



Teacher/Leader Guide American Warrior Day of Honor Thank You Letters



Dear Teacher or Leader:

We sincerely appreciate your time and effort to encourage and support your writers in this expression of appreciation to our veterans. We will provide you with as much assistance as you need. A good source for your own background is the American Warrior website:

<http://www.AmericanWarrior.us>.

An American Warrior Representative would be happy to visit your school or organization to make a presentation on World War II. If this is not possible, provide your young writers with a brief background on WWII. Personal stories of those you know also help young people understand why these individuals are being honored.

We also encourage you and your writers to attend the Homecoming at Bradley Airport in Hartford (specific information on site and time to follow). This is an incredible and emotional celebration including Patriot Guards, a 40's band and singers, a Fife and Drum Corps leading a Parade of Veterans, and hundreds of family and friends waving flags, singing, and dancing. It is hard to describe but the positive feeling lasts for months.

Guidelines and Suggestions for Writing to our Veterans

1. Read "Unconditional Patriotism" for background and motivation for writers.
2. Read "Reflection: The Flight Home" to provide a story about the importance of their letter writing.
3. Share the Sample Letters and Letter Template sheet with your young writers. These are actual letters and phrases from letters written by young writers from elementary through high school. We merely typed them for easier reading. The quality of letters rises each time as writers use these as platforms to create their own messages. Some teachers have used this opportunity to reinforce the writing curriculum.
4. Writers should write a first draft beginning:
 - Dear Mr./Mrs. <Last Name>: (leave blank until final copy)
 - Thank you for your service in the <branch of armed service: Army, Navy, Marines, Army Air Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, National Guard> (leave blank until final copy) to our country.
5. Each draft should be proofread for appropriateness. Look for the following:
 - a. A positive tone.
 - b. Keep it simple and to one page that fits on the letterhead.

- c. This is a 'thank you' letter that expresses appreciation.
 - d. It should not ask questions of the veteran (this not a dialogue).
 - e. There should not be language that denigrates any individual or group.
 - f. Similarly, it should not include graphic language and the horrors of war. Veterans remember the war vividly. These thoughts are always with them and we do not want to remind them of the suffering but thank them for their service.
6. It is acceptable for a writer to tell about a family member in the service, past or present. Encourage them to ask their parents or other family members about those who served in the Armed Services.
 7. Please edit for grammar and spelling. These letters reflect on your school or organization and our young writers in general.
 8. Writers should sign only their first name and grade level.
 9. Use the letterhead created for your school or organization. This provides our veterans with information to communicate with the writer through the contact person.
 10. You will receive a control list of Veterans traveling on the trip.
 11. After you have proofread and edited first draft letters you will assign each young writer a name of a veteran from the control list.
 12. Return the draft letter to the writer with a letterhead (specific to your school or organization) for the young writer to write or type the final copy.
 13. When all letters are complete, return with the Control Sheet to the American Warrior Letter Coordinator in a large (9 by 12) envelope. Write the contact person's name and school or organization on the outside of the envelope.
 14. Return by the due date. This is important so that the letters can be delivered to the correct veteran during the trip.

Thank you for taking the time and making the effort to provide these letters of appreciation for our veterans. Their sacrifices and contributions made our country safe and prosperous for us who followed.

Contact the Letter Coordinators with any questions or suggestions:

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