

# Veterans Day Facts

*This article is provided courtesy of History.com.*

Veterans Day originated as “Armistice Day” on Nov. 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of World War I. Congress passed a resolution in 1926 for an annual observance, and Nov. 11 became a national holiday beginning in 1938. Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day—a common misunderstanding, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American service members who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.

## VETERANS DAY FACTS

- In 1954, President Eisenhower officially changed the name of the holiday from Armistice Day to Veterans Day.
- In 1968, the Uniform Holidays Bill was passed by Congress, which moved the celebration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. The law went into effect in 1971, but in 1975 President Ford returned Veterans Day to November 11, due to the important historical significance of the date.
- Britain, France, Australia and Canada also commemorate the veterans of World Wars I and II on or near November 11th: Canada has Remembrance Day, while Britain has Remembrance Sunday (the second Sunday of November). In Europe, Britain and the Commonwealth countries it is common to observe two minutes of silence at 11 a.m. every November 11.

## VETERANS STATS

The brave men and women who serve and protect the U.S. come from all walks of life; they are parents, children and grandparents. They are friends, neighbors and coworkers, and an important part of their communities. Here are some facts about the current veteran population of the United States.

***Did You Know?*** *There are approximately 23.2 million military veterans in the United States.*

- 9.2 million veterans are over the age of 65.
- 1.9 million veterans are under the age of 35.
- 1.8 million veterans are women.
- 7.8 million veterans served during the Vietnam War era (1964-1975), which represents 33% of all living veterans.
- 5.2 million veterans served during the Gulf War (representing service from Aug. 2, 1990, to present).
- 2.6 million veterans served during World War II (1941-1945).
- 2.8 million veterans served during the Korean War (1950-1953).
- 6 million veterans served in peacetime.
- As of 2008, 2.9 million veterans received compensation for service-connected disabilities.
- 5 states have more than 1 million veterans in their population: California (2.1 million), Florida (1.7 million), Texas (1.7 million), New York (1 million) and Pennsylvania (1 million).
- The VA health care system had 54 hospitals in 1930. Since then it has expanded to include 171 medical centers; more than 350 outpatient, community, and outreach clinics; 126 nursing home care units; and 35 live-in care facilities for injured or disabled vets.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is Veterans Day?

- A a holiday in Britain that falls on the second Sunday of November
- B a holiday in Canada that is observed on November 11th
- C a holiday in France that commemorates the veterans of World Wars I and II
- D a U.S. holiday that pays tribute to all American veterans

2. What does this article list?

- A the names of the veterans who served during the Vietnam-War era
- B the names of the veterans who served during World War II
- C facts about Veterans Day and veterans
- D the most common injuries suffered by American service members in battle

3. Read these sentences from the text:

"Veterans Day originated as 'Armistice Day' on Nov. 11, 1919, the first anniversary of the end of World War I. Congress passed a resolution in 1926 for an annual observance, and Nov. 11 became a national holiday beginning in 1938."

Based on this evidence, what might you infer about the importance of Armistice Day to Americans?

- A Armistice Day became increasingly important to Americans after 1919.
- B Armistice Day became less and less important to Americans after 1919.
- C Armistice Day was never very important to Americans.
- D Armistice Day was important to just a few Americans.

4. Veterans Day has undergone several changes since it originated in 1919.

What evidence from the text supports this statement?

- A Veterans Day is commonly confused with Memorial Day.
- B Veterans Day gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.
- C In 1968, Veterans Day was moved to the fourth Monday in October.
- D Britain, France, Australia, and Canada have holidays similar to Veterans Day.

5. What is the main idea of this text?

- A According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Day is commonly confused with Memorial Day.
- B Memorial Day honors American service members who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries received in battle.
- C Veterans Day is a holiday honoring the brave men and women who served and protected the U.S. during war and peacetime.
- D As of 2008, 2.9 million veterans had received compensation for service-connected disabilities.

6. Read these sentences from the text:

“Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day—a common misunderstanding, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American service members who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American **veterans**—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.”

What does “**veterans**” probably mean here?

- A citizens
- B former members of the armed services
- C soldiers who died in battle
- D politicians and other government officials

7. Read this sentence from the text:

“Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American service members who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.”

What word could replace “especially” without changing the sentence’s meaning?

- A instead
- B otherwise
- C consequently
- D particularly

8. How many military veterans are there in the United States?

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9. Read the paragraph that begins the "Veterans Stats" section of the article. This paragraph describes veterans as "the brave men and women who serve and protect the U.S." According to the paragraph, who are these brave men and women? Include at least three pieces of information in your answer.

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10. Imagine that you are describing Veterans Day to someone who has never heard of it. What information from the article would you share? In your answer, be sure to explain why you would choose this information to share.

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