Why We Celebrate Veterans Day

6th Grade

Informational reading · Social Studies

Name: _____ Date: _____

Every year on **November 11**, Americans pause to thank **veterans**: people who have served in the United States Armed Forces, in times of war or of peace.

The date has a special history. World War I was one of the largest wars the world had ever seen. On November 11, 1918, at 11 o'clock in the morning, an **armistice**, an agreement to stop fighting, took effect. People remembered it as "the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month." A year later, in 1919, the President proclaimed the first **Armistice Day** to remember the end of the war.

In 1938, Congress made Armistice Day a legal holiday. Then the world fought another enormous war, World War II, followed by the Korean War. Many Americans felt the holiday should honor veterans of all wars, so in 1954 Congress changed its name to **Veterans Day**.

For a few years the holiday moved. A 1968 law shifted it to a Monday in October, beginning in 1971. Many people felt November 11 was too meaningful to change, and in 1978 the holiday returned to November 11, where it has stayed.

Veterans Day is different from **Memorial Day**. Memorial Day, in May, honors service members who died while serving. Veterans Day thanks everyone who has served, especially living veterans. Today communities hold parades and ceremonies, many of which begin at 11 a.m. One of the simplest ways to take part is to say "thank you" to a veteran you know.

Word bank

veteran: a person who served in the armed forces · **armistice**: an agreement to stop fighting · **proclaim**: to announce officially · **observe**: to celebrate or honor a day

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Veterans Day: Show What You Know

6th Grade

Answer using evidence from the text

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is an armistice? Use the text to explain.

2. Why is Veterans Day held on November 11?

3. Why did Congress change the name to Veterans Day in 1954?

4. How is Veterans Day different from Memorial Day?

5. Why do you think the author included the paragraph about the holiday moving to October?

Timeline: write the year next to each event, then number them in order (1-6).

_____ (___) The holiday is observed on a Monday in October.

_____ (___) Fighting in World War I stops with an armistice at 11 a.m. on November 11.

_____ (___) The holiday is renamed Veterans Day to honor veterans of all wars.

_____ (___) Congress makes Armistice Day a legal holiday.

_____ (___) The holiday returns to November 11.

_____ (___) The first Armistice Day is proclaimed.

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Veterans Day or Memorial Day?

6th Grade

Sort the facts · Then write a thank-you note

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write V for Veterans Day or M for Memorial Day.

1. Held on November 11 _____
2. Held on the last Monday in May _____
3. Honors those who died while serving _____
4. Thanks all who served, especially living veterans _____
5. Began as Armistice Day _____

Write a thank-you note to a veteran you know (or one in your community).

Dear _____,

From, _____

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Veterans Day: Show What You Know

ANSWER KEY 6th Grade

Answer using evidence from the text

1. What is an armistice? Use the text to explain.

An agreement to stop fighting.

2. Why is Veterans Day held on November 11?

Fighting in World War I stopped with an armistice on November 11, 1918, at 11 a.m.

3. Why did Congress change the name to Veterans Day in 1954?

To honor veterans of all wars, not only World War I, after World War II and the Korean War.

4. How is Veterans Day different from Memorial Day?

Memorial Day honors service members who died while serving; Veterans Day thanks everyone who has served, especially living veterans.

5. Why do you think the author included the paragraph about the holiday moving to October?

To show how meaningful the date November 11 is: people wanted it back, and it returned in 1978.

Timeline: write the year next to each event, then number them in order (1-6).

1971 (5)	The holiday is observed on a Monday in October.
1918 (1)	Fighting in World War I stops with an armistice at 11 a.m. on November 11.
1954 (4)	The holiday is renamed Veterans Day to honor veterans of all wars.
1938 (3)	Congress makes Armistice Day a legal holiday.
1978 (6)	The holiday returns to November 11.
1919 (2)	The first Armistice Day is proclaimed.

Veterans Day or Memorial Day?

1. V 2. M 3. M 4. V 5. V

Thank-you notes: answers will vary. Look for a greeting, specific thanks, and a closing.

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