



CLOVIS
VETERANS
MEMORIAL DISTRICT

2026 Veterans Day Art Contest Teacher's Guide- ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2026: “Happy Birthday America”

The mission of the Clovis Veterans Memorial District (CVMD) is to provide a permanent living memorial honoring U.S. Military and Veterans; provide facilities and support programs to promote a legacy of service for preserving our community's and country's foundational ideals. Veterans Day is an opportunity to honor and give thanks to those who have served or are serving in the military, those who preserve the American way of life.

The resources included in this Teacher's Guide can be used to talk to your class about the history of Veterans Day and introduce them to this year's theme: “Happy Birthday America,” celebrating the 250th anniversary of American independence.

History of Veterans Day:

Veterans Day is held on November 11th, which began as a celebration of peace after World War I ended. It was originally called Armistice Day, to celebrate the truce signed between America and Germany during World War I. In 1954 the name was changed to Veterans Day, to honor all veterans.

Resources for teaching your students about Veterans Day:

The Veterans Day Visitor by Peter Catalanotto

Veterans: Heroes in Our Neighborhood by Valeri Pfundstein

[Veterans Day and the Meaning of Sacrifice](#)

Why are we celebrating America's 250th Birthday?

On July 4, 2026, the United States marks 250 years since the adoption of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The theme “Happy Birthday America” invites students to explore the people, ideals, symbols, service, and sacrifice that have shaped our nation across 250 years. Veterans are an important part of that story: generations of Americans have served in the U.S. Armed Forces to defend the nation and the freedoms and ideals it represents. This anniversary gives us an opportunity to celebrate America's history while honoring those who have served.

What is the history of the Clovis Veterans Memorial District?

The Clovis Veterans Memorial District was created in 1946, just after World War II, when the people of Clovis wanted a special place to honor those who had served and sacrificed for our

country. Over the years, the District has grown into a center for the community, providing space for veterans' organizations, civic groups, schools, and families to gather. Its is centered on the ideals of **honoring veterans, educating the community, and inspiring future generations**. For almost 80 years, the District has kept that promise by hosting events like Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies, supporting local veterans, and sharing history through exhibits and programs at the Community Heritage Center.

Starting a conversation...

Introduce Veterans Day to your students and discuss why we honor our veterans. Review the meaning of America's 250th anniversary, the theme "Happy Birthday America," and the history of the Clovis Veterans Memorial District. Invite students to consider how service, sacrifice, citizenship, and community are part of America's story.

Discuss with the students.

- What does "Happy Birthday America" mean to you?
- What people, events, places, or ideas from America's 250-year history would you celebrate?
- What symbols or images represent America and its history to you?
- How have veterans and service members contributed to America's story over the past 250 years?
- How can we celebrate America's 250th birthday while honoring the service and sacrifice of veterans?

Resources

My First Election Day Adventure: A Children's Storybook about Voting by Ovenda Simon

Grandad Bud: A Veterans Day Story by Sharon Ferry

[National Constitution Center's Freedom Day Curriculum Guide](#)

[Teaching Laws, Rights, & Responsibilities](#)

Happy Birthday America:

“Happy Birthday America” Prompt:

In 2026, America celebrates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. For two and a half centuries, generations of Americans have helped shape our nation through service, courage, creativity, citizenship, and sacrifice. Veterans have played an essential role in that story by serving our country and helping defend its freedoms. The theme “Happy Birthday America” asks students to celebrate this historic milestone by showing what America’s 250-year story means to them and how veterans are part of that legacy.

Create and submit an illustration/drawing around the theme “Happy Birthday America.” Artwork may celebrate America’s 250th anniversary through its history, people, national symbols, freedoms, communities, or the service and sacrifice of U.S. veterans.

How to Enter:

Submit your artwork with Entry Form to the Visual & Performing Arts Department- 1690 David E. Cook Way, Clovis, CA 93611. If you have any questions regarding the contest, please call the Clovis Veterans Memorial District at (559) 299-0471.

Related History-Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools & Common Core Standards:

Kindergarten:

K.2 Student recognize national and state symbols and icons such as the national and state flags, the bald eagle, and the Statue of Liberty.

K.6 1. Identify the purpose of, and the people and events honored in, commemorative holidays, including the human struggles that were the basis for the events (e.g., Veteran’s Day...)

1st Grade:

1.3 2. Understand the significance of our national holidays and the heroism and achievements of the people associated with them.

2nd Grade

2.1 1. Trace the history of a family through the use of primary and secondary sources, including artifacts, photographs, interviews, and documents.

3rd Grade

3.3 Students draw from historical and community resources to organize the sequence of local historical events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3.7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

4th Grade

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

5th Grade

CCSS-ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9: Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.7: Conduct short research projects that that uses several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.