



IT'S NOT THE WAR WE KNOW.
IT'S THE WAR THEY FOUGHT.

VIETNAM **IN** HD

TEACHER'S GUIDE

CURRICULUM LINKS

Vietnam in HD would be useful for History, Politics, and Global Studies courses. The series includes intense content and imagery and is recommended only for mature high school students and college students. Viewer discretion is advised. Teachers should watch the program before showing it in class to make sure it is appropriate for their students.

PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY

Before watching this series, ask students to locate Vietnam and Cambodia on a map. Ask them to locate the following places: Hanoi, Mekong Delta, Saigon, Khe Sanh, Ia Drang Valley.

TERMS TO DEFINE

Before or after they watch, ask students to define the terms below. Students can also keep their own list of terms to define or new words they learn while watching the series.

- Cold War
- Containment
- DMZ
- Domino Theory
- Draft
- General William Westmoreland
- Ho Chi Minh
- My Lai Massacre
- National Liberation Front
- Ngo Dinh Diem
- Pentagon Papers
- Tet Offensive
- Viet Cong
- Vietnamization

Those who lived through the Vietnam War era will never forget the way it changed their lives and profoundly affected world politics.

But for many young people, the war in Vietnam is a conflict they may know very little about. HISTORY® is proud to present *Vietnam in HD*, an all-new six-hour miniseries. This series captures the war through the eyes of those who experienced it firsthand. Culled from thousands of hours of rarely seen footage, much of it taken by soldiers and combat journalists, this series touches down into the drama of the war at key turning points.

Narrated by actor Michael C. Hall, the series covers many of the major events in the war from its origins through the Fall of Saigon in 1975. The words and recollections of ten Vietnam War veterans, an Army nurse, the wife of a POW, and a UPI reporter are voiced by popular actors throughout the series.

Viewers will also see how the war unfolded against a backdrop of domestic change and upheaval within the U.S. *Vietnam in HD* tells the story of the Vietnam War to a new generation of viewers, giving them insights into the causes and consequences of this tumultuous era.



THIRTEEN VOICES REVEAL THE TRUTH OF VIETNAM

VOICE BY
BARRY
ROMO



VOICE BY
ADRIAN
GRENIER

VOICE BY
JOE
GALLOWAY



VOICE BY
EDWARD
BURNS

VOICE BY
KEITH
CONNOLLY



VOICE BY
KEVIN
CONNOLLY

VOICE BY
CHARLES
BROWN



VOICE BY
BLAIR
UNDERWOOD

VOICE BY
ELIZABETH
ALLEN



VOICE BY
TEMPESTT
BLEDSOE

VOICE BY
RAYMOND
TORRES



VOICE BY
JERRY
FERRARA

VOICE BY
KARL
MARLANTES



VOICE BY
ZACHARY
LEVI

VOICE BY
ARTHUR
WIKNIK



VOICE BY
JAMES
MARSDEN

VOICE BY
ANNE
PURCELL



VOICE BY
JENNIFER
LOVE HEWITT

VOICE BY
DON
DEVORE



VOICE BY
GLENN
HOWERTON

VOICE BY
GERY
BENEDETTI



VOICE BY
ARMIE
HAMMER

VOICE BY
JAMES
ANDERSON



VOICE BY
DYLAN
MCDERMOTT

VOICE BY
BOB
CLEWALL



VOICE BY
DEAN
CAIN

VIETNAM IN HD

EPISODE GUIDE

HOOR ONE – DATES: 1964-1965
MAJOR BATTLE: IA DRANG VALLEY

Hour One sets up the United States' reasons for becoming involved in Vietnam. Beginning with the advisor relationship in the 1950s through the landing of the ground troops, the U.S. was attempting to support South Vietnam in the face of aggressions from the Viet Cong and the communist North. In short, the Cold War became hot in Vietnam.

HOOR TWO – DATES: 1966-1967
MAJOR BATTLE: DAK TO

Hour Two takes the viewer inside the world of "search and destroy." The idea is that U.S. forces will drive the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese (NVA) out of the South by waging a war of attrition. The year 1966 is one of unprecedented escalation, with U.S. troop strength in Vietnam rising from 180,000 at the start of the year to 389,000 at the end. For the 19- and 20-year-old American troops, it is clear that Vietnam is not their father's war. By the end of 1967, public support for the war is severely dropping.

HOOR THREE – DATE: 1968
MAJOR BATTLES: TET OFFENSIVE AND KHE SANH

In mid-January 1968, the North Vietnamese (NVA) surround and

attack the Marine base at Khe Sanh, shocking the American forces and the public back home. Less than two weeks later, what becomes known as the Tet Offensive is launched. It is the largest enemy offensive of the entire war; more than 120 cities, towns and installations are simultaneously hit. Though U.S. forces prevailed, it seems that the war in Vietnam may not be winnable.

HOOR FOUR – DATES: 1968-1969
MAJOR BATTLE: HAMBURGER HILL

Although severely depleted after the Tet Offensive, North Vietnamese forces take advantage of the American social and political upheaval. May 1968 is the deadliest month of the entire war – 2,169 Americans are killed in action. In June 1968, General Creighton Abrams replaces General William Westmoreland as overall commander in Vietnam. The episode culminates in the battle for Hill 937 in the A Shau Valley.

HOOR FIVE – DATES 1969-1970
MAJOR BATTLE: GROUND INVASION OF CAMBODIA

Hour Five focuses on Vietnamization – President Nixon's newly proclaimed policy in Vietnam, implemented in June 1969, to

begin the process of handing responsibility for the war over to the South Vietnamese through training, supply and the gradual withdrawal of U.S. ground troops. It is the beginning of the end for America's war in Vietnam, though an invasion into Cambodia seemed to further entrench U.S. forces. Vietnam is reaching its peak of controversy; American soldiers return to an extremely hostile home front.

HOOR SIX – DATES 1970-1975
MAJOR BATTLE: OPERATION LAM SON 719

Hour Six takes the viewer inside the final years of America's involvement in Vietnam. In February and March 1971, South Vietnamese troops fight valiantly but fail to achieve victory in Operation Lam Son 719. On August 11, 1972, the last American ground combat troops are withdrawn. On April 30, 1975, Saigon falls when North Vietnamese troops overrun South Vietnamese soldiers. Although American forces are no longer involved, the Fall of Saigon is widely seen as a final exclamation point on the failure of the U.S. war effort in Vietnam.



ACTIVITIES

- 1. Creating Context.** The Vietnam War was a complex conflict. Ask students, working in groups, to research the war and choose 15 events they think are most important. Then, have them create an illustrated timeline using PowerPoint or on a poster. (Events students may want to include: 1954 Geneva Accords, NLF formed, First U.S. Combat Death, Diem Overthrown, Gulf of Tonkin attack, Pentagon anti-war protests, Tet Offensive, My Lai massacre, Vietnamization, U.S. troops leave Vietnam, Fall of Saigon.)
- 2. Pathways to War.** An attack by the North Vietnamese navy against the *USS Maddox* in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1964 prompted Congress to pass a resolution granting President Lyndon Johnson the power to commit U.S. military resources to the war in Vietnam. Ask students to visit the National Archives' Our Documents site, www.ourdocuments.gov, and locate the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. First, have students read the resolution aloud and discuss it. Then, have them write a short synopsis of the resolution and its meaning.
- 3. First-Person Perspective.** *Vietnam in HD* focuses on the stories of those who experienced the war firsthand. Ask students to choose one of the people in this series and write a short description of their unit, branch of service and role in the war. Students can also write short letters from the perspective of the person they chose. Students should also consider the perspective of Vietnamese soldiers and civilians affected by the war.
- 4. In Their Own Words.** The Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress has collected many oral histories with Vietnam veterans. These oral histories show the diversity of experiences among those who served. Ask students to visit their website at www.loc.gov/vets and search the Vietnam War collection (select "digitized" to find video interviews). Each student can pick one veteran's story and write a short synopsis to share with the larger group.





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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WEBSITES

Learn more about the Vietnam War on History.com: www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war

Learn about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Call for Photos: www.vvmf.org/photos

View a teacher's guide from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund: www.vvmf.org/education

The Smithsonian's National Museum of American History Price of Freedom exhibit:
www.americanhistory.si.edu/militaryhistory

BOOKS

Fitzgerald, Frances. *Fire in the Lake: The Vietnamese and the Americans in Vietnam*. (Back Bay Books, 2002).

Karnow, Stanley. *Vietnam: A History*. (Penguin, 1997).

Kovic, Ron. *Born on the Fourth of July*. (McGraw Hill, 1976).

O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried*. (Houghton Mifflin, 1990).



VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND AND EDUCATION CENTER AT THE WALL HOMETOWN HEROES: SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund National Call for Photos is a campaign to collect a photograph for each of the more than 58,000 men and women whose names are inscribed on The Wall. Collected pictures will be used in the Education Center at The Wall. (Visit www.buildthecenter.org to learn more about the Education Center and the proposed Wall of Faces exhibit.) After the September 2009 launch of the National Call for Photos, VVMF engaged the Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress in creating the Hometown Heroes Service Learning Project.

The goal of the project was to collect photos and stories of those on The Wall and those who returned. This unique extracurricular project was originally developed by Cindy Galloway, a teacher at Lewiston Middle School in Lewiston, Michigan, to encourage her students to find information about their Hometown Hero, Michael Jonas Pynnonen. The story of Michael Jonas Pynnonen was included in VVMF's most recent collection of stories, *Dreams Unfulfilled: Stories of the Men and Women on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*.

Visit www.buildthecenter.org

The Service Learning Project is split into three parts:

- Remembering Those Who Sacrificed helps motivate students to learn more about local veterans who gave the ultimate sacrifice and to send the pictures and stories of those on The Wall to VVMF for use in the Education Center on the National Mall.
- Honoring Those Who Served encourages students to preserve the legacy and stories of those who served in our nation's military during a conflict and to preserve these stories in written or oral format.
- Honoring Those Who Served and Sacrificed encourages the students to hold a ceremony for veterans and their families on Memorial Day and Veterans Day. This project not only inspires today's youth to learn about those who sacrificed their lives in Vietnam but also to learn and preserve the stories of those who served in Vietnam.

