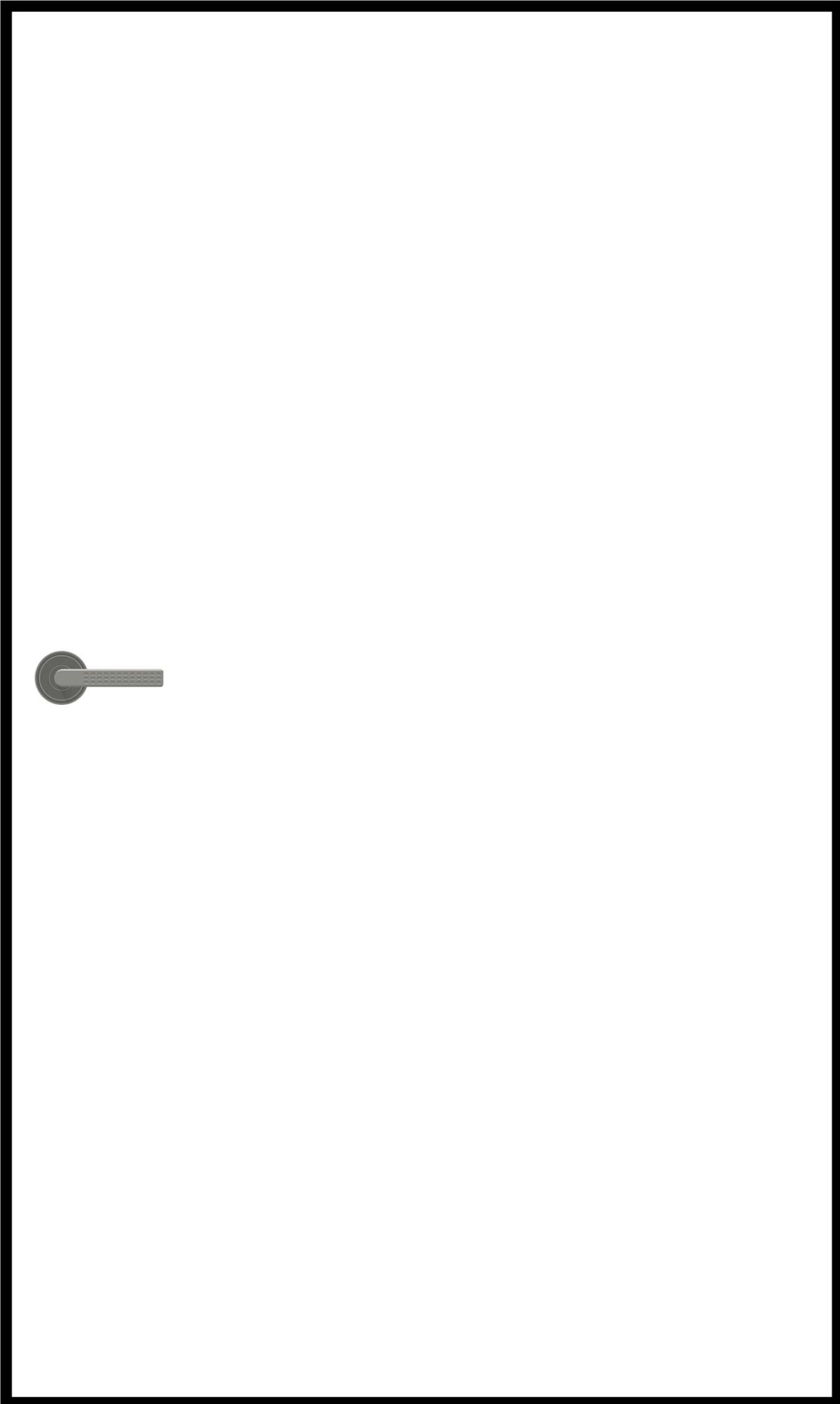


# Secret Service Showcase CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE



Agents will join their troop (class) to design and decorate their classroom door based on approved mission themes that represent their experience as a military-connected student. **It will be up to head agent's discretion whether their classroom will participate in actual door decorating.** Themes highlighting service, sacrifice, and resilience include, but are not limited to:

- The Military Child
- Relocation & New Assignments
- Life During a Parent's Deployment
- Reunion & Homecoming
- Global footprint (places we've lived)



**NAME:**



**GRADE/CLASSROOM#:**



**THEME:**





# Writing crime fiction

## MINI-WHODUNIT



### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will apply key conventions of crime fiction by writing their own short whodunit story (500–800 words). They will develop a mystery with suspects, clues, and red herrings, demonstrating how suspense and resolution are built in narrative form.

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### 1. Formulate the Mystery

- Decide what the central crime or puzzle is (theft, murder, disappearance, etc.).
- Think about who the victim is and why the crime matters.

#### 2. Create Your Detective Figure

- Decide who will investigate: a professional detective, amateur sleuth, journalist, or ordinary observer. Consider how you might characterise them through speech, thoughts, appearance, actions and how they interact with others

#### 3. Develop Suspects

- Create at least 3 suspects.
- Give each suspect a motive, an alibi (or lack of one), and a personality trait that makes them memorable.

#### 4. Plant Clues and Red Herrings

- Include at least 2–3 real clues that point toward the solution.
- Add at least 1 red herring to mislead readers.

#### 5. Build Suspense

- Use setting, pacing, and character reactions to heighten tension.
- End with a resolution where the detective explains how the mystery was solved.

Use the planning template provided on the next few pages to help you map out your story before you begin writing.

#### Extension Exercise

Once you've finished your story, swap stories with a classmate. Try to "solve" their mystery before reaching the ending – then compare your guesses with the actual resolution!



# *planning your* **MINI-WHODUNIT**



## STORY TITLE

## THE CRIME OR MYSTERY

1. What happened? Briefly summarise the crime or mystery.

2. Who is the victim? Why do we sympathise with them?

3. Why is the crime important/significant?

## THE DETECTIVE

4. Who will investigate? (Name, role and type of detective)

5. Briefly describe them (Speech, appearance, actions, how they interact with others etc.)

6. Why are they well-suited to solving this case?

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## THE SUSPECTS

### Suspect 1

Name	
Motive	
Alibi	
Memorable Trait/s	

### Suspect 2

Name	
Motive	
Alibi	
Memorable Trait/s	

### Suspect 3

Name	
Motive	
Alibi	
Memorable Trait/s	



# CLUES AND RED HERRINGS

Clues that lead to the solution or resolution

1.

2.

3.

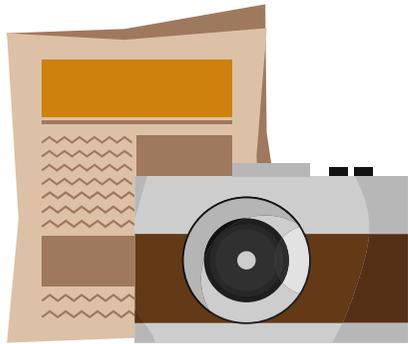
Red Herring(s) to trick the reader or throw them off the case

# SUSPENSE & RESOLUTION

How will you build suspense? (setting, tone, pacing, obstacles)

How will the detective reveal the solution?

Once planning is complete, use this outline to draft your 500-800 word mini-whodunit story. Swap your draft with at least one classmate to get feedback before editing your final copy.



# creating a CRIME PODCAST



## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will explore how crime narratives adapt to modern media platforms by collaboratively planning and pitching a podcast episode. They will analyse how mode, medium, and narrative voice shape audience engagement in the crime genre.

## INSTRUCTIONS

### 1. Form Groups

Work in small groups of 3-4 (choose team members you work well with). Each group will plan and record a 5-10 minute crime podcast episode.

### 2. Choose a Crime Story

You may choose a fictional story (e.g., Sherlock Holmes, Agatha Christie etc.) or a true crime case (check with your teacher to ensure it is appropriate for school context).

### 3. Plan Your Episode Structure

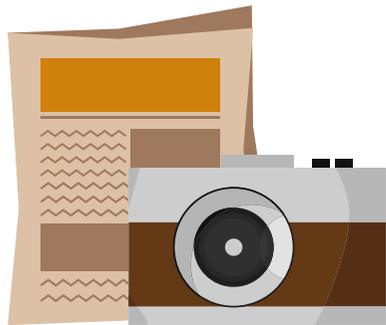
- Introduction: Hook your listeners – how will you grab their attention?
- Narrative of Events: Retell the crime clearly and dramatically.
- Exploration of Mystery: Highlight key puzzles, clues, or unanswered questions.
- Audience Engagement: Add features like rhetorical questions, dramatic pauses, or calls for listeners to 'decide' or 'guess' what happens.

### 4. Consider Focus Areas

- Mode & Medium: How does the podcast form (audio only, episodic, conversational) change the way crime fiction is told compared to short stories or film?
- Narrative Voice: Decide who will narrate (single host, dialogue between presenters, or dramatic re-enactment).
- Modern Adaptation: Consider how your podcast will update or reframe traditional crime fiction conventions.

### 5. Record Your Podcast

- Script or outline your episode and assign roles (host, narrators, sound effects, etc.).
- Record a 5-10 minute podcast episode using a phone, laptop, or other device.
- Ensure audio is clear and background noise is minimised.
- Give your episode a title and save the file under your group name.



# planning your CRIME PODCAST



## GROUP MEMBERS

--

## EPISODE BASICS

<b>Podcast Title</b>	
<b>Chosen Crime Story</b> (fictional or real)	
<b>Brief Summary of Crime</b> in 3-4 sentences. (E.g. Who, What, When, Where, Why)	
<b>Target Audience</b>	

## EPISODE STRUCTURE

### Introduction

How will you hook your listeners? (dramatic opening, question, sound effect)

--

**Narrative of Events**

What are the key details of the crime? How will you guide listeners through it? (E.g. (single host, dialogue between presenters, dramatic re-enactment with sound effects etc.).

**Mystery, Suspense and Audience Engagement**

What puzzles, clues, or unanswered questions will you highlight? How will you keep your listeners interested and engaged? (E.g. rhetorical questions, cliffhangers, suspense)

**Narrative Voice**

Who will speak – a single host, multiple presenters, or re-enactments?

**Mode & Medium**

How does audio-only storytelling change the way you might present the crime?

[WWW.ARNGCYS.COM](http://WWW.ARNGCYS.COM)

