

Memorial Day

Last Monday in May



Background Information

Memorial Day observances in the United States began shortly after the Civil War, honoring the war dead of both sides. The official birthplace of Memorial Day, previously known as Decoration Day, is Waterloo, New York, where Henry C. Welles recommended decorating soldiers' graves in 1865. A committee worked out the details: flags at half-mast, flowers on graves, black mourning draperies, a parade, and speakers at the cemeteries. Other early observances occurred in Columbus, Mississippi; Boalsburg, Pennsylvania; and Belle Isle in the James River in Richmond, Virginia.

By 1868, ceremonies were held at the National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. New York was the first state to legalize the holiday. May 30 may have been chosen as the official date because it is the approximate anniversary of the surrender of the last Confederate Army. The observances of Memorial Day were important for healing the country's rift during the Civil War, which persisted even after the two world wars.

The official name of the holiday is Decoration Day, referring to the decorating of graves. Over the years, the day has come to be one of honoring all ancestors and loved ones who have died in war. Parades and ceremonies may feature members of the military, groups of children from groups such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America, and marching bands.

Perhaps the biggest event on Memorial Day is the 500-mile race at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Around the World

Australia and New Zealand honor their soldiers on Anzac Day. The countries of the Commonwealth (formerly British Commonwealth) observe Remembrance Day, also known as Poppy Day or Armistice Day, in honor of those who died in World War I.

Recommended Books

Ditchfield, Christin. 2003. *Memorial Day*. New York: Scholastic.

Nobleman, Marc Tyler. 2005. *Memorial Day*. Mankato, MN: Compass Point Books.

Memorial Day

Last Monday in May



Fascinating Facts

- Memorial Day was first called Decoration Day. It began in 1865.
- People began decorating graves after the Civil War to honor the dead soldiers. They decorated graves from soldiers of the North and the South. Many people were still upset about the war. These ceremonies helped heal those wounds.
- The day of May 30 was near the end of the Civil War. This is probably why it was chosen for the date.
- People now honor any dead soldiers on Memorial Day. They decorate the graves of family members or loved ones who have died.
- Flags are flown at half-staff on official buildings on Memorial Day.
- Many people fly flags on their homes. Parades and ceremonies at cemeteries help us remember those who have died.

Facts about the Civil War

- The Civil War was fought on the battlefield from 1861 to 1865.
- More than 600,000 soldiers died in the war. That was more than in World War I and II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War combined.
- Some women dressed up as men and sneaked into the army.
- Clara Barton, a famous nurse, took care of wounded soldiers.
- More than 23,000 men died during the Battle of Antietam.
- Disease killed two men for each one that died in battle. (Most men were killed by rifles.) Men got chicken pox, measles, and mumps. One million men got malaria. Many got dysentery.
- The Union army was from the North, and the Confederate army was from the South.
- Soldiers slept in tents and had to do their own cooking. They often ate hardtack biscuits. But they would often be full of bugs called weevils. They would dunk it in coffee, and the weevils would float to the top.
- President Abraham Lincoln, who fought to end slavery, led the Union during the war.



Name _____ Date _____

Mixed-Up Memorial

Directions: Use page 139 to help you unscramble the words below. Then unscramble the circled letters to answer the question.

<p>1. oMilemr aDy</p> <p>M _ e (m) _ o _ r _ i _ a _ l</p> <p>D _ a _ y</p>	<p>2. gfals</p> <p>_____ () _____</p>
<p>3. evsrga</p> <p>_____ () _____</p>	<p>4. darapse</p> <p>_____ () _____</p>
<p>5. iCvil aWr</p> <p>_____ () _____</p>	<p>6. seasdie</p> <p>_____ () _____</p>
<p>7. erisolds</p> <p>_____ () _____</p>	<p>8. norho</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>9. One million soldiers got this:</p> <p>_____</p>	





Name _____ Date _____

Memorial Sentence Search

Directions: This is something like a word search. You need to find words, but the words are connected to make a sentence. Follow these tips:

- The first word is YOU in the third row. The last word is ALIVE.
- The next word may start above, below, or next to the last letter (U).
- A word may go from left to right, up, or down.
- No words go backwards. No words go at an angle.
- A word does not change directions once it starts.
- Look for words that will make a good sentence.
- Write the sentence below.
- **Hint:** The sentence has seven words. This one is a saying by Les Brown about life and death.

Y	E	S	Y	O	U	C	A	N	Y	N	O
I	N	W	O	C	T	S	E	E	S	O	R
Y	O	U	L	A	N	B	Y	A	L	L	E
I	F	C	W	A	L	K	I	T	M	E	V
T'	H	A	T	O	U	T	T	O	E	N	I
S	M	N'	E	D	A	O	S	R	H	E	L
O	G	T	G	G	E	F	L	I	F	E	A
B	O	B	W	A	L	R	A	T	G	O	O
R	L	R	I	N	S	I	D	E	W	A	R

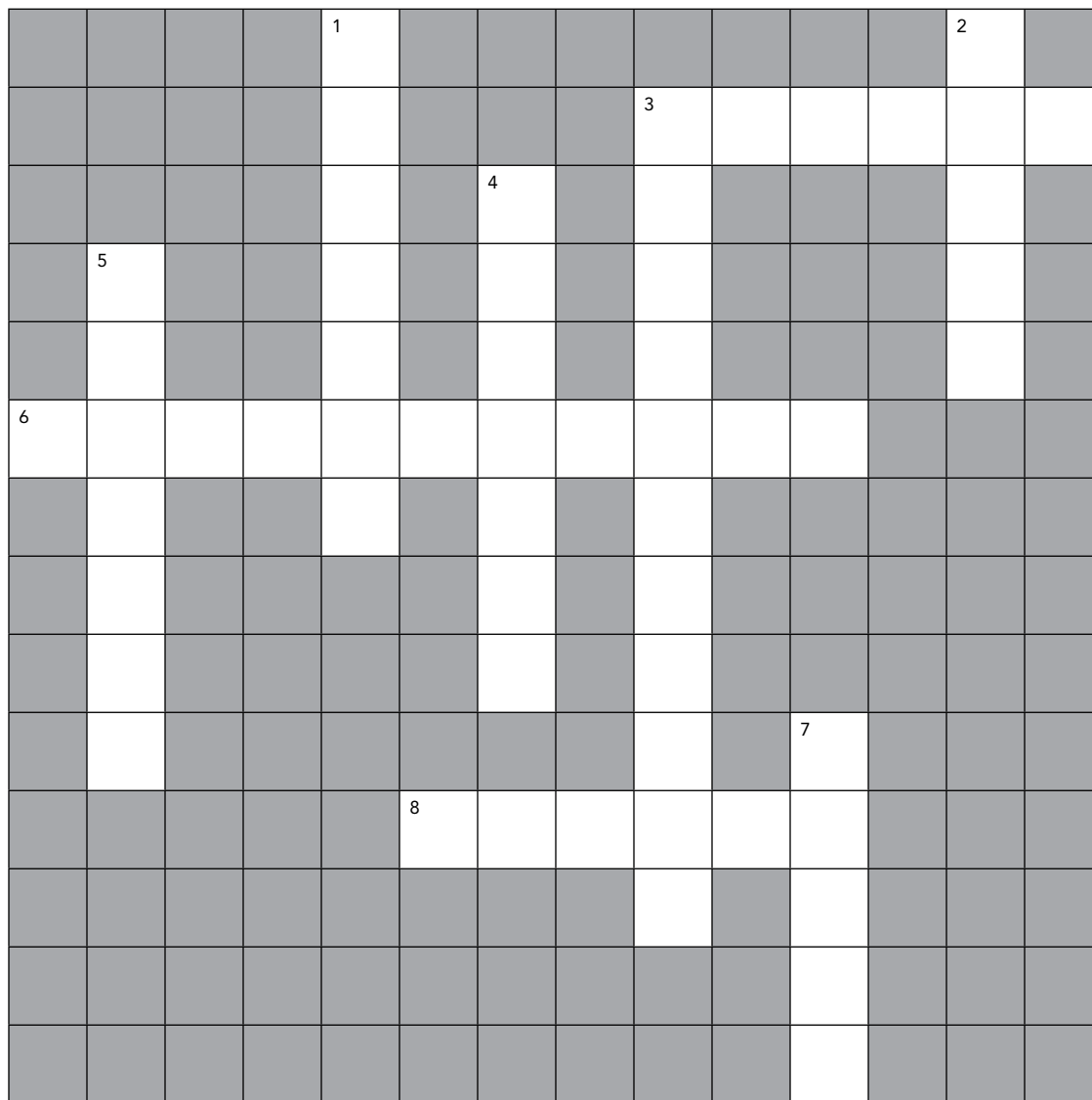
Write the saying here.



Name _____ Date _____

Civil War Madness

Directions: Use page 139 to complete the puzzle below.



Across

3. dunk biscuits in this drink
6. where soldiers fight wars
8. Clara's last name, a famous nurse

Down

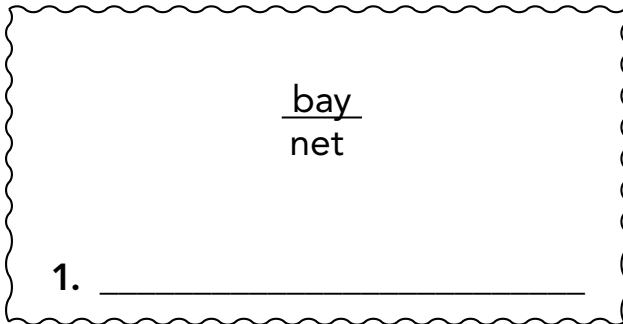
1. pests often found in hardtack
2. where soldiers slept
3. the army of the South
4. what soldiers wore
5. what President Lincoln ended
7. the army of the North

Name _____ Date _____



Memorial Day Word Puzzles

Directions: Each puzzle has something to do with the Civil War. Write the saying under each puzzle.



2.



+

tle of



+



- at + am

3.



+ pox

Directions: Each word can be scrambled into a new word about war. Write the new word on the line. The first letter is given to you.

4. lamed m _____

5. filer r _____



Name _____

Date _____

Memorial Day Memory Poem

Directions: Follow the steps to make a diamante poem about someone you want to remember or honor.

One word _____
(the subject of your poem)

Two words _____
(words that describe the subject, such as *brave, strong*)

Three words _____
(action words about your subject, such as *caring, loving*)

Four words _____
(a phrase about your subject, such as *always helping others succeed*)

Three words _____
(more action words about your subject)

Two words _____
(more words that describe the subject)

One word _____
(the same as line one or a new way to say the subject)





Balloon Rocket Game

Directions: Have fun on Memorial Day with these balloon rockets.

Materials

- bird seed
- funnel
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup measure
- long balloons in red, white, or blue
- 3 streamers in red, white, or blue, cut into 10-inch lengths



Steps

1. Funnel about $\frac{1}{3}$ cup bird seed into a balloon.
2. Blow up the balloon. Tie tightly.
3. Tie on the streamers.

Balloon Catch

1. Play outside. Start about three or four feet apart.
2. Each player tosses the balloon at the same time to the other.
3. If one player drops it, start again.
4. If both catch the balloon, take a step backward.
5. Play until someone drops a balloon. If it breaks, the birds get a treat! Be sure to pick up the broken balloon pieces.

Experiment

What happens with more or less bird seed? With longer or shorter streamers?