

The Edmond Sun

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Celebrate Freedom Week

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EDMOND — Among the reasons the United States is the great country it is today are the many brave men and women who fought to preserve our values and liberty. Many have indeed made the ultimate sacrifice of giving their lives for our freedom.

Across the nation, we honor these men and women on Veterans Day, Nov. 11. This day was originally designated as Armistice Day or Remembrance Day to honor the armistice which ended World War I. The armistice, or truce, effectively ended the war by ceasing all hostilities on the Western Front in France in World War I in the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. But, in 1954, Congress renamed the holiday to honor all veterans of all wars.

During the week of Nov. 8-12, Oklahoma public schools will observe "Celebrate Freedom Week." This week is dedicated to helping boys and girls learn about the sacrifices made on their behalf and for the freedom and democratic values on which this country was founded.

The board of education of each district ensures each school holds a Veterans Day assembly program of at least one class period. Most schools will observe the traditional one-minute moment of silence beginning at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Nov. 11.

This is a great opportunity to remember and honor veterans with Oklahoma roots. As state superintendent, I encourage schools to invite veterans and members of the military, historians and local government officials to participate in Celebrate Freedom Week events with students.

For example, Woodland Public Schools in Osage County and a local business are hosting an appreciation luncheon on Veterans Day. The partnership also includes an afternoon assembly to recognize local veterans. In addition, family members of a local Vietnam veteran will be honored with his high school diploma posthumously.

Elgin Public schools in Comanche County will hold a Veterans Day program on Nov. 10, for students in grades 5-12, faculty and community members. Special guests include State Rep. Joe Dorman, State Sen. Don Barrington and Fort Sill's Chief of Staff, Col. Daniel Karbler.

During Celebrate Freedom Week, or another designated by the local board of education, Oklahoma students also will learn about the importance of historic documents, including the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

In addition, students will learn what it means to be a democratic republic, which is a nation that adheres to a set constitution and conducts a representative vote for its leaders. Please visit the State Department of Education's suggested "Celebrate Freedom Week" curriculum, which is available at www.sde.state.ok.us.

This November, help us honor the lives and legacy of our veterans and show our appreciation for their dedication and service to our country.

SANDY GARRETT is state superintendent of public instruction.

CELEBRATE FREEDOM WEEK RESOURCES

Act 682 of 2003 creates "Celebrate Freedom Week" in public schools the week of September 26-30, 2005. This law was created to educate students about the sacrifices made for freedom in the founding of this country and the values on which this country was founded.

During "Celebrate Freedom Week" all social studies classes shall include instruction to help students focus on the freedoms offered in the United States of America. Suggested topics of study are included in the text of Act 682 of 2003, but the instruction is left up to the individual school district.

In an effort to assist educators and curriculum coordinators with programs and lesson plans for Celebrate Freedom Week, ADE has compiled the following ideas. These are only suggestions, and schools are encouraged to select their own creative ideas for "Celebrate Freedom Week."

To view the wording of the law, please refer teachers in your district to <http://arkedu.state.ar.us/commemos/customer.cgi> which is the ADE web address to access commissioner's memos.

The following resources will assist schools in meeting Act 682 of 2003. Schools may use ideas from this list of resources, or they may create their own method of meeting Act 682 of 2003.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/declaration_join_the_signers.html
Click on the NARA "link" listed above for numerous activities for students including some of those listed below.

"Signing the Declaration of Independence"

Choose a pen and add your name to the Declaration of Independence alongside our Forefathers. (This interactive exhibit requires the Macromedia Flash Player. Instructions and a link are provided.)

Creating the Declaration

View the time line for the creation of the Declaration of Independence beginning with the Lee Resolution and ending on August 2, 1776 when most members of Congress signed the document.

The Signer's Gallery

Who was the oldest Signer of the Declaration of Independence? Which Signer was also a musician? Learn the answers to these and other questions, and get our fact sheet about the Signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Meet America's Founding Fathers

http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/constitution_founding_fathers.html

2003 Patriotic Education Booklet and School Assembly Materials

http://www.nscar.org/patriotic_education/

The National Society of the Children of the American Revolution (N.S.C.A.R.) holds patriotic education as one of its objects. This year the organization makes "A Pledge of Freedom" in its Patriotic Education Booklet by providing schools with free educational materials focusing on The American's Creed.

In addition, a script for a patriotic assembly for elementary, middle, and high schools is available. These materials are prepared by - and are a public service of - N.S.C.A.R., and provide learning activities for use by any school or group. They help meet national and state Standards of Education on teaching the U.S. Constitution and patriotic values.

The VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) contains Resources for Educators link on its web site. This can be found at <http://www.vfw.org>. The site provides educational tools for teachers and a venue for educators to offer ideas of their own.

Other Programs for Teachers and students offered by the VFW include:

1. Speaker's in the Classroom -

VFW members speak to students about their military experiences and Ladies Auxiliary VFW members can talk about the importance of the home front.

2. Youth Development - Patriot's Pen -

This essay contest gives 7th and 8th graders across the country the opportunity to be recognized for expressing their views on democracy and win U.S. Savings Bonds.

3. Youth Development - Voice of Democracy -

This program gives students in grades 9-12 the opportunity to write and record patriotic essays on audiotapes and compete for over \$2 million in scholarships at the local, state and national level.

4. National VFW Citizenship Education Teacher Award -

Since 1999, this program has recognized thousands of classroom teachers for promoting citizenship education with their students. Each year one elementary, middle and high school teacher are recognized in Washington, D.C., and both the teacher and his/her school receive \$1,000 and an award plaque. Entry Deadline to local VFW Post is November 1.

5. Flag Education-

Poster brochure describing the history of the U.S. flag and flag etiquette. One of the many resources available as part of the VFW flag education activity.

6. Echoes from the Wall -

A teaching curriculum about the Vietnam War was created with support by the VFW and distributed to every middle and high school. For more information, call 202-393-0090 or visit www.teachvietnam.org.

K-8th grade Social Studies Benchmarks can be found on the ADE website at

<http://arkedu.state.ar.us/curriculum/benchmarks.html#Social>

Grade Specific Sample Teaching Strategies are provided for each of the Student Learning Expectations. This document contains several ideas and strategies for incorporating civics and government lessons into Constitution Week. Teachers should be directed to the fourth strand, which is Power, Authority and Governance (PAG) for ideas that relate to Constitution Week.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

The National Constitution Center, <http://www.constitutioncenter.org> (click on Explore the Constitution), created this section to help teachers teach the Constitution and other civic-related topics to students of all ages. These lesson plans meet the Center for Civic Education's National Standards for Civics and Government and offer elementary grades K-4, middle grades 5-8, and high school grades 9-12 teachers a selection of classroom activities, readings and Web resources. Each month this page will feature a new lesson plan highlighting recent Constitutional issues as well as historical events such as the Constitutional Convention. Access the Interactive Constitution at <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/constitution/>. Print a copy of the Constitution for students to analyze in small groups by clicking on the following address <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/constitution/constitution.pdf>
<http://www.constitutioncenter.org/explore/FoundingDocuments/index.shtml>

Analyze the following founding documents. Compare and contrast.

- I. Magna Carta
- II. Mayflower Compact
- III. The Virginia Declaration of Rights
- IV. Declaration of Independence

- V. Articles of Confederation
- VI. The Federalist Papers
- VII. The Constitution
- VIII. Bill of Rights
- IX. The Reconstruction Amendments

AboutGovernment The Dirkson Congressional Center contains numerous resources containing information about our government. Visit them at <http://www.congresslink.org>, and for a direct link to various historical documents such as The Articles of Confederation, Bill of Rights, Federalist Papers, Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution visit http://www.aboutgovernment.org/print_historicaldocuments.htm#constitution

The Bill of Rights Institute <http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org/>

This site contains many instructional materials that are free for use in the classroom. Teaching guides are available and there are quick links available for Constitution Day and lesson plans.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) <http://www.archives.gov/> is the link for the homepage. <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/index.html> contains numerous lesson plans by eras, just select and click, then browse. <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constitution-day/> contains Constitution Day specific materials.

100 Milestone Documents is A National Initiative on American History, Civics, and Service available at <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/content.php?flash=true&page=milestone>

We invite all Americans to participate in a series of events and programs to get us thinking, talking and teaching about the rights and responsibilities of citizens in our democracy. At the heart of this initiative are 100 milestone documents of American history. These documents reflect our diversity and our unity, our past and our future, and mostly our commitment as a nation to continue to strive to "form a more perfect union." We want everyone-students, teachers, parents, and the general public-to read these milestone documents, consider their meaning, discuss them, and decide which are the most significant and why. This initiative creates a number of ways to do that-through classroom activities and competitions, and votes.

Center for Civic Education <http://www.civiced.org/lesson-plans.html> contains many **Sample Lesson Plans**

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:

Congress for Kids <http://www.congressforkids.net/>

Learning about government doesn't have to be boring. Congress for Kids gives you access to interactive, fun-filled experiences designed to help you learn about the foundation of our federal government and how its actions affect you. Although designed for students in grades fourth through high school, other students, teachers, parents, and interested citizens will find helpful, engaging activities, too.

Using appealing, full-color illustrations, and engaging activities, this site will extend your learning in the basics about the American federal government. Uncle Sam is your guide through Congress for Kids. He will introduce you to a new skill or bit of knowledge, or review a skill you already have, or even test your knowledge.

Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids is available at <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

This site provides learning tools for K-12 students, parents, and teachers. These resources will teach how our government works, the use of the primary source materials of GPO Access, and how one can use

GPO Access to carry out their civic responsibilities. And, just as GPO Access provides locator services to U.S. Government sites, Ben's Guide provides a similar service to U.S. Government Web sites developed for kids.

"If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions."

James Madison, The Federalist, No. 51