



2026 VETERANS DAY ACTIVITY GUIDE

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource guide includes activities for students in grades K–12 to reflect on the significance of Veterans Day and explore ways they can honor the service and sacrifices of veterans by serving in their communities.

In this guide, you'll find:

- Video discussion guide
- “Thank a Veteran” activity
- Creative activities with teacher guides
- Veterans Day word searches with answer keys
- Supplemental reading list with Veterans Day-themed books for various age groups
- Guide to planning a visit to a local veterans home

VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE

Thank you for listening to a special message about Veterans Day from U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Josh Jabin [Ret.] from Travis Manion Foundation [TMF]. Below are suggested questions to help guide a discussion with your students about the video.

1. What is a veteran?
2. Why do we celebrate Veterans Day?
3. Does anyone have a family member or neighbor who is a veteran?
4. What is the difference between Veterans Day and Memorial Day?
5. Why do you think it is important for us to honor and thank our veterans?
6. What are some of the qualities or character traits you think a veteran may have? Refer to the graphic on the next page for a list of 24 character strengths.
7. How do you think we can express gratitude to veterans in our community?

If you are interested in learning more about free Character Does Matter programming and would like to inquire about having a TMF Veteran Mentor visit your school, please visit travismanion.org/veteransdayCDM2026.

Travis Manion Foundation [TMF] invests in veterans and families of the fallen to lead by mentoring youth and serving in their communities.

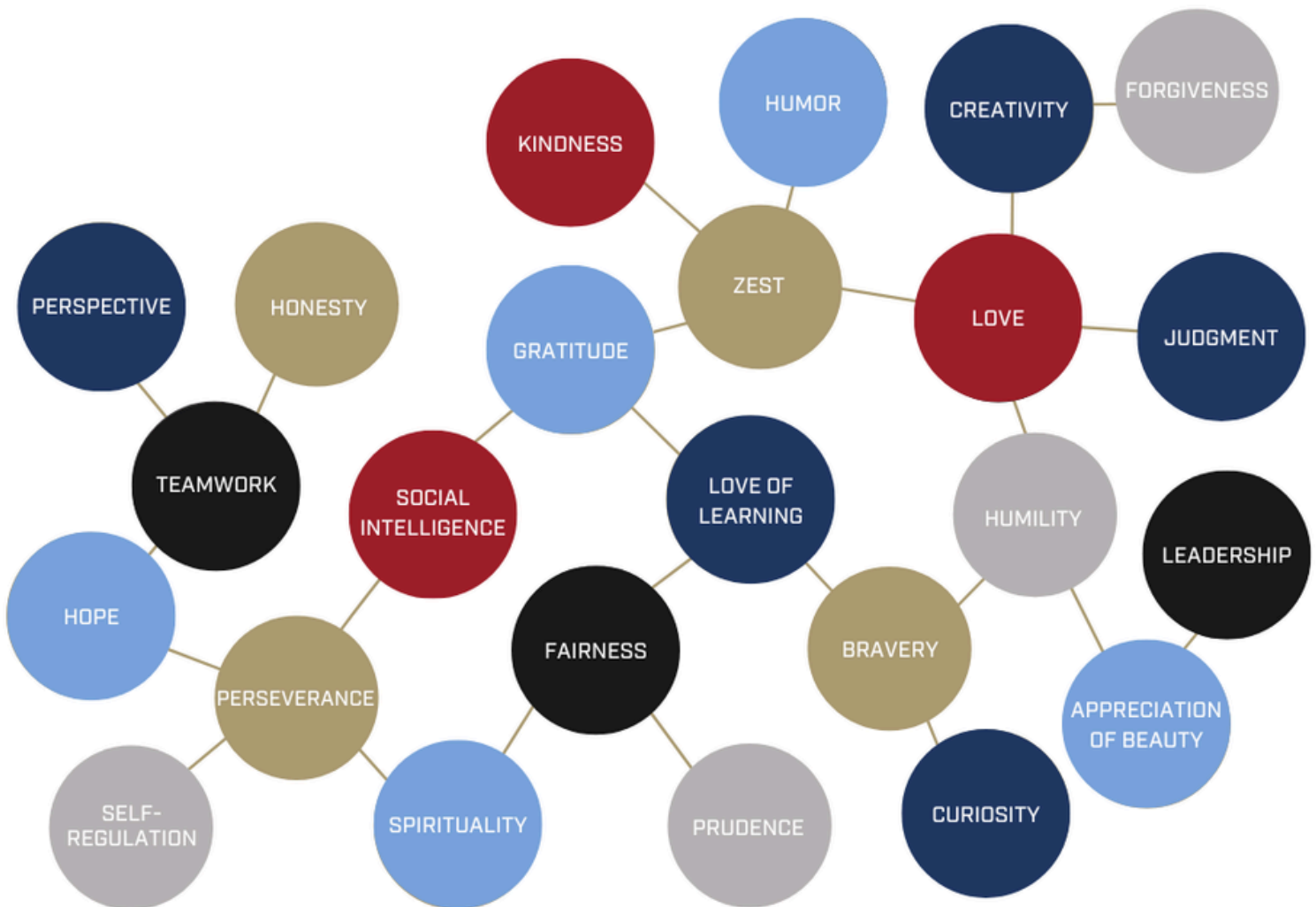
THANK A VETERAN

Using a blank sheet of paper or one of the templates on the following pages, encourage students to write a thank you letter to a veteran. Share these thought starters to help students get started. Veterans also love artwork. Younger students are welcome to draw pictures.

- Thank you for serving our country.
- I think you are brave because...
- I am grateful for veterans because...
- I think you are a hero because....
- Thank you for protecting our country's freedoms while serving.
- I think a veteran is _____ because...
- I think it is important to honor our veterans because....
- This Veterans Day, I want to share my gratitude because...
- Draw a patriotic picture



Drop the completed letters and pictures at a local veterans home. We also invite you to share pictures to social media to inspire others to thank veterans this Veterans Day. Don't forget to tag @travismanionfoundation in your post!



TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY



24 Character Strengths

Strength	Examples
Appreciation of Beauty Drawing inspiration from beauty and excellence	• Taking in the scenery on a hike or outdoor adventure • Enjoying artwork and exhibits at a museum
Bravery Standing firm in a personal value, despite opposition	• Moral Bravery: Standing up for something that you believe in • Physical Bravery: Doing something physically risky or that you are afraid of, like climbing a tree to save a cat
Creativity Imagining new and unique ways of thinking or doing things	• Finding unexpected solutions to problems
Curiosity Being open to experience and knowledge	• Asking questions as you learn something new • Enjoying trying new hobbies, sightseeing, or trying new foods
Fairness Promoting justice and equality	• Treating others with respect and promoting equality • Doing the right thing so that everyone feels included and respected
Forgiveness Being accepting of people's faults or mistakes	• Accepting others' apologies • Avoiding making the same mistake again after someone forgives you
Gratitude Being thankful for good things in life	• Thanking someone for something simple, such as holding the door • Sending a card in the mail to someone who has been thoughtful • Taking time to appreciate a special moment
Honesty Being genuine and taking responsibility for one's actions	• Having difficult conversations with others sometimes and owning your mistakes • Being yourself at home, at school, and with your friends
Hope Expecting the best and working toward it	• Being optimistic and looking at the glass as half full rather than half empty • Putting effort into whatever you do with a positive attitude
Humility Being modest about one's own accomplishments	• Finishing tasks or projects for your own enjoyment instead of doing things in order to get praise or recognition from others
Humor Enjoying making others smile or laugh	• Laughing together, sharing fun moments, and making friends smile
Judgment Examining all sides of an issue before making a decision	• Remembering that your decisions impact yourself and others



Strength	Examples
Kindness Taking care of others; being caring, generous, and considerate	• Holding the door for someone behind you • Sharing a snack with a classmate who forgot theirs • Inviting someone to sit with you at lunch
Leadership Motivating a group of people to achieve a goal	• Listening to the needs of others and making a decision that is best for the group • Taking care of those around you and making sure people trust your decisions
Love Valuing individual relationships with others	• Putting extra effort into special relationships and valuing the time you get to spend with those people
Love of Learning Always adding to one's knowledge and skills	• Enjoying going to museums, visiting new places, reading, and picking up new hobbies
Perseverance Finishing what you start, despite obstacles and setbacks	• Studying for a difficult math test or finishing homework before making plans with friends
Perspective Having a thoughtful point of view that others seek out	• Putting yourself in other people's shoes and imagining how you would feel in their situation
Prudence Considering outcomes and risks carefully before acting or speaking	• Making a pro/con list before making a decision
Self Regulation Being mindful of and responsible for one's own emotions and actions	• Thinking before you speak • Knowing what you need to do to stay calm in stressful situation
Social Intelligence Understanding what makes other people tick	• Being aware of others and their feelings, but also having awareness of who you are and how you function as a person
Spirituality Believing in one's purpose in life and place in the universe	• Knowing your passions and purpose in life • Having the unique ability to be in the moment • Feeling present with a sense of happiness, calm or peace
Teamwork Cooperating with others toward a common goal	• Listening to others, problem solving in a group, communicating in a way that is not bossy or one-sided, or finding what each person in the group is good at and using that to accomplish a goal
Zest Approaching life as an adventure with great enthusiasm	• Being highly energetic, enthusiastic about ideas or events, and able to excite other people about an idea or thought



PLANNING A VETERANS HOME VISIT

Shared Stories, Lasting Impact

Visiting your local veterans home is a great way for students of all ages to serve their community and connect with another generation. While these visits can help students learn about Veterans Day, veterans appreciate visits year-round. Here are some ideas to get you started.

- Locate a veterans home near you by visiting <https://nasvh.org/directory/>
- Connect with the activities coordinator or staff to inquire about visitation and volunteer guidelines
- Ideas for visiting:
 - Play board/card games
 - Bring picture books/children's books for younger students to read out loud to veterans
 - Organize arts and crafts for students to do with veterans
 - Offer to participate in existing activities that the veterans home has scheduled
 - Ask what their needs are and how your students can be helpful
- Inspire older students to interview veterans using some of the questions below. Students can record responses, take notes, or simply enjoy the conversation. Our veterans have a lot to share!
 - Encourage students to share their interviews in school with classmates. Pose thoughtful questions to students, such as:
 - How can you apply what you learned from this veteran to your own life?
 - What was the most meaningful part of your conversation?

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- What branch did you serve in and how long did you serve?
- Why did you decide to be a part of the military?
- Where did you travel [deploy] to?
- What was the most important lesson learned during your time in the military?
- Do you have a favorite or funny memory?
- What was the hardest part about boot camp or your initial training?
- How did you stay in touch with your family and friends?
- Why is it important to have both moral and physical bravery?
- What character strengths do you think are important to lead with in the military?
- What advice would you give to this generation?
- Allow the conversation to flow. Veterans can ask students questions, and students can come up with their own questions that are appropriate to ask veterans.



TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY 
FREEDOM

VETERANS DAY SUPPLEMENTAL CHILDREN'S READING LIST

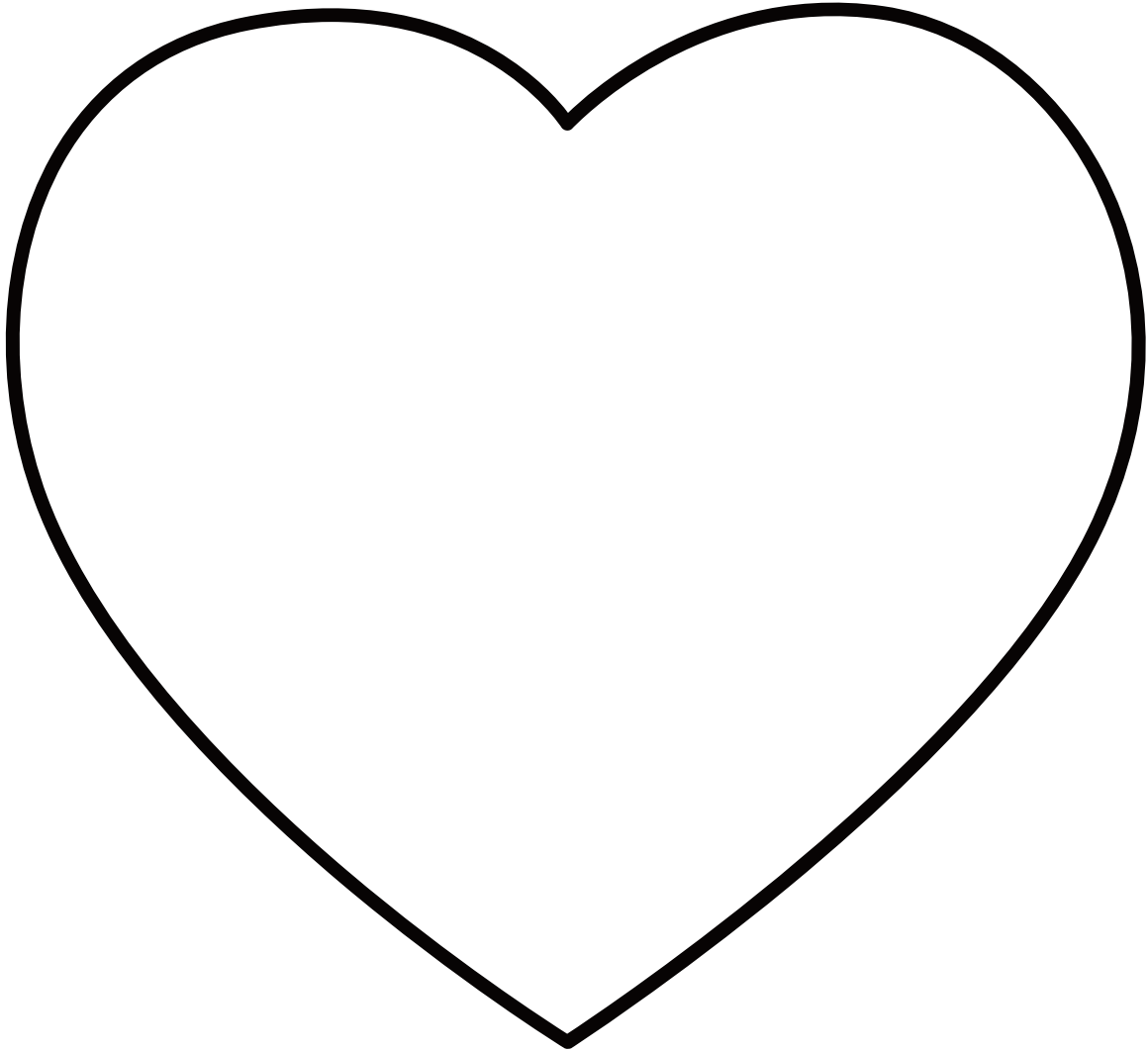
Inspire young readers to share an appreciation for our nation's veterans using this supplemental reading list. These stories will help students understand what it means to be a veteran and why we celebrate them each November.

For a deeper discussion, consider reading the book in advance, identifying key moments for reflection, and preparing thoughtful questions to encourage comprehension and conversation.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUGGESTED GRADE LEVELS
<i>Mr. Quigley's Keyes</i>	Barbara Gruener	K-5
<i>Otto's Tales: Today is Veterans Day!</i>	PragerU	K-2
<i>Veteran's Day for Grandpa</i>	Dee Smith	Pre K -1
<i>Hero Dad</i>	Melinda Hardin	K-2
<i>Hero Mom</i>	Melinda Hardin	K-2
<i>My Red Balloon</i>	Eve Bunting	Pre K- 2
<i>Letters To A Soldier</i>	David Falvey	3-6
<i>Veterans: Heroes in Our Neighborhood</i>	Valerie Pfundstein	Pre K - 2
<i>Nubs: The True Story of a Mutt, a Marine, and a Miracle</i>	Major Brian Dennis	3-6



Veterans are the



of America!



**TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION**

POWERED BY

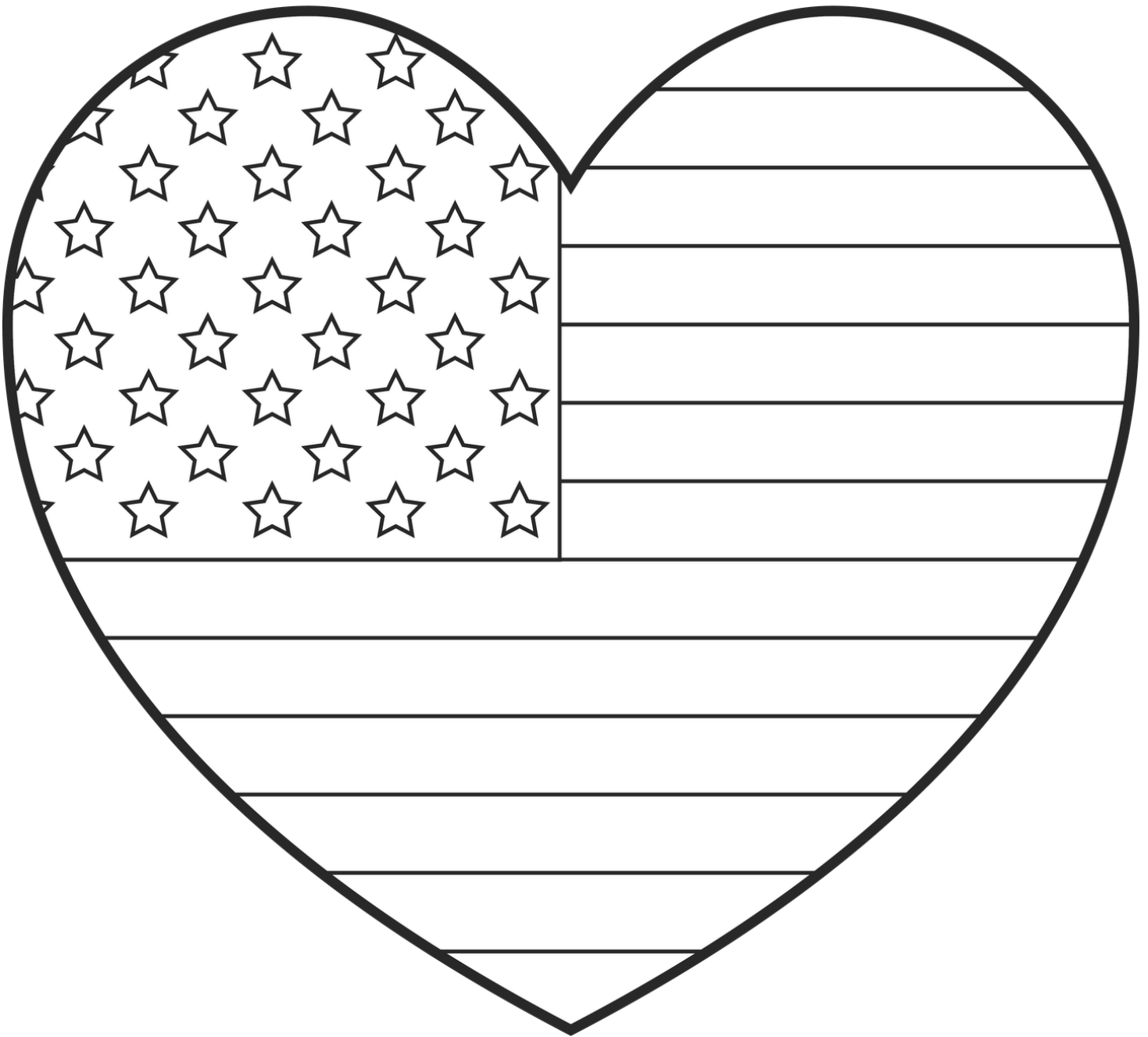


FREEDOM



THANK YOU,
VETERAN

THANK YOU, VETERAN!



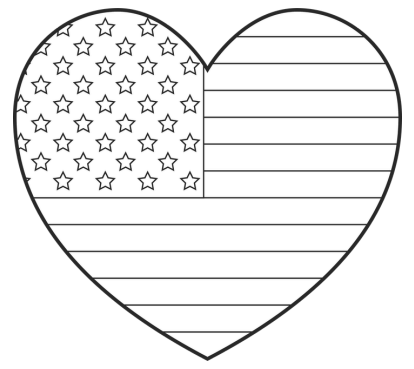
TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY



[illegible]

VETERANS DAY ACROSTIC POEM



V

E

T

E

R

A

N



TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY 
FREEDOM

A VETERAN IS ...



Name:



TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY



FREEDOM

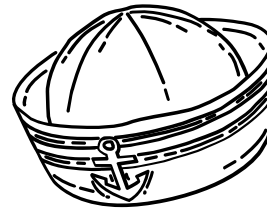
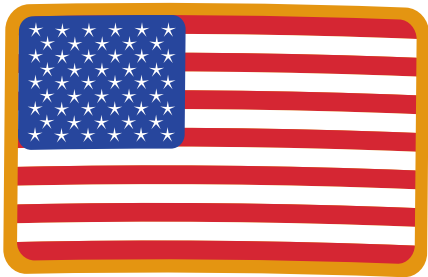
SAMPLE

A VETERAN IS ...



Coloring Area for Students

Use this area to draw American flags or military flags, hearts, military service members, patches, vehicles, or any other pictures related to veterans.



I think a veteran is brave because it takes courage to defend our country.

Name: _____



TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY 
FREEDOM

VETERANS DAY WORD SEARCH

Name: _____

I	Q	K	C	O	A	S	T	G	U	A	R	D	C	Y
I	K	D	M	I	L	H	V	S	Y	T	D	E	T	W
V	S	P	E	K	N	T	M	E	O	L	C	H	R	B
F	R	E	E	D	O	M	J	R	T	R	Q	H	S	J
D	C	K	Q	A	E	H	Q	K	O	E	F	L	A	G
X	J	K	T	E	A	M	I	F	I	F	R	F	Q	S
L	P	W	G	Y	R	U	E	J	I	C	I	A	A	M
A	A	B	N	M	N	C	W	O	E	X	E	F	N	M
M	R	R	P	A	A	H	T	E	X	C	T	S	T	X
E	M	A	C	P	V	C	W	U	R	R	E	C	W	T
R	Y	V	S	A	Q	Y	C	O	K	N	E	D	B	H
I	R	E	H	L	R	U	F	A	I	P	E	R	F	Q
C	P	B	Q	T	Z	R	D	R	S	G	I	I	R	M
A	S	J	A	C	I	N	A	E	A	V	S	G	M	I
S	T	O	V	A	N	M	R	F	Z	N	Z	W	G	G

COAST GUARD
AIR FORCE
FREEDOM
VETERAN

MARINES
BRAVE
TEAM
ARMY
SPACE FORCE

FLAG
NAVY
AMERICA
RESPECT



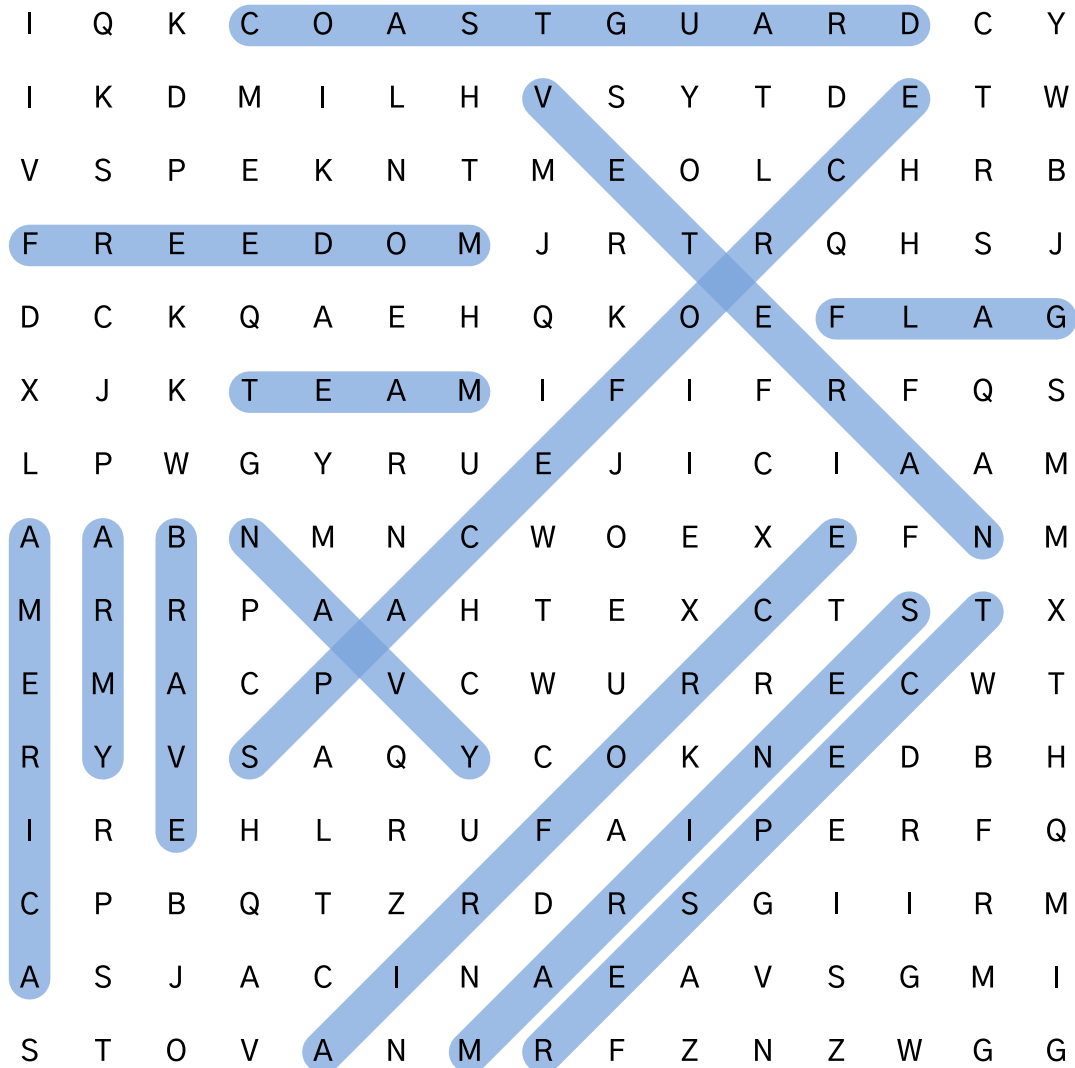
TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY



VETERANS DAY WORD SEARCH

ANSWER KEY



COAST GUARD
AIR FORCE
FREEDOM
VETERAN

MARINES
BRAVE
TEAM
ARMY
SPACE FORCE

FLAG
NAVY
AMERICA
RESPECT



TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY



VETERANS DAY WORD SEARCH

Name: _____

T	N	H	O	N	O	R	Y	X	A	M	E	R	I	C	A	W
Q	E	Q	I	F	H	C	K	K	B	M	Y	I	F	D	X	O
Y	Y	A	J	V	L	E	Z	P	O	T	R	P	C	D	Z	O
R	T	M	M	A	W	E	L	O	W	D	E	J	C	C	H	F
E	R	J	O	W	I	B	A	W	S	N	V	A	O	N	N	R
B	E	I	V	G	O	R	L	D	I	K	A	S	A	G	T	E
M	B	M	U	T	D	R	F	S	E	E	R	O	S	H	C	E
E	I	R	T	Z	F	O	K	O	S	R	B	L	T	J	E	D
V	L	S	P	A	C	E	F	O	R	C	E	D	G	K	P	O
O	H	E	A	P	Y	S	X	Y	I	C	P	I	U	M	S	M
N	E	Q	V	I	G	J	M	E	O	M	E	E	A	N	E	I
Q	D	A	A	D	N	R	K	Y	W	A	D	R	R	A	R	S
C	H	E	R	O	A	F	Z	N	N	R	A	T	D	V	N	D
Y	G	Z	V	E	T	E	R	A	N	I	R	O	X	Y	V	J
F	A	L	D	H	K	M	N	P	C	N	A	X	M	U	Y	P
J	L	O	E	A	P	X	M	Y	H	E	P	W	M	K	R	R
A	F	V	C	J	C	K	S	W	B	S	J	A	F	S	C	X

RESPECT
COAST GUARD
AIR FORCE
NOVEMBER
SOLDIER
AMERICA

VETERAN
MARINES
LIBERTY
FREEDOM
PARADE
LEADER
HONOR

BRAVERY
ARMY
NAVY
HERO
FLAG
TEAMWORK
SPACE FORCE



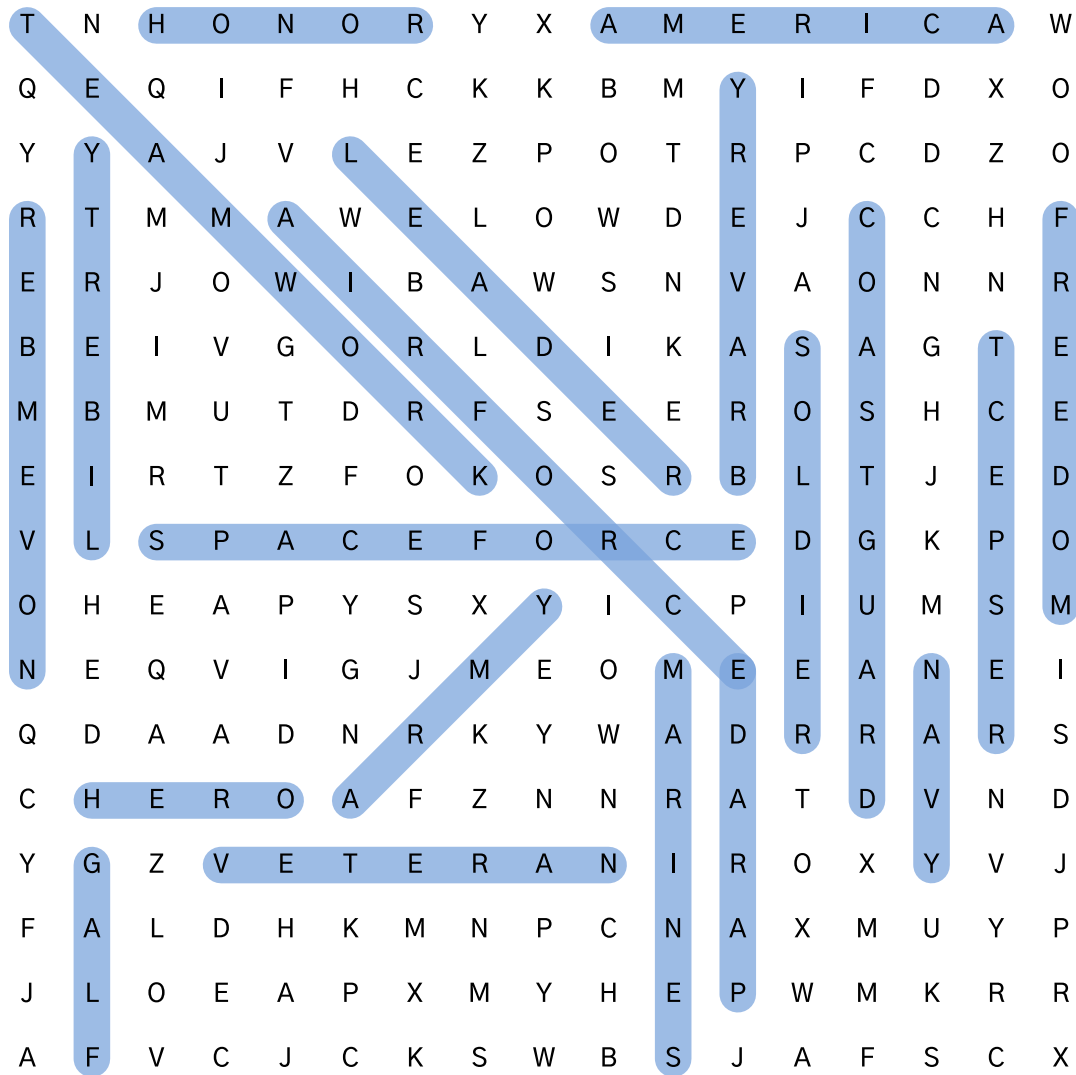
TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY



VETERANS DAY WORD SEARCH

ANSWER KEY



RESPECT
COAST GUARD
AIR FORCE
NOVEMBER
SOLDIER
AMERICA

VETERAN
MARINES
LIBERTY
FREEDOM
PARADE
LEADER
HONOR

BRAVERY
ARMY
NAVY
HERO
FLAG
TEAMWORK
SPACE FORCE



TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY



FREEDOM

VETERANS DAY WORD SEARCH

Name: _____

J K O O C Q J A J G E D A R A P W A S S
J S S Y G E I B I L Q E G C F U R I P P
Y G L X M R I X M A T J R O S N A D U W
Z W B X F R N A V Y J A C A P K R K F V
B R P O F Z A X H Q C P Z S G V T N R E
L F R E C R O F E C A P S T U E T O Q T
J C M P H X Q H S L E I H G C S K I T E
E M O D E E R F S E C L G U K E O T X R
R S A M J P B M E A N D W A V N J A G A
S L P J A R R S L D A X C R K I Z N G N
A P M T L E P X F E R P G D W R W F A X
Y M N I S S P S L R E P R R J A Q I R W
O R E P L J K X E H V J A T K M S W D D
G T E R K I G V S E E E T Y T R E B I L
K C K V I O T W K R S Y I F M V L R P R
T C Z Z A C H A P O R X T T Z F C Y O M
Q S I K W R A L R Z E R U M C C G N H U
Y G B A L H B Q E Y P A D X O I O E X V
I O P J S O L D I E R M E J L H U F X C
C H A R A C T E R D T E A M W O R K B G

GRATITUDE
PERSEVERANCE
COAST GUARD
CHARACTER
AIR FORCE
SELFLESS
TEAMWORK
MILITARY
SPACE FORCE

FREEDOM
LIBERTY
MARINES
VETERAN
AMERICA
SOLDIER
RESPECT
LEADER

NATION
PARADE
HONOR
BRAVERY
HERO
NAVY
ARMY
IF NOT ME THEN WHO



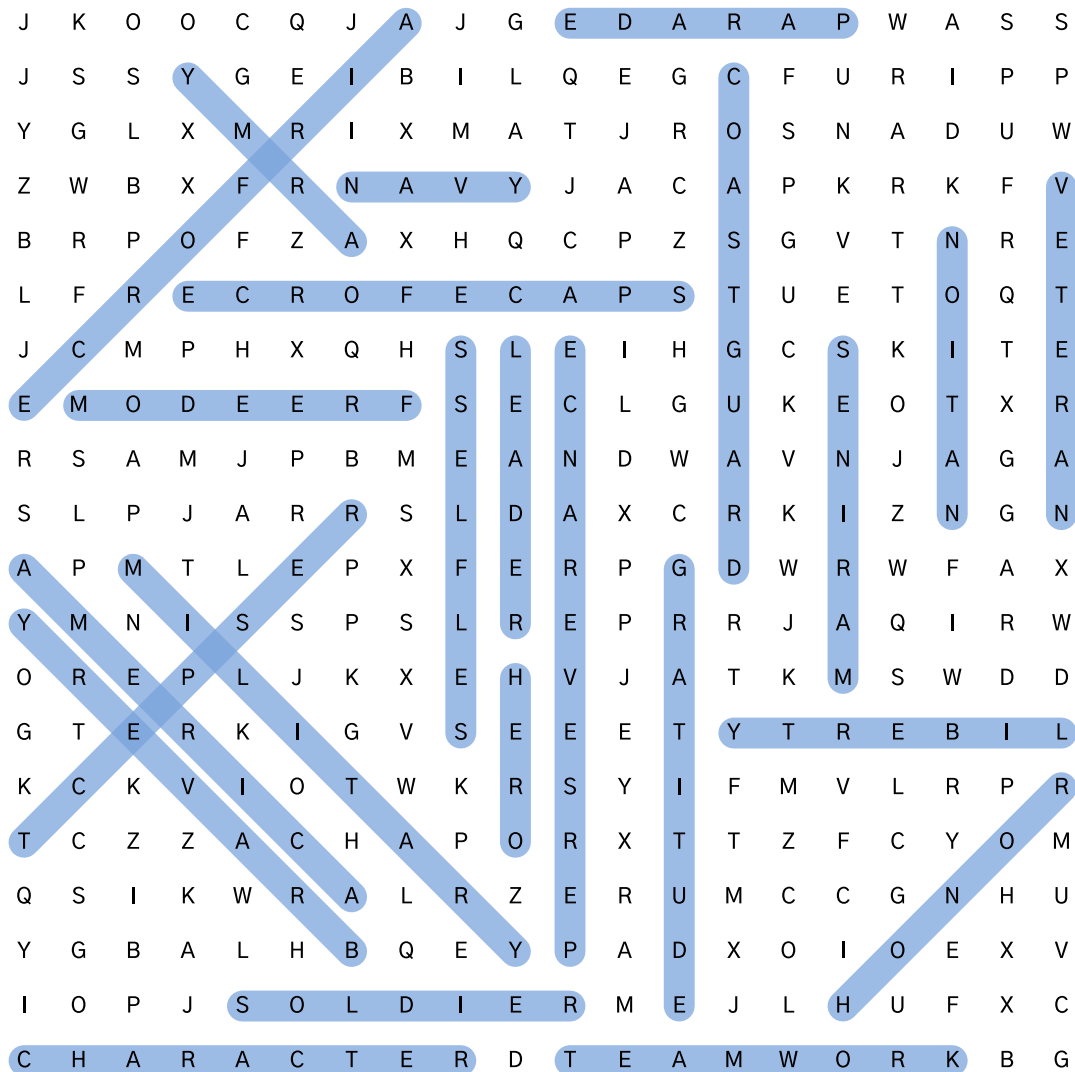
TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY



VETERANS DAY WORD SEARCH

ANSWER KEY



GRATITUDE
PERSEVERANCE
COAST GUARD
CHARACTER
AIRFORCE
SELFLESS
TEAMWORK
MILITARY
SPACE FORCE

FREEDOM
LIBERTY
MARINES
VETERAN
AMERICA
SOLDIER
RESPECT
LEADER

NATION
PARADE
HONOR
BRAVERY
HERO
NAVY
ARMY
IF NOT ME THEN WHO



TRAVIS MANION
FOUNDATION

POWERED BY

