**Veterans Day**

**Alumni Ambassadors Discussion Template**

**PLEASE USE THE BELOW INFORMATION AS A PRESENTATION TEMPLATE. THE PRESENTATION SHOULD RUN 15-20 MINUTES MAX.**

**GREETING**

Welcome and thank you for joining me today to talk a little bit about Veterans Day and its place in our community. I would like to thank [Teacher's Name] and [Principal's Name] for having me here today.

1. **Share a brief background on your military career**
2. Why I joined
3. What I wanted to accomplish
4. What I did in the military
5. A favorite memory I had while in service
6. One to two skills or lessons I learned from their time in the service and how they apply it to their current life

**2. The history of Veterans Day**

Veterans Day in the United States is a federal holiday observed annually on November 11th, honoring military veterans who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. The history of Veterans Day dates back to the end of World War I and reflects a deep respect for the sacrifices made by our servicemen and women.

**3. The difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day**

1. Memorial Day is a time to remember those who gave their lives for our country, particularly in battle or from wounds they suffered in battle.
2. Veterans Day honors all of those who have served the country in war or peace — dead or alive — although it’s largely intended to thank living veterans for their sacrifices.

**4. A Question and Answer session**

Challenge the students to think about their own ways of being of service to others and the positive effects these acts will have on their communities as well as themselves.

**QUESTION PROMPTS TO STUDENTS**

1. As Veterans, we often hear, “Thank you for your service.” What does service mean to you?
2. Who are others in your community that perform acts of service?
3. How can you be of service to your family, to your friends, and to your community?
4. What are two acts of service that you can commit to doing today? For a friend, for a family member, for a stranger?
5. How do you think these acts of service will make those people feel?
6. How do you think it will make you feel?

**CLOSING**

Thank you for joining me today to talk a little bit about Veterans Day. I would like to thank [Teacher's Name] and [Principal's Name] for having me here today.

**Inspirational Quotes**

“Wherever you turn, you can find someone who needs you.” Albert Schweitzer

“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.” – Arthur Ashe

### **Background and Supporting MATERIAL**

**Origins: Armistice Day (1919)**The holiday initially began as Armistice Day, commemorating the armistice agreement that ended World War I. This agreement was signed on November 11, 1918, at 11 a.m.—the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month—marking the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front. In 1919, President Woodrow Wilson declared November 11 as the first Armistice Day, honoring those who fought in "the war to end all wars." The day was meant to reflect on the sacrifices of those who served and to promote peace and diplomacy.

**WWI Quick Facts**

* Duration: July 28, 1914 - November 11, 1918
* America entered WWI on April 6, 1917, after Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare, and sinking civilian ships.
* American veterans: Approximately 4.8 million Americans served in WWI, with around 116,000 American deaths.

**Evolution into Veterans Day (1954)**Armistice Day originally focused on honoring veterans of World War I. However, following World War II and the Korean War, when millions more Americans served, its scope broadened. In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a bill into law officially changing the name from Armistice Day to Veterans Day, transforming it into a day to honor all U.S. military veterans, not just those from World War I.

**Significance of November 11**The significance of November 11 has been preserved as it marks the end of the "Great War." Although the holiday was temporarily moved to the fourth Monday in October in 1968 under the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, it returned to its original date in 1978 due to widespread public support for the traditional observance on November 11.

**Modern Observance**Today, Veterans Day is celebrated with parades, ceremonies, and moments of silence across the country. Unlike Memorial Day, which honors those who died in military service, Veterans Day is dedicated to recognizing all who have served living and those who have passed, whether during wartime or peacetime. It’s a time for Americans to thank veterans for their service and defending our country. It is also a time to reflect on all acts of service and how we, as ordinary citizens, might serve our communities and country as a whole.

**Current Statistics**Currently, about 18 million veterans are alive in the United States, representing all six branches of service: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Space Force.