



Veterans History Project Lesson Plan

WOMEN AT WAR

This unit contains four lesson plans, three lesson plans as part of a mini-unit and one extension activity.

Suggested Unit flow:

Unit 1 in a Series of 3: Why did women join the WWII effort?

Unit 2 in a Series of 3: How did women participate in the WWII effort?

Unit 3 in a Series of 3: How have women's roles in WWII through present day wars changed?"

Extension Activity: Should women serve in combat roles?



Veterans History Project Lesson Plan

Title: Women at War -- Mini Unit - Lesson 1 in a series of 3
“Why did women join the WWII war effort?”

Subject: History, Gender, War, WWII, Military Service

Contact Information: Kristen Duke, Kristen_Duke@hotmail.com

CT Social Studies Standards: 1.11 -12.1 Formulate historical questions and hypothesis from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources. 3.04 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.

National Standards: Civic Ideals and Practices: Locate, access, analyze, organize, synthesize, evaluate, and apply information about selected public issues--Identifying, describing, and evaluating multiple points of view

Grade Level: 9-12

Individual or Small Group Assignment: Both

Time Duration: 1 Block Period (70 minutes) or 2 Shorter Class Periods (45 minutes)

Overview: Utilizing the Veterans History Project, students will understand the scope and degree of American women’s involvement in WWII. **Essential Question:** To what extent were American women involved in WWII?

Content Objective(s): By the end of the lesson, students will be able to conclude and support that women’s motivations were ultimately similar or dissimilar to their male counterparts. Guiding question for Lesson I: Why did women join the war effort?

Skills Objectives(s): Evaluation, analysis, Venn Diagram

Materials: Access to computers and the VHP website. Poster or other paper for the Venn Diagram.

Activities and Procedures: Background Knowledge Needed--Students will need an understanding of the causes of WWII and America’s direct entry into the conflict in December 1941.

Motivations for participation

1. In small groups, students will view interviews of WWII vets via the Veterans History Project website (<http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=673>). Once at the site, students click the link "Search by War" and enter the WWII portal. Students may view any of the interviews, but should view a minimum of four and incorporate an even number of male and female veterans. See below for a sample of interviews available:



← World War II →

1939 - 1946



Blair, William M.



Campbell, Robert E.



Bormolini, William



Buemi, Anthony



Busha, Lawrence A. "Mike"



Cain, Constance (Sullivan)

2. Students will create a Venn diagram that places men on one side, women on the other, and a common area in the middle. Students will categorize the motivations for men and women to join the war effort in each part of the Venn diagram.
 3. Students will compose a two paragraph lesson reflection that develops a conclusion regarding women's motivations in comparison to men's.
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Veterans History Project Lesson Plan

Title: Women at War - Mini Unit - Lesson 2 in a series of 3
“How did women participate in the WWII war effort?”

Subject: History, Manufacturing, Gender, WWII, Military Service, Homefront

Contact Information: Kristen Duke, Kristen_Duke@hotmail.com

CT Social Studies Standards: 1.06: Use primary sources to analyze multiple perspectives, 3.06: Demonstrate an understanding of the ways gender issues have affected individuals in the past

National Standards: Culture: Analyze the way groups address human needs and concerns, Individual Development and Identity: Examine the interactions of ethnic, national, or cultural influences in specific situations or events.

Grade Level: 9-12

Individual or Small Group Assignment: Both

Time Duration: -3 Blocks, 1 to view the documents, 1-2 to create the exhibit and present findings.

Overview: Students will explore various primary source documents available on the Veterans History Project website and produce an exhibit that visually demonstrates the various ways American women participated in WWII.

Content Objective(s): Understanding of the ways American women participated in WWII. Guiding Question: To what extent were women involved in WWII?

Skills Objectives(s): Use of primary documents, oral histories and presentation skills

Materials: Poster board, markers, scissors, access to the internet, access to printer (not required), glue, tape, etc.

Activities and Procedures:

In small groups, students will revisit the WWII portal of the Veterans History Project online (<http://www.ccsu.edu/page.cfm?p=935>). Viewing only the sites of women veterans, students will analyze and evaluate the primary sources

available (letters, photos, posters, medals, etc) and take notes on the various roles of women in WWII.

See below for examples of such documents.



- Students will then produce a creative exhibit that uses visual representations of women's roles in WWII and present their exhibits to the class. Students may create a traditional poster, 3-D exhibit, etc. to demonstrate their understanding of the scope of women's involvement in WWII.

Suggested Homework: Calculate how much distance and how many different countries your veteran visited for comparison to other groups/students.

Veterans History Project Lesson Plan

Title: Women at War Mini Unit- Lesson 3 in a series of 3
“How have women’s roles in WWII through present day wars changed?”

Subject: History, WWII, Vietnam, Iraq, Gulf War, Afghanistan, Gender, Women, Military Service, Combat

Contact Information: Kristen Duke, Kristen_Duke@hotmail.com

CT Social Studies Standards: 1.11 -12.1 Formulate historical questions and hypothesis from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources.

National Standards: Time, Continuity, and Change: Apply key concepts such as time, chronology, causality, change, conflict, and complexity to explain, analyze, and show connections among patterns of historical change and continuity.

Grade Level: 9-12

Individual or Small Group Assignment: Both

Time Duration: 2 Block Periods (70 minutes each) or 3 Shorter Class Periods (45 minutes)

Overview: Utilizing the Veterans History Project, students will analyze and evaluate how women’s roles in warfare have shifted from WWII through the current conflicts.

Objective(s): Students will develop a ‘tree map’ that visually demonstrates the massive expansion of female involvement in waging war.

Content Objective(s): Students will learn the ways women participated in military conflicts of the past 60 years. Guiding Question: To what extent have women’s roles changed in warfare?

Skills Objectives(s): Evaluation, synthesis.

Materials: Poster board, rulers, markers, access to the Veterans History Project website.

Activities and Procedures:

- 1.** Students will view video clips of women veterans from more recent conflicts such as Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan and analyze the ways women's roles expanded.
- 2.** Students will create a tree map that 'branches' off into the various roles women assumed in later conflicts using WWII as the starting point of the map (the trunk). Eventually the tree should 'grow' to include the roles women served in the most recent wars, Iraq and Afghanistan. The tree will serve as a visual metaphor for the growing role of women in the military
- 3.** Students will compose a conclusion paragraph that evaluates the degree to which women's roles have expanded in warfare since WWII.

Evaluation: Teachers can evaluate the depth of research as demonstrated on the tree map and the conclusion paragraph for content and skill objective.



Veterans History Project Lesson Plan

Title: Women at War - Extension Activity –
“Should women serve in combat roles?”

Subject: Women, Gender, Military, Combat, Iraq War, Afghanistan War, Roles in Combat

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State Standards: Historical Thinking: 01.02

National Standards: Power, Governance and Authority: Examine persistent issues involving the rights, roles, and status of the individual

Grade Level: 9-12

Time Duration: Two class periods, 45-50 minutes each.

Overview: As an extension activity to the Women at War Mini Unit, teachers may engage their students in a thought provoking debate regarding allowing women to serve in combat roles. Currently, women are barred from infantry, armor, and most artillery units. Building on the knowledge and skills learned from the Women at War Unit, students will utilize outside information on the issue and the VHP website to familiarize themselves with experiences of men in the current conflicts to evaluate the pros and cons of women in combat and defend their decision in a debate format.

Objective(s): Students will be able to evaluate sources, develop and defend a stance on the issue of American women serving in combat roles.

Content Objective(s) Students will understand the circumstances and experiences of combat soldiers in the current conflicts as well as understand the arguments for and against women serving in combat.
Guiding Question: Should women serve in combat roles?

Skills Objectives(s) Evaluation, synthesis, analysis, debate skills.

Materials: Access to the VHP website, copies of the article from *Upfront Magazine* “Should Women be Allowed to Serve in Combat?” (available at

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/upfront/debate/index.asp?article=0905>)

Activities and Procedures:

1. Students will review their 'tree map' from the previous lesson that documents the growth and expansion of women's roles in the military over the last 75 years. Teachers should ask their students to discuss what's missing, or perhaps what role would be the next 'level' in the tree. A class discussion should produce the answer of active combat. (Please note teachers can skip to steps two and three if their students did not participate in the tree activity)

2. Students are given access to the VHP website and view video interviews of Afghanistan and Iraq veterans and take notes on their experiences in the current conflicts.

3. Students read the article from *Upfront* magazine which presents both sides of the issue on women and combat.

4. Students develop an argument for or against the guiding question based on the article and the experiences of men in the current conflict.

5. Students debate the question in class in an informal class discussion.

Evaluation: Teacher can grade students based on level of participation and quality of arguments.