

SummerReads: Memorial Day - Celebrating Memorial Day

by Alice Lee Folkins

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Taken by Adam Bond. Released into the public domain by the U.S. Air Force

The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds perform at an air show at Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi, April 2009..

Memorial Day is not just a day off from work or school for many people. To them Memorial Day is an important day to remember friends or family who have died while serving in the military. Many of the celebrations on Memorial Day include the military. For example, the Air Force may hold air shows where they fly special planes and jets for everyone to see. The Navy may also let people explore the inside of old battleships. Other military groups may hold drills to show how they do some of their tasks, like saving people from a burning ship.

Another way to celebrate Memorial Day is to fly the American flag at half-staff. Instead of flying the flag all the way to the top of the flagpole, the flag is raised only halfway. Take a look at the flags at police or fire stations. Many are raised at half-staff on Memorial Day. People also fly flags at half-staff on other days in the year to remember important people who have died.

In Washington, DC, people hold many events to celebrate Memorial Day. Arlington National Cemetery was a place where Union soldiers were buried in the Civil War. Since then, soldiers from other wars have also been buried in the Arlington National Cemetery. On Memorial Day, thousands of soldiers place a small flag on each grave. The president of the United States will also place flowers at the Tomb of the Unknowns at the Arlington National Cemetery. The Tomb of the Unknowns is a place to honor those who have died, even though we don't know the soldiers' names.

celebrate cel · e · brate

Definition

verb

1. to honor something or make it special by giving gifts or doing things that people enjoy.

Our family celebrates holidays with a special dinner.

We celebrated her birthday with a big party.

Advanced Definition

transitive verb

1. to observe or commemorate (an occasion or event), as with gifts, festivities, or special rituals.

They celebrated their daughter's birthday with a small party.

Christians celebrate Easter in the spring.

America celebrated its bicentennial in 1976.

2. to perform (a religious ceremony or ritual).

The priest will celebrate a special Mass on that day.

3. to praise or gratefully acknowledge.

His music celebrates freedom.

Every day I celebrate living in such a beautiful place as this.

intransitive verb

1. to observe or commemorate a happy occasion or event with special ceremonies or festivities.

She passed her exams, so now we're all celebrating.

Spanish cognate

celebrar: The Spanish word *celebrar* means celebrate.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. March is National Nutrition Month. You can **celebrate** this special month by learning how to eat healthfully.
2. Artists make pottery and other crafts. They often sell their crafts at powwows. A powwow is a festival that **celebrates** Native American life.
3. It is time to **celebrate** poetry. Poetry is a type of writing that lets people express, or show, their emotions. Some poems rhyme, and some do not.
4. Gothic architecture is light and airy. The buildings show the creativity of humans. Architects wanted to build cathedrals where citizens could **celebrate** God. The cathedrals are extremely impressive.
5. Maeve Wilson was in fourth grade the first time she went to the Lotus Lantern Festival in Seoul, the capital of South Korea. The festival **celebrates** the birthday of Buddha, the founder of the Buddhist religion.
6. The Rose Harvest Festival in Bulgaria takes place in June. People **celebrate** with folk music, dances, and traditional costumes. Many roses grow in Bulgaria. Those flowers are used to make products such as perfume and chocolate.
7. Independence Day takes place on July 4. It is the day the United States **celebrates** its freedom from British rule. People often wear the colors of the American flag, march in parades, and watch fireworks to **celebrate** this holiday.
8. After his decision to stay, Pedro announced that Brazil would be independent from Portugal. Today, Brazilians **celebrate** this moment in history with "I Remain Day," similar to our Fourth of July. Pedro's stance let Brazil gain freedom without fighting.
9. The Statue of Liberty is an American symbol of freedom. It is located on Liberty Island in New York City. The people of France gave the statue to the United States as a gift to **celebrate** the friendship between the two countries.
10. To **celebrate** Earth Day, people get together once a year to think about ways to protect Earth. But many people think that every day should be Earth Day. They say people should always work to stop and clean up the land and water.

memorial

me · mo · ri · al

Advanced Definition

noun

1. a ceremony, custom, or public structure to honor a dead person or past event.

Hundreds of people attended the memorial for the slain police officer.

The city erected a memorial for the soldiers who had been killed.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. The King **Memorial** is built on the National Mall.
2. The monument was built to honor the United States' first president, George Washington. It is a **memorial** to him.
3. Today they were going to the Lincoln **Memorial**. Nick had learned about it in school. He knew it was built to honor Abraham Lincoln.
4. The King **Memorial** opened in August of 2011. It has a 30-foot statue of King. Sentences from some of his speeches are carved into a stone wall.
5. He saw the big statue. The statue showed President Lincoln sitting down. Nick's father asked, "Nick, do you know what the **memorial** is made from?" "It is made from a stone called marble," Nick answered.

Definition

adjective

1. having to do with soldiers or armies.

Dan wore a military uniform.

noun

1. the armed forces.

Did you serve in the military?

Advanced Definition

adjective

1. of or pertaining to warfare or preparation for war.

The generals are developing a new military strategy.

These countries have strong military forces.

This type of gun is not used as a military weapon.

2. of, relating to, or having the characteristics of armies or soldiers.

He is buried in a military cemetery.

He walked with a military air about him.

He wore his military uniform at the wedding.

noun

1. the armed forces.

Did your father serve in the military during the war?

How much money does the government actually spend on the military?

One brother became a priest, and the other joined the military.

Spanish cognate

militar. The Spanish word *militar* means military.

These are some examples of how the word or forms of the word are used:

1. Caesar first became famous as a **military** commander.
2. The president is commander-in-chief of the country's **military**.
3. The president carries out laws and leads the U.S. **military**.
4. The **military** uses brass instruments, especially the bugle, for many reasons.
5. He proved to be a great speaker, writer, politician, and **military** leader.
6. Now, the United States **military** plays "Taps" at funerals and other serious ceremonies.
7. During World War II, Japanese **military** forces attacked a U.S. naval base in Hawaii called Pearl Harbor.
8. Another shows him as a **military** leader at age 45. At that time, he led the American army that fought the British for our nation's independence, or freedom.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1. Who are remembered on Memorial Day in the United States?

2. Describe two ways Memorial Day is celebrated.

Support your answer with evidence from the text.

3. What is the main idea of this text?

4. Read these sentences from the text.

"Another way to celebrate Memorial Day is to fly the American flag at half-staff. Instead of flying the flag all the way to the top of the flagpole, the flag is raised only halfway."

Why might the American flag be flown at half-staff on Memorial Day?

Support your answer with evidence from the text.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What is a meaning of the word **military**?

- A. formed into a structured or coherent whole
- B. characteristic of members of the armed forces
- C. free from external control and constraint

2. What is another meaning of the word **military**?

- A. confined to particular persons or groups or providing privacy
- B. of or relating to the study of the principles of warfare
- C. related to electricity (or electronics)

Please use each answer choice only once. Choose the one word that best completes the sentence.

3. For some words, the _____ signals and American Sign Language are different.

- A. militarily
- B. militaristic
- C. military
- D. militia
- E. militias
- F. militant

4. The ranks of the _____ were thinned and there was a general melee.

- A. militarily
- B. militaristic
- C. military
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- F. militant

5. Around 1900, English women had become very _____ in their fight for the vote.

- A. militarily
- B. militaristic
- C. military
- D. militia
- E. militias
- F. militant

6. The United States entered world war ii after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and emerged from the war as the most powerful nation, economically and _____, in the world.

- A. militarily
- B. militaristic
- C. military
- D. militia
- E. militias
- F. militant

7. The German Empire closely resembled the authoritarian and _____ Prussian state.

- A. militarily
- B. militaristic
- C. military
- D. militia
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- F. militant

8. In 1775, colonial _____ at Lexington and Concord fought the English.

- A. militarily
- B. militaristic
- C. military
- D. militia
- E. militias
- F. militant

9. Please write your own sentence using the word **military**.

10. What would you like to remember about the meaning of the word **military** so that you can use it when you write or speak?

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