



In Their Words: Exploring World War II Through the Power of Story

These lessons are provided as an educational service of public television station WETA in Washington, D.C. Our thanks Maureen Carroll, Ph.D., author of the lesson plans.

Grade Level

6–12

Subjects

Language Arts, History, Visual Arts

Learning Objectives

Students will do the following:

- View and analyze media
- Complete a timeline
- Conduct Internet research
- Engage in small-group and whole-group discussion
- Analyze, evaluate, and summarize information from multiple sources
- Create a multimedia exhibition

Media

- Ken Burns: *THE WAR*
This lesson was designed to complement the Ken Burns film entitled THE WAR on WETA TV 26; however, it may also be used without viewing the film to help students learn about World War II and storytelling.

Overview

The power of storytelling lies in the singular voice of its teller. In this interdisciplinary lesson, students in grades 6–12 will have an opportunity to learn about World War II through a diverse collection of individual voices.

They will learn about the contributions that African Americans, the Navajo Code Talkers, military women, and those on the home front made to the war effort. They will also explore stories of life during World War II in Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia. As a culminating activity, the students will create a multimedia story exhibition.

Learning Activities

BUILDING BACKGROUND

Activity One. *Learning from Story*

The purpose of this activity is to introduce students to unique stories about World War II that will enhance their motivation to learn.

1. Images that tell a story can be a powerful tool to help motivate students to learn about World War II. Show your students the images on the next two pages.



Ask the students to brainstorm ideas about what they think this quilt represents. Then share with your students the information below about the quilt's origin on page 3.

The Map Quilt

In the early stages of World War II, a group of American volunteers known as the Flying Tigers, flying the shark-mouthed Curtiss P-40 E Warhawk and lead by General Claire Lee Chenault, gave American morale a much-needed boost by proving that the Japanese could be beaten in the air. While flying “the hump” in China and Burma, the pilots of this elite group carried with them survival maps of the terrain which were printed on rayon so they could be folded and stuffed into their flying boots.

Jacquie Porter acquired a set of these maps which she crafted into the quilt you see displayed here on the wall.



A young boy does his part to defend the homefront by pulling down a blackout shade

Image courtesy of National Archives and Records Administration.



Oneida Miller Stuart

2. Show the students the following image of a Virginia boy pulling down a blackout shade during World War II at

http://www.vahistory.org/WWII/image_archive/image.php?image_id=857&page=

Ask the students to brainstorm ideas about what the boy is doing and why he is doing it.

3. Tell the students that they are going to listen to two stories of women who lived during World War II. First, listen to the audio recording of World War II Army nurse Oneida Miller Stuart's experiences with racist patients and prisoners of war from Veterans History Project at

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.04850/>.

(Click on audio excerpt entitled "Dealing with racist patients and prisoners of war.")

Then read the story below aloud to your class.

Jean Devlin was eleven years old when the United States entered World War II. She lived in Sag Harbor, a small town located in the east end of Long Island, New York.

Our whole town had to have black out shades and they had to be down as soon as it got dark. My friend Audrey lived two blocks away, and we would signal to each other to say goodnight. We would lift it up and down a few times before the shade had to go down for the night.

There was a group of volunteer men who patrolled the streets at night to see if there were any planes coming over us. My Uncle Johnny was in this group.

Everything was rationed—sugar, coffee, meat. When you ran out of ration tickets, you could no longer get anything. Sometimes we traded with other families depending on what we needed. The butter came in a white stick with a yellow disk that you had to work into the stick of butter to make it look yellow-like you expected. You couldn't use silk stockings anymore—all the material had to go to the parachute makers.

Lead a class discussion based on students' responses to the two stories. Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- What were you able to learn about World War II from these stories?
- What were you able to learn about Oneida Miller Stuart and Jean Devlin from these stories?
- How did the stories make you feel?
- What were you able to learn about racism from Oneida's story?
- What were you able to learn about life on the home front from Jean Devlin's story?
- How do you think it must have felt to be a child during World War II?
- How do you think it must have felt to be an Army nurse during World War II?
- How do you think life is different for children experiencing war today compared to World War II?

Activity Two. *Pieces of Time*

The purpose of this activity is to provide students with background information about the key events of World War II from 1939–1945.

1. Divide the class into four groups. Hang a large piece of butcher paper in the classroom and divide it into seven sections. Label the sections 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944 and 1945.

Teacher Note: You may also use the panels of a blackboard.

2. Tell the students that they are going to complete a timeline on World War II. Give each group a copy of the “World War II Timeline” handout.
3. Ask each group to fill out its assigned portion of the handout. When the students have finished, have them list two or three key events under the correct year on the butcher paper panels so that the entire class may view all the time periods from 1939–1945. Have the groups briefly explain to the entire class the key events they record on the chart.

STEPS

Activity One. *Jigsaw Learning*

The purpose of this activity is for students to conduct small-group collaborative research on a specific topic of World War II history, and share the results with the whole class in a multimedia presentation.

1. Divide the class into four groups. Tell the students that they are going to create a class presentation based upon stories of World War II.
2. Give each group a copy of the handout entitled “World War Two Story Project Planner.” You may wish to review the steps on the handout with your students and clarify any questions. The handout is designed to help students create their class presentation. It begins with a resource collection that contains information about women who served in World War II, African Americans who served in World War II, Native Americans roles in World War II, and Japanese Americans’ experiences in World War II. Discuss with your students the importance of information that we can gain from primary sources. The resources listed below appear on the student’s handouts.

The Women of World War II

The Library of Congress *Rosie the Riveter: Real Women Workers in World War II*
<http://www.vahistory.org/WWII/>

American Merchant Marine at War
<http://www.usmm.org/women.html>

The Library of Congress Local Legacies: Fort Lee, Virginia & The Legacy of Army Women
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cocoon/legacies/VA/200003605.html>

The National Archives
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/its_a_womans_war_too/its_a_womans_war_too.html

PBS American Experience: Fly Girls

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/flygirls/>

Primary Source Cornelia Fort American WWII Pilot

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/flygirls/filmmore/reference/primary/lettersarticles01.html>

Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation

<http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/BBH1998.html#6>

The Library of Congress

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/fsaall:@filreq\(@field\(NUMBER+@band\(fsac+1a35337\)\)+@field\(COLLID+fsac\)\):displayType=1:m856sd=fsac:m856sf](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/fsaall:@filreq(@field(NUMBER+@band(fsac+1a35337))+@field(COLLID+fsac)):displayType=1:m856sd=fsac:m856sf)

Brown University "What Did You Do in the War, Grandma?"

http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/WWII_Women/tocCS.html

African Americans in World War II

National Public Radio "We Were There"

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1917020>

Virginia Historical Society: The Civil Rights Movement in Virginia Turning Point: World War II

<http://www.vahistorical.org/civilrights/ww2.htm>

American Memory

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart8.html>

African American Freedom Fighters

<http://www.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/aaffsfl.htm#WWTWO>

(Click on WWII)

The National Archives

Pictures of African Americans During WWII

<http://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/ww2-pictures/index.html>

The Library of Congress Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project

Rutherford Vincent Brice

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.05397/>

United States Merchant Marines

<http://www.usmm.org/african-americans.html>

African American Odyssey

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart8.html>

Japanese Americans in World War II

The National Archives Japanese Relocation and Internment During World War II

<http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/military/japanese-internment.html>

Smithsonian Institution

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/experience/index.html>

University of Utah

<http://www.lib.utah.edu/spc/photo/9066/9066.htm>

The Japanese American Archival Collection

<http://library.csus.edu/collections/jaac/>

Densho.org

www.densho.org

Native Americans in World War II

Defense Link

<http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/nativeamerican01/wwii.html>

Native Americans in World War II

http://www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/NAWWII.html

Department of the Navy: Navajo Code Talkers

<http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq61-2.htm>

Military Contributions of Native Americans

<http://library.thinkquest.org/TQ0312140/ThinkQuest/Patty%20Jo/Native%20Americans%20in%20the%20Military.htm>

Latinos & Latinas in World War II

The University of Texas at Austin War Stories

<http://www.utexas.edu/features/archive/2004/history.html>

<http://utopia.utexas.edu/explore/latino/narratives/v4n2index.html>

(Scroll to "The Stories")

The Hispanic Experience: Hispanics in Military Service

<http://www.houstonculture.org/hispanic/memorial.html>

Latino Advocates

<http://www.latinoadvocates.org/Foreword2.htm>

Latino Perspectives

<http://www.latinopm.com/Latino-Perspectives-Magazine/July-2007/Behind-the-camera/>

Organization of American Historians

"Many Americas in the Shadow of the Capitol: Latinos in Washington, D.C."

<http://www.oah.org/pubs/nl/2006feb/cadaval.html>

AARP Segunda Juventad World War II Veterans

<http://www.aarpsegundajuventud.org/english/issues/2002-oct/1.vets.htm>

Virginia, Maryland & Washington, D.C. Resources

WETA

http://www.weta.org/war/?page_id=9#video

Maryland Public Television

<http://www.mpt.org/thewar/maryland/mdsuccess.html>

The Library of Congress Local Legacies: Fort Lee, Virginia & The Legacy of Army Women

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cocoon/legacies/VA/200003605.html>

University of Virginia

Letter from a Nurse

http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/internet/library/historical/uva_hospital/8evac/

Laurel Historical Society

http://www.laurelhistory.org/exhibits_ww2.html

Cradle of Victory Trail

http://visitnorthernvirginia.com/Maps/cradle_of_victory_trail

The George C. Marshall Museum

<http://www.marshallfoundation.org/museum/index.html>

Arlington Historical Museum

http://www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/learn/snapshots/military_hist_army-navy.asp

(Scroll to "On the homefront")

Teacher Note: This lesson would be greatly enhanced if you could invite a World War II veteran to speak with your class.

3. Provide class time for the students to develop their multimedia presentations.
4. Invite others in the school and community to view students' multimedia exhibitions.

Extension Activities

Activity One. *The Music of World War II*

1. Ask your students to explore the music of World War II at

<http://www.umkc.edu/lib/spec-col/ww2/WarNews/index.htm>

on "G.I. Jive" and "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boys."

2. Ask the class to discuss how music can tell a story about a particular place and time, and how the music they heard tells a story about World War II.

Activity Two: *The Victory Garden*

1. As a class, view the WETA video that showcases the Washington D.C. Victory Garden at

<http://www.weta.com/community/neighborhoods/gloverpark/>

You might also wish to take your class on the U.S. Arboretum Youth Victory Garden tour.

2. Ask your students why they think victory gardens were an important part of the home front effort during World War II.

Activity Three: *Women Journalists, Photographers & Broadcasters*

1. Have your students read about the role that women journalists, photographers and broadcasters played in WWII at

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/wcf/>

2. Ask the students to create brief presentations to share what they have learned with their classmates.

National Education Standards

<http://www.mcrel.org>

READING

Standard 7.

Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/standardDetails.asp?subjectID=7&standardID=7>

Level III (Grades 6–8)

1. Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of informational texts (e.g., electronic texts; textbooks; biographical sketches; directions; essays; primary source historical documents, including letters and diaries; print media, including editorials, news stories, periodicals, and magazines; consumer, workplace, and public documents, including catalogs, technical directions, procedures, and bus routes)
3. Summarizes and paraphrases information in texts (e.g., arranges information in chronological, logical, or sequential order; conveys main ideas, critical details, and underlying meaning; uses own words or quoted materials; preserves author's perspective and voice)
4. Uses new information to adjust and extend personal knowledge base

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

1. Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of informational texts (e.g., textbooks, biographical sketches, letters, diaries, directions, procedures, magazines, essays, primary source historical documents, editorials, news stories, periodicals, catalogs, job-related materials, schedules, speeches, memoranda, public documents, maps)

WRITING

Standard 4.

Gathers and uses information for research purposes

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/standardDetails.asp?subjectID=7&standardID=4>

Level III (Grades 6–8)

3. Uses a variety of resource materials to gather information for research topics (e.g., magazines, newspapers, dictionaries, schedules, journals, phone directories, globes, atlases, almanacs, technological sources)
5. Organizes information and ideas from multiple sources in systematic ways (e.g., time lines, outlines, notes, graphic representations)

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

2. Uses a variety of print and electronic sources to gather information for research topics (e.g., news sources such as magazines, radio, television, newspapers; government publications; microfiche; telephone information services; databases; field studies; speeches; technical documents; periodicals; Internet)

HISTORY

Standard 2.

Understands the historical perspective

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/standardDetails.asp?subjectID=3&standardID=2>

Level III (Grades 5–6)

2. Understands that specific individuals had a great impact on history
5. Understands that specific decisions and events had an impact on history

Level IV (Grades 7–8)

2. Analyzes the influence specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history
6. Knows different types of primary and secondary sources and the motives, interests, and bias expressed in them (e.g., eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos; magazine articles, newspaper accounts, hearsay)

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

1. Analyzes the values held by specific people who influenced history and the role their values played in influencing history
10. Understands how the past affects our private lives and society in general
11. Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy

VISUAL ARTS

Level III (Grades 5–8)

2. Understands what makes various organizational structures effective (or ineffective) in the communication of ideas
3. Knows how the qualities of structures and functions of art are used to improve communication of one's ideas

Level IV (Grades 9–12)

1. Understands how the characteristics and structures of art are used to accomplish commercial, personal, communal, or other artistic intentions

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Standard 1.

Contributes to the overall effort of a group

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Benchmark.asp?SubjectID=22&StandardID=1>

Level IV (Grade K-12)



THE WAR

Activity

World War II Story Project Planner

Your task is to create a multimedia presentation based on what you have learned about World War II through the power of stories. Your presentation must contain the following elements:

- Background Information on World War II
- Information about either women, African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos & Latinas, or Japanese Americans during World War II
- Information about local World War II stories from Virginia, Washington, D.C. and Maryland

Be creative! You may wish to create a memory box, a podcast, a slide show, a music video, a public service announcement, a skit, a mural, or an idea of your own.

Step One.

The first step in your project is to conduct research. You may begin by using the following resources to learn about World War II.

The Women of World War II

The Library of Congress *Rosie the Riveter: Real Women Workers in World War II*

<http://www.vahistory.org/WWII/>

American Merchant Marine at War

<http://www.usmm.org/women.html>

The Library of Congress Local Legacies: Fort Lee, Virginia & The Legacy of Army Women

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cocoon/legacies/VA/200003605.html>

The National Archives

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/its_a_womans_war_too/its_a_womans_war_too.html

PBS American Experience: Fly Girls

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/flygirls/>

Primary Source Cornelia Fort American WWII Pilot

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/flygirls/filmmore/reference/primary/lettersarticles01.html>

Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation

<http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/BBH1998.html#6>

The Library of Congress

[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/fsaall:@filreq\(@field\(NUMBER+@band\(fsac+1a35337\)\)+@field\(COLLID+fsac\)\):displayType=1:m856sd=fsac:m856sf](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?pp/fsaall:@filreq(@field(NUMBER+@band(fsac+1a35337))+@field(COLLID+fsac)):displayType=1:m856sd=fsac:m856sf)

Brown University "What Did You Do in the War, Grandma?"
http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/WWII_Women/tocCS.html

African Americans in World War II

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Virginia Historical Society: The Civil Rights Movement in Virginia Turning Point: World War II
<http://www.vahistorical.org/civilrights/ww2.htm>

American Memory
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aopart8.html>

African American Freedom Fighters
<http://www.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/aaffsfl.htm#WWTWO>
 (Click on WWII)

The National Archives
 Pictures of African Americans During WWII
<http://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/ww2-pictures/index.html>

The Library of Congress Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project
 Rutherford Vincent Brice
<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.05397/>

United States Merchant Marines
<http://www.usmm.org/african-americans.html>

African American Odyssey
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Japanese Americans in World War II

The National Archives Japanese Relocation and Internment During World War II
<http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/military/japanese-internment.html>

Smithsonian Institution
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/experience/index.html>

University of Utah
<http://www.lib.utah.edu/spc/photo/9066/9066.htm>

The Japanese American Archival Collection
<http://library.csus.edu/collections/jaac/>

Densho.org
www.densho.org

Native Americans in World War II

Defense Link
<http://www.defenselink.mil/specials/nativeamerican01/wwii.html>

Native Americans in World War II
http://www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/NAWWII.html

Department of the Navy: Navajo Code Talkers
<http://www.history.navy.mil/faqs/faq61-2.htm>

Military Contributions of Native Americans
<http://library.thinkquest.org/TQ0312140/ThinkQuest/Patty%20Jo/Native%20Americans%20in%20the%20Military.htm>

Latinos & Latinas in World War II

The University of Texas at Austin War Stories

<http://www.utexas.edu/features/archive/2004/history.html>

<http://utopia.utexas.edu/explore/latino/narratives/v4n2index.html>

(Scroll to "The Stories")

The Hispanic Experience: Hispanics in Military Service

<http://www.houstonculture.org/hispanic/memorial.html>

Latino Advocates

<http://www.latinoadvocates.org/Foreword2.htm>

Latino Perspectives

<http://www.latinopm.com/Latino-Perspectives-Magazine/July-2007/Behind-the-camera/>

Organization of American Historians

"Many Americas in the Shadow of the Capitol: Latinos in Washington, D.C."

<http://www.oah.org/pubs/nl/2006feb/cadaval.html>

AARP Segunda Juventud World War II Veterans

<http://www.aarpsegundajuventud.org/english/issues/2002-oct/1.vets.htm>

Virginia, Maryland & Washington, D.C. Resources

WETA

http://www.weta.org/war/?page_id=9#video

Maryland Public Television

<http://www.mpt.org/thewar/maryland/mdsuccess.html>

The Library of Congress Local Legacies: Fort Lee, Virginia & The Legacy of Army Women

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cocoon/legacies/VA/200003605.html>

University of Virginia

Letter from a Nurse

http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/internet/library/historical/uva_hospital/8evac/

Laurel Historical Society

http://www.laurelhistory.org/exhibits_ww2.html

Cradle of Victory Trail

http://visitnorthernvirginia.com/Maps/cradle_of_victory_trail

The George C. Marshall Museum

<http://www.marshallfoundation.org/museum/index.html>

Arlington Historical Museum

http://www.arlingtonhistoricalsociety.org/learn/snapshots/military_hist_army-navy.asp

(Scroll to "On the homefront")

Step Two.

As a group, brainstorm ideas for your multimedia exhibition. Write your ideas in the space below.

Step Three.

Discuss the group's ideas, and choose a topic for the multimedia exhibition. Write your topic in the space below.

Step Four.

Decide on the format of your multimedia exhibition. You may wish to create a podcast, create a brief film, create a photographic display, create a music video, a mural or any other ideas you may choose about how to best showcase the stories of World War II. Describe your plan in the space below.

Step Five.

Decide what you will include in your multimedia exhibition. List all the components in the space below.

Step Six.

Share your plan with another group. In the space below, write any changes or additions you may include after listening to the group's feedback.



Multimedia Storytelling Exhibition

Rubric

Task	Excellent	Good	Needs improvement
Brainstorm ideas	The group brainstormed at least 10 ideas for the multimedia exhibit.	The group brainstormed at least 7 ideas for the multimedia exhibit	The group was able to brainstorm fewer than 7 ideas for the multimedia exhibit.
Discuss ideas & select topic	The group was highly effective in discussing ideas and working together to choose a topic for the multimedia exhibition.	The group was somewhat effective in discussing ideas and working together to choose a topic for the multimedia exhibition.	The group was not able to work effectively together to discuss ideas and to choose a topic for the multimedia exhibition.
Select a format & develop components	The group did an excellent job selecting a format and developing ideas for the multimedia presentation.	The group did a good job selecting a format and developing ideas for the multimedia presentation.	The group did not do an effective job in selecting a format and developing components for the multimedia exhibition.
Incorporating feedback	The group did an excellent job incorporating feedback into its plan.	The group did a good job incorporating feedback into its plan.	The group did not do an effectively incorporate feedback into its plan
Overall presentation	The group developed a powerful and comprehensive multimedia presentation that told a compelling story about World War II.	The group developed a good and well developed multimedia presentation that told a story about World War II.	The group did not develop a comprehensive or compelling story about World War II.