

Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials

WWI Florida Veterans: Biographical “Storymaps”

Grade(s): 8th grade -10th grade

Time: 3-5 class periods

Lesson Overview:

This lesson should follow a unit on the history of World War One. Students should already be familiar with the factors that brought the United States into the Great War. In this lesson, students create “Biographical Storymaps” of American Servicemen who fought in the Great War. Working in pairs or small groups, students use both digital and traditional resources. Along the way, students deploy basic geography skills, practice close-reading informational text, and summarize significant biographical events.

Essential Question

“How should we remember the legacy of American servicemen in World War One?”

Learning Objective

Students will be able to use details from a biographical text to design a map that summarizes key events in the life of Americans who served in the U.S. forces during World War I.

Florida State Standards

World History (Course #2109310 & #2109320)

SS.912.G.1.1 Design maps using a variety of technologies based on descriptive data to explain physical and cultural attributes of major world regions.

SS.912.W.7.3 Summarize significant effects of World War I.

LAFS.910.RH.4.10 By the end of grade 10, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 9/10 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

United States History Honors (Course #2109310 & #2100320)

SS.912.A.4.6 Examine how the United States government prepared the nation for war with war measures (Selective Service Act, War Industries Board, war bonds, Espionage Act, Sedition Act, Committee of Public Information).

SS.912.A.4.11 Examine key events and people in Florida history as they relate to United States history.

Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials

Historical Context:

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the United States was still largely reluctant to become involved in European alliances or wars. But by 1917, unfettered German submarine warfare and a secret proposal to support Mexico in reclaiming territories lost in the Mexican-American War gave President Woodrow Wilson occasion to call on Congress to declare war on the German Empire. On April 2, Wilson gave an address to a joint session of Congress, calling for a declaration of war to make the “world safe for democracy.” In order to engage in such a war, the United States needed to raise an army. Secretary of War Newton Baker was given the task of creating the Selective Service Act of 1917, which required that all men aged 21 to 30 to register for military service. The draft raised 2.8 million troops, many of whom had been farmers and laborers, but even some students.

Required Materials:

Computer Access for Students

Highlighters of different colors

Printed copies of blank world map (Attached, recommended printing size 11 inches x 17 inches)

[UCF-VLP - Episode 1: The United States Joins the War](#) (YouTube Video Documentary)

[Veteran’s Legacy Program “Storymap Biographies”](#)

Instructions and Rubric for Student Groups (Attached)

Student Sample Biographical Map (Attached)

Biographies of American Servicemen to choose from (printed copies required):

- [Leroy Ian Brandon](#) (1897–1918) – Marine Corps
- [Clyde Atwood Emerson](#) (1890–1919) – Army
- [Paul Hon](#) (1898–1918) – Army
- [Luther Wade Pilcher](#) (1898–1918) – Marine Corps
- [Carol Oscar Anderson](#) (1893–1918) – Army
- [Edward Cantey DeSaussure](#) (1891–1918) – Army
- [Tellef Lindland](#) (1887–1918) – Army
- [Willoughby Ryan Marks](#) (1888–1918) – Army
- [Rufus W. Ridgdill](#) (1888–1918) – Army
- [William Snow Taylor, Jr.](#) (1888–1918) – Army
- [Will Todd](#) (1892–1919) – Army
- [John D. Watkins](#) (1889–1918) – Army
- [Fred White](#) (1898–1918) – Army
- [Riley Wright](#) (1893–1919) – Army

Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials

Procedures:

Activity One (Optional): Introduction - The US Joins World War One and the Selective Service Act of 1917

To begin this lesson segment, the teacher has the whole class make several predictions. Students are posed several questions as a whole group. These questions should be posted somewhere visible in the classroom, such as the class whiteboard.

Student predictions may be accurate or range widely. The teacher should record student answers next to the questions. Then, students watch the UCF-VLP documentary on the United States Joining World War One. As they watch, students are asked to pay close attention to how close their predictions were.

Question	Answer	Common Misconceptions
How many American men would you guess might have fought in World War One?	4.7 Total Million Armed Forces, of whom 2.8 Million were drafted.	Students may overestimate or underestimate the total number of soldiers, and have no concept of the size of an average military.
Who were the men that served in the U.S. Army in World War One?	Farmers, laborers, and students. Largely people from all walks of life, all segments of American society, and from across the U.S.	Students may believe that all who fought were military personnel, or not think of those who were drafted.
Beyond fighting, what kinds of jobs might American servicemen have needed to do during the course of the 'Great War?'	Supplies, trench construction, cooking, medical services, and even forestry	Students may believe that all military servicemen were constantly engaged in active fighting.

After watching the video as a class, the teacher prompts the students to consider whether or not their initial predictions had been correct. Going one question at a time, students comment on whether or not their class's predictions were close. The teacher should point out common misconceptions if they occurred.

Activity Two: Introducing the Biographical "Storymap"

1. *Introduction:* The teacher introduces the class to the idea of a "Storymap" by sharing an example of the [Veterans Legacy Program's Biographical Storymap](#) with the class. The teacher should choose one veteran, and walk the class through the storymap to highlight a couple of advantages of this format. A "Storymap" allows us to learn about what a veteran's life might have consisted of, and also to visualize the parts of the world that person spent his life in. The teacher may also want to point out how historians become aware of the biographical facts of American veterans through documents such as military service cards, census data, or other records where appropriate.

Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials

2. *Assign Groups:* Students should be divided into groups made up of 2-4 students, depending on teacher preference. Each group is assigned or allowed to choose one of the American Servicemen listed in the “Required Materials” section of this lesson plan. Each student per group should receive one printed biography of the veteran that they chose.
3. *Read and Annotate:* Students now need to close-read the biographical article carefully. To create their own “Biographical Storymaps,” the two most important pieces of information that students will need to begin is 1) where the serviceman they chose to learn about lived, worked, or served, and 2) when they were there. The teacher instructs the students to read the article in “round robin” fashion, where each student reads a paragraph or section before rotating to the next student. (There are different ways to determine which direction students read in: nose-goes, clockwise, counterclockwise, etc.) Some teachers prefer students to read informational text such as this up to three times. The first reading may be to form an overview. In the second reading, students will need two different colored highlighters. In one color, they should highlight anytime the biography makes mention of where that person was, and with the other color, when they were there. Students should create a key for these colors on their text. This can be a bit challenging, because while many of the biographies give most dates directly, some dates may have to be “puzzled out” of the context of the passage. During the final reading, students will want to summarize in one sentence what the person they are studying did in each place that he spent time.
4. *Create a Map:* Once students have close-read and annotated their person’s biography, student groups should receive instructions and a rubric from their teacher for the creation of their own “biographical storymap” (provided in this lesson plan). Students will also need the provided blank world map as well as access to a computer with Google Earth to locate the places where the American serviceman they are studying spent time. Students follow the steps to create their own “Storymap.” 1) Mark all of the places their assigned person was, 2) provide labels for those locations, 3) provide a range of dates for those locations, 4) roughly sketch the path they might have taken from one location to another, 5) briefly summarize what they did while in each place, and 6) provide a title, subtitle, and image of their assigned veteran on their completed “Biographical Storymap.” These completed maps may then be displayed around the classroom.

Activity Three: Lesson Follow-up and Discussion

Once all student groups have created their “Storymaps,” the teacher should repeat the essential question to the class: “How should we remember the legacy of American servicemen in World War One?” To consider this question, the teacher explains that the group will now view one another’s posters. As they do, students should bring something with them to take notes. Students should look for details in each poster that would help them respond to the essential question.

Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials

A “carousel” or “gallery walk” are good activities to get students out of their seats, moving around the classroom, and discussing what they are learning about with their peers. To conduct an activity like this, the student “Storymaps” should be posted around the room. Student groups meet at their original poster, and wait for the teacher to give them a cue to move on to the next poster, rotating around the room in a clockwise direction. (A timer or music are good cues to let students know it’s time to move on to the next poster.) As student groups meet at each poster, the teacher should repeat the direction that they should look for details and take notes at each poster that help to answer the essential question.

After students have had an opportunity to examine each “Storymap,” they return to a whole group setting for discussion. The teacher may help coach students toward a complete response to the essential question by posing some guiding questions to the whole group:

- “Where were the Americans that our class studied from?”
- “What different parts of the world did the Americans that you examined spend time in?”
- “Who were these Americans that we studied?”
- “Why do you think these Americans served in the military in World War One? Are there any clues for this?”
- “What did these Americans that we studied do that made them important to U.S. History?”
- “How should we remember the legacy of American servicemen in World War One?”

At the end of the lesson, students should have developed an understanding that when the United States joined World War One, it was largely average Americans who served in the military. They should also be able to recognize that the contributions of each individual became a part of their legacy that make them worth remembering and their actions worth commemorating. They will also carry with them that it is possible to develop an understanding of individuals from the past through biographical sources, and an appreciation for the importance of understanding geography when reading history.

Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials

Project Instructions & Rubric

Essential Question

“How should we remember the legacy of American servicemen in World War One?”

Learning Objective

Students will be able to use details from a biographical text to design a map that summarizes key events in the life of Americans who served in the U.S. forces during World War I.

Instructions

The Americans who served in the U.S. Forces during World War I came from all walks of life and all over the United States. About half were drafted into the military after the Selective Service Act of 1917, left their homes, and traveled across the United States and even the Atlantic Ocean. In order to tell the stories of their lives, maps can be a very useful tool. In class, you are going to create a “Storymap” to bring the story of an American Soldier to life. Follow the steps below:

- 1) On your blank world map, mark all of the places that the soldier you chose to learn about lived, worked, or served in the U.S. Forces. You may use Google Earth or an Atlas.
- 2) Label each of the locations that you marked on your map with the name of that city or place.
- 3) Provide a range of dates that your soldier was at each of the places that you marked on your map.
- 4) Sketch the path that the soldier you are learning about might have taken from one location to another. Your lines will be rough approximations, and that is ok.
- 5) In one or two sentences, briefly summarize what your soldier did while in each place.
- 6) Provide a title, subtitle, and image of their assigned veteran on their completed “Biographical Storymap.”

Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials

Rubric for Grading

Locations on “Storymap” marked accurately /15 points
Each person we study spent time living, working, and/or serving in the military in different places around the world. Each of the locations mentioned in the biographical article provided should be clearly marked on the “Storymap.”

Each location marked is also labeled /10 points
For each location that is marked on the map, the name of that place or city should be provided.

Dates given for each location / 15 points
Each person that we study was only in each place marked on the map for a certain period of time. A date or range of dates should be provided where possible to indicate when that person was there.

Summaries of soldier’s biography /30 points
The locations marked on the map were places where American servicemen spent some significant part of their lives. What they did while they were there will have to be briefly summarized on the “Storymap.” Whether they lived and worked in a location, or served in the U.S. military in that place, it ought to be clear to the reader what it is that is being portrayed through the map.

Title, subtitle, and image on “Storymap” present /10 points
To make clear whose life and legacy is being put on display on each storymap, a title with the person’s name, subtitle identifying what the map is portraying, and image of the soldier (where available) should be placed on the “Storymap.”

Annotations to biographical article provided by each student /20 points
In order to create an accurate “Storymap,” reading the provided biographical article carefully was an important step. Each student should have 2 different-colored highlighter markings on their article to emphasize when and where important live stages are mentioned in the text. One sentence summaries for each location are also needed.

TOTAL POINTS: _____

Teacher Comments:

Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials

Sergeant Paul

A Background Page

August 8, 1918 - September 8, 1918



Paul Dawson
Sergeant
Deliver Food

August 8, 1918 ①
Paul had been in
Washington Springs, West
Virginia, his best
two brothers

April 27, 1918 ②
Paul began his
training at Camp
Haskell, MD as a
private in the 10th
Training Battalion.
On June 19th he was
assigned to Company C
of the 328th Infantry.

1918-1919 ③
Paul had no
experience fighting
during this time.
Serving in his
draft band, he
worked at the
White Star food
Company.

July 6th 1918 ④
The 328th Infantry
took a train to
Haskell, MD to board
the USS Louisiana, one
of the largest ships
in the world!

July 16, 1918 ⑤
The USS Louisiana
sailed for
Great France.

August 1918 ⑥
The crew of the ship
Dawson learned to
be a sailor, only
under French
discipline and
special tasks. There
were 600 crew of
110 and some medical
staff.

September 9, 1918 ⑦
The 328th Infantry transferred to the
Hesse Barracks, CA September 28.
Paul had 18 days a week of
heavy drilling that day. He was
the last night before the 100th day.

