

# Article of the Week #1

*The History of Veterans Day (1450L)*

**Instructions: COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS AND MARGIN NOTES using the CLOSE reading strategies practiced in class. This requires reading of the article three times.**

**Step 1: Skim** the article using these symbols as you read:

(+) agree, (-) disagree, (\*) important, (!) surprising, (?) wondering

**Step 2: Number** the paragraphs. **Read** the article **carefully** and **make notes in the margin**.

Notes should include:

- Comments that show that you **understand** the article. (A summary or statement of the main idea of important sections may serve this purpose.)
- Questions you have that show what you are **wondering** about as you read.
- Notes that differentiate between **fact** and **opinion**.
- Observations about how the **writer's strategies** (organization, word choice, perspective, support) and choices affect the article.

**Step 3: A final quick read** noting anything you may have missed during the first two reads.

Your **margin notes** are part of your score for this assessment. Answer the questions carefully in **complete sentences** unless otherwise instructed.

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Class Period \_\_\_\_\_

## History of Veterans Day

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m. The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926.

An Act approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day." Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word

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"Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated: "In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible."

On that same day, President Eisenhower sent a letter to the Honorable Harvey V. Higley, Administrator of Veterans' Affairs (VA), designating him as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee. In 1958, the White House advised VA's General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee's chairman.

The Uniform Holiday Bill was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97, which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans' service organizations and the American people.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

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**Comprehension questions – answers may be in phrases.**

1. *By what two other unofficial names is World War I regarded?*
2. *Ultimately, what three purposes does Veterans Day serve?*
3. *Define **proclamation** as used in the text.*
4. *Name three U.S. presidents mentioned in the text.*
5. *Define **cessation** as used in the text.*

8.RI.1,4

**2. Answer each question in one or more complete sentences.**

*By what other official name was Veterans Day once known?*

*What reasons are listed in the article for changing Veterans Day to a Monday, and in what year did this occur?*

*According to the text, what three organizations or groups of people supported moving Veterans Day back to November 1?*

8.RI.3,4,5,10

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3. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans does not include an apostrophe because it is not a day that belongs to veterans but is, instead, a day for honoring veterans (Veterans Day frequently asked questions). Considering that information and using what you already know, identify the following excerpts from the text as plural possessive, plural, or singular possessive.

“...regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.” \_\_\_\_\_

“...the reflections of Armistice Day...” \_\_\_\_\_

“...all veterans' organizations, and the entire...” \_\_\_\_\_

“...celebration to honor America's veterans...” \_\_\_\_\_

“...of Veterans Day to November...” \_\_\_\_\_

“...Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day...” \_\_\_\_\_

“...has served as the committee's chairman.” \_\_\_\_\_

“The United States Congress officially recognized...” \_\_\_\_\_

8.RI.4

4. Based on the reasoning presented in paragraph 7, explaining why the Uniform Holiday Act was passed. Was sound reasoning used in making this decision at the time? Did the decision show true recognition for veterans? Support your answer by citing directly from the text.

8.RI.8