

Grades 4-8

Freebie!

NO PREP

ARLINGTON

Activities for Memorial Day

Mini-Lesson Pack



By
Lovin' Lit

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Memorial Day Lesson Pack

Teacher's Instructions

Purpose: Close read and analyze a poem (song lyrics). View a documentary and extract essential information. Discuss the significance and importance of Memorial Day.

Resources:

Music Video "Arlington" by Trace Adkins

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJO7IJJxG10>

Backup Download Link: <http://goo.gl/Hk75xE>

Documentary "Arlington: Field of Honor"

Online: https://www.snagfilms.com/films/title/arlington_field_of_honor

Backup Download Link: <http://goo.gl/FnoFx4>

(You'll need to actually download the file above for it to work properly.)

Procedure:

1. Direct open this lesson by showing the music video. I do not even mention Memorial Day beforehand because I want to assess my students' prior knowledge of Arlington. After showing the video, I ask my students for all of the information they know about what the song and video were about.
2. At this point, I'm not going to give students the lyrics or analyze them yet. I want my students to know more about Arlington before they answer these questions as they will make more sense and be more meaningful after the documentary.
 3. Show the documentary. You do not need to preview it if time is an issue, as I have watched it several times and there is absolutely nothing questionable or disturbing. Even the funerals are sad but should not cause any content issues.
 4. I recommend pausing the video about every 10 minutes since it is very dense with information and discussing it with the students so that it doesn't become too cumbersome for them to carry the information over without having discussed it. Review the Viewing Guide as you go along so that it is not so overwhelming for students, either.
 5. If you choose to only analyze the song and skip the documentary, consider showing the last 5 minutes of the documentary that cover the funeral of a soldier who died serving in Iraq.
 6. After completing and discussing the viewing guide, go back to the music video. Play it again as students view the lyrics. You will notice that they are sized to fit in an interactive notebook. Simply cut out the lyrics and questions as one piece, then fold down the dotted line in the middle. Then, fold up the questions and glue down the back of the lyrics only so that the questions swing open from the right.
 7. Although this last bit is not included in the lyric analysis, consider discussing how the mood is influenced by the violin, especially in the beginning of the song.

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"Arlington" Lyrical Analysis

Arlington

by Trace Adkins

I never thought that this is where I'd settle down,
I thought I'd die an old man back in my hometown,
They gave me this plot of land,
me and some other men,
for a job well done.

There's a big white house sits on a hill just up the road.
The man inside he cried the day they brought me home,
They folded up a flag,
and told my mom and dad,
'We're proud of your son.'

And I'm proud to be on this peaceful piece of property,
I'm on sacred ground and I'm in the best of company,
I'm thankful for those thankful for the things I've done,
I can rest in peace,
I'm one of the chosen ones,
I made it to Arlington.

Analysis of "Arlington"

After reading the first stanza, what can you infer about the narrator?

What is the "big white house on a hill"?

Who is "the man inside"?

What evidence in the second stanza shows that the narrator died young?

Find 2 examples of alliteration in the third stanza.

Writer(s): Jeremy N. Spillman, Dave Turnbull Copyright: Emi April Music Inc., New Sea Gayle Music, Universal Music Corp., Songs Of The Village

Memorial Day Lesson Pack

"Arlington" Lyrical Analysis

I remember Daddy brought me here when I was eight,
We searched all day to find out where my granddad lay,
And when we finally found that cross,
He said, 'Son this is what it cost,
to keep us free'.

Now here I am a thousand stones away from him,
He recognized me on the first day I came in,
And it gave me a chill,
when he clicked his heels,
and saluted me.

And I'm proud to be on this peaceful piece of property,
I'm on sacred ground and I'm in the best of company,
I'm thankful for those thankful for the things I've done,
I can rest in peace,
I'm one of the chosen ones,
I made it to Arlington.

And every time I hear twenty-one guns,
I know they brought another hero home, to us.
We're thankful for those thankful for the things
we've done,
We can rest in peace, 'cause we were the chosen ones,
We made it to Arlington,
yea, dust to dust
Don't cry for us,
we made it to Arlington.

Did the narrator's grandfather also die in war? How do you know?

The narrator says he is a "thousand stones away from" his grandfather. What do those thousand stones symbolize, or represent?

The narrator states "I'm in the best of company." What does this mean?

The narrator repeats "I made it to Arlington." What does this tell you about burials in Arlington Cemetery?

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"Arlington" Lyrical Analysis

Answer Key – Some answers may vary. Answers are suggested only.

Analysis of "Arlington"

After reading the first stanza, what can you infer about the narrator?

The narrator was a soldier who died in combat
and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.
He died tragically young.

What is the "big white house on a hill"?

Possibilities: Arlington House, The White House,
The Capitol

Who is "the man inside"?

Depends on previous answer; I interpret it as
Arlington House and George Washington

What evidence in the second stanza shows that the narrator died young?

The folded flag was given to his parents. If he were
older, it would have likely been given to his widow.

Find 2 examples of alliteration in the third stanza.

proud to be on this peaceful piece of property
thankful for those thankful for the things I've done

Did the narrator's grandfather also die in war? How do you know?

Yes, because upon finding his grave at
Arlington, his dad said "Son, this is what it cost
to keep us free."

The narrator says he is a "thousand stones away from" his grandfather. What do those thousand stones symbolize, or represent?

The thousand stones separating the narrator
and his grandfather represent the thousands of
other soldiers who have sacrificed.

The narrator states "I'm in the best of company." What does this mean?

The narrator is proud and honored to be among
other soldiers who have served their country and
sacrificed. He is also with his grandfather.

The narrator repeats "I made it to Arlington." What does this tell you about burials in Arlington Cemetery?

It is considered a prestigious honor to be buried
at Arlington National Cemetery.

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Memorial Day Lesson Pack

"Field of Honor" Viewing Guide

1. The first unknown (buried in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier) died in battle in _____ and was interned in the tomb in the year _____.

2. Unidentified soldiers from three more wars were buried near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Which wars?

3. Today, the tomb represents over _____ unknowns from all wars.

4. About how many funerals are held at Arlington National Cemetery each day? _____

5. What is the significance of a Caisson burial both past and present?

6. The property of the present-day Arlington Cemetery was once a _____ owned by _____.

7. He built a memorial to honor former president _____ that is known as _____.

8. His daughter, Mary, married a young soldier named _____.
Her husband would later become _____.

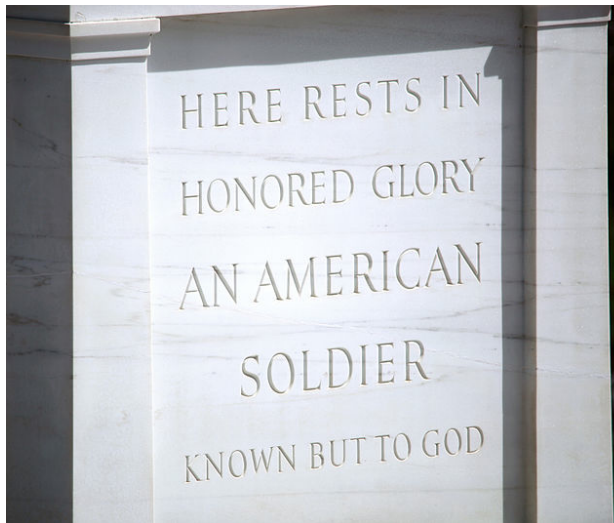
9. An all-volunteer corps called the _____

keeps any family member from _____



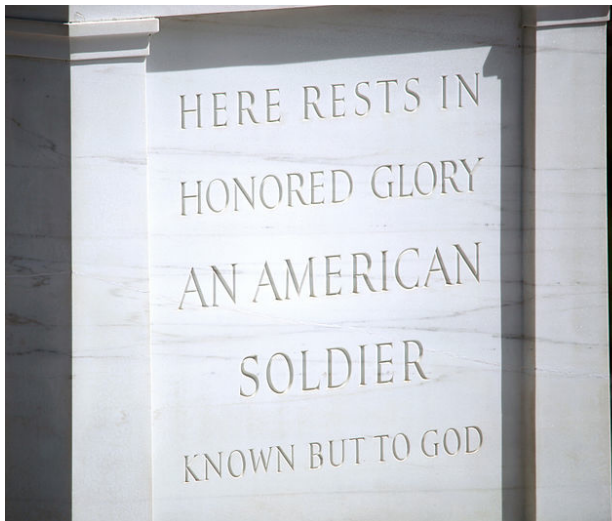
Memorial Day Lesson Pack "Field of Honor" Viewing Guide

10. The United States confiscated the Arlington House and sold it to _____ It was used to bury _____
11. A _____ is a way to honor a pilot or air crewman.
12. By the end of the Civil War, over _____ dead were buried on the Arlington Estate.
13. Mary Custis Lee's son, Custis Lee, sued the US government and won the land back. Lee then sold the land back to the government for _____
14. Once considered a potter's field, the cemetery began to be seen as an honorable place after _____ sailors were buried there after the explosion and sinking of the _____
15. The cemetery's prestige continued to grow as _____ became the first US president to be buried there.
16. The most influential burial at Arlington Cemetery was President _____
17. This president was buried in the spot that he is reported to have said _____
18. The USCT, or the _____, were the first African Americans allowed into combat roles in the Civil War. President _____ believed these men deserved citizenship.
19. The ceremony that takes place each hour, half hour, or two hours, is known as the _____
20. Today, Section _____ is reserved for soldiers who have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Memorial Day Lesson Pack "Field of Honor" Viewing Guide

10. The United States confiscated the Arlington House and sold it to itself (United States). It was used to bury poor soldiers from Civil War
11. A flyover is a way to honor a pilot or air crewman.
12. By the end of the Civil War, over 7,000 dead were buried on the Arlington Estate.
13. Mary Custis Lee's son, Custis Lee, sued the US government and won the land back. Lee then sold the land back to the government for \$150,000.
14. Once considered a potter's field, the cemetery began to be seen as an honorable place after 150 sailors were buried there after the explosion and sinking of the Battleship Maine.
15. The cemetery's prestige continued to grow as William H. Taft became the first US president to be buried there.
16. The most influential burial at Arlington Cemetery was President John F. Kennedy.
17. This president was buried in the spot that he is reported to have said was so beautiful that he could stay up there forever.
18. The USCT, or the _____, were the first African Americans allowed into combat roles in the Civil War. President Abraham Lincoln believed these men deserved citizenship.



19. The ceremony that takes place each hour, half hour, or two hours, is known as the Changing of the Guard.
20. Today, Section 60 is reserved for soldiers who have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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Grades 4-8

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Grades 4-8

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RUDOLPH, THE RED-NOSED REINDEER

A Common Core Literary Analysis for Grades 4-8

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