

LETTERS TO A VETERAN Talking Points

Hi! My name is _____

Do you have a family member or neighbor who is a veteran? If not maybe you can try to imagine their military experience and the sacrifices they made on our behalf.

From the time our service member arrived at boot camp they were in an environment new and strange to them. Their civilian clothing was taken and stored. They had a new haircut. Their privacy was gone and they were in a barracks with a lot of other people and perhaps there was someone yelling instructions at them.

Have you considered where and how our veterans may have served our nation? Have you ever been scared? Too cold or too hot? Our veterans may have served in a desert, a swamp or maybe a place of extreme cold.

Do you think you would miss your family, friends, or pets?

Would you miss your home? Your bedroom? Your Mom's cooking? Do you think our veteran's living accommodations were safe and comfortable?

How do you suppose their absence might have affected their family?

Have you ever been physically injured? Do you think our service members were afraid they would be?

Our new veteran heroes have contributed much to medical progress but it has been at a very high cost. Some may have lost an arm or leg - or both; maybe they suffer an unseen injury such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The veteran receiving your letter may be injured or ill; maybe recovering from surgery.

Our veterans deserve our respect and gratitude so - thank them for protecting our way of life. As you write your "thank you" think about the personal sacrifices they have made.

Your letters will be shared with _____

LETTERS TO A VETERAN

Helpful Hints

Create interest by displaying letters from or to a service member as well as a few pieces of V-Mail. A photo of a service member humanizes the letter writing effort.

It is very helpful if you can address the students at the end of their visit with a veteran. At that point you have their undivided attention and it is difficult to reclaim when they scatter to the tables to write their letters.

If you need to spend more time before a group moves to the next station consider talking about V-Mail. Victory Mail ensured that thousands of tons of shipping space could be reserved for war materials. The 37 bags required to carry 150,000 ordinary, one-page letters could be replaced by a single mail sack of V-Mail microfilm with the same number of letters. The weight was reduced dramatically from 2,575 pounds to a mere 45 pounds.

Have a large supply of sharpened pencils, erasers, and a pencil sharpener on hand. Most children take writing their letter of gratitude seriously and like to correct their mistakes.

Above all consider the personal safety of the children writing the letters. There should be no personal address on their letter and it would be best to use given\first names only.



COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE

Dear Veteran:

About Me:
