

0807

NE/NEG



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Jason Ajello Date: 11-21-23

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Name of School: Our Lady of Good Counsel Grade: 7

Number of Words in Essay: 366

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: Bernard H Eldredge Branch 226

Sponsor's Address: 466 Hawthorne Ave.

City: Staten Island State: NY Zip: 10314-4231

Parent/Guardian Permission: I understand that my student is participating in FRA's Americanism Essay Contest and authorize FRA to publish photos of him/her if he/she should receive recognition for this entry.

Parent/Guardian Name: Kelly Ajello

Parent/Guardian Signature: Kelly Ajello

Note: Please type or write legibly.

PLEASE USE THIS FORM ONLY - NO OTHER ACCEPTED

1st Place
7th grade



“What Memorial Day Means to Me”

When I first began to think about what Memorial Day means to me, I remembered attending the Memorial Day Parade each year on Forest Avenue with my family. I also recalled stories from my grandfather and about my great-grandfather and how they had served our country. Despite my trips down the parade route each year and hearing the stories about my grandfathers serving in wars that I was not familiar with, Memorial Day had previously been more about barbecues with family and a long weekend just before the end of the school year.

This past Saturday, November 11th, my understanding of Memorial Day changed forever when I attended the Clearbrook Veterans Day Celebration Dinner. I was invited by a classmate's father to attend the event and to help serve food to a group of Veterans. I did not expect that the experience would prepare me to write this essay or that it would permanently change my view of Memorial Day.

My role at the event was to serve food to the Veterans who had made it home from foreign wars; yet, what struck me most was the way in which these Veterans honored others who never made it home from war. When each Veteran approached the buffet line, gathered up their food and made their way to a table, there was one table in the room that remained unoccupied. I later stopped by the table to get a closer look and learned that it was called a “missing man table”, also known as a “fallen comrade table” that was set up to honor fallen, missing or imprisoned military service members.

After meeting many Veterans that night, and watching them pass the “missing man table”, I gained a better understanding of the importance of Memorial Day. I thought about the families of those who never came home, the ones who died to ensure that we continue to live freely here in the United States. The empty table now helps me appreciate when there is a full table at my own family barbecue on Memorial Day and teaches me never to take for granted the sacrifices that these men, women and their families have made for us all.

wc



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

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Name of School: Saint Andrew's Episcopal Grade: 7th

Number of Words in Essay: 340

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: Branch 101 - Richard Ruiz / Erin Stacey

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Parent/Guardian Name: Nikki Marcel

Parent/Guardian Signature: Nikki-M

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*2nd Place
7th grade*



What Does Memorial Day Mean to Me?

What does Memorial Day mean to me? That's a great question. Memorial Day is held on the last Monday of May, and holds a place in the hearts of all Americans. For me, it is not just a day marked on the calendar like any other, but a reminder of sacrifice, freedom, and commemoration for those who gave their lives for us. For example my Great Uncle Craig fought in the Vietnam War, and died due to the effects of Agent Orange soon after I was born. I never met him, but I've heard many stories of his heroism, intelligence, and love for his country.

Memorial Day serves as an important reminder of the countless men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for us. It is a day to commemorate those who died for the well-being of our country. It is also a day to reflect on the bravery and courage of those who faced the terrible conditions of war.

Memorial Day is also a day to express our gratitude for the sacrifices made by our military members. It is not only a day of mourning but a celebration of lives dedicated to protecting the freedom that defines our country. The freedoms we enjoy today come at a cost, and this day encourages me to consider the size of that sacrifice they made.

Memorial Day is a special day when we remember and thank the brave people who gave their all for our country. It's about more than just barbecues and picnics. It's a day to appreciate the freedom we enjoy every day. Because of them, we get to speak our opinions, follow our dreams, and live in a place where everyone is free to do as they like.

In conclusion, Memorial Day is a reflective day for me. It is a day of commemoration, a moment to express gratitude for the sacrifices of those who died while serving our country, and a celebration of the freedom we earned because of them.

SE



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Izabella Wynn Date: 11/20/23

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Name of School: Seneca Middle Grade: 7

Number of Words in Essay: 350

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: Joyce M. Jones / 015-SC, Welhella

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Parent/Guardian Name: Tiffany Wynn

Parent/Guardian Signature: Tiffany Wynn

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3rd Place
7th grade



What Memorial Day Means to Me

To me, Memorial Day is a time where I can respect those who have fallen for me and my country. A time where I can pay my respects to the courageous people who gave their lives in the military. Their bravery and courage soars high with the glorious Bald Eagle.

Memorial Day; a day of sorrow and respect. A day reserved for the men and women who are now with God. The men and women who fought with such bravery and spirit. The people who protected America. Now they lay in hallowed ground, side by side. Everyday people look in awe at the white stones that stand strong on emerald grass. People leave silky, freshcut flowers on their graves. 400,000 veterans have been laid to rest in the national Arlington cemetery and 1.7 million people have visited them. 1.7 million people have gone to pay their respects.

Memorial Day; It's more than just a day. It's a memory, a respect, it's an honor to those who have died in action. On Memorial Day I take time to research and learn about the valiant soldiers who died for America. These soldiers who were heroic, these soldiers who left their warm families to serve, these soldiers who died on different days as they fought for our country.

Memorial Day; the day the American flag is flown at half-staff from sunrise to noon. The American flag that represents everything, freedom, opportunity, hope, joy, *everything*. It waves at half-staff in honor to the many veterans who died in war.

Memorial Day; A day where I can look and see the bold people who served. The people who left everything behind to go to the military. The men and women I respect most.

Memorial Day; The last Monday of May. A day where many shed tears, a day where many people look at white stones and leave roses, a day dedicated to the gallant men and women who died in action, the men and women who fought for our country.

Memorial Day; A day for them.

7-6

NW



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Adeline Maynes Date: 20 Nov 23

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Name of School: Coupeville Middle School grade: 8th

Number of Words in Essay: 288

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: Branch 97

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Parent/Guardian Permission: I understand that my student is participating in FRA's Americanism Essay Contest and authorize FRA to publish photos of him/her if he/she should receive recognition for this entry.

Parent/Guardian Name: Lara Maynes

Parent/Guardian Signature: Lara Maynes

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1st Place
8th grade



What Memorial Day Means to Me

Memorial Day means a great deal to me. It means honoring the sacrifice and courage of those who have lost their lives in military service to our country. When I think of Memorial Day, the image of my father comes to mind. What if he was the one who we were honoring? What if one day, the United States Navy informed my family that he had been killed? How would this make me feel? Memorial Day brings a lot of important questions to mind.

I feel I can understand the meaning of Memorial Day better than most. Just thinking about how sad I am when my dad deploys for six months at a time, and then magnifying that feeling if he were never to come home. For military kids, this is a realistic worry. We never know when something unexpected might happen. For example, my dad was on an aircraft carrier when the previous Commanding Officer was removed. As the Executive Officer, he had to take charge and do both jobs. It is incredibly daunting to think that Memorial Day could come around and my family would be the ones honoring a family member lost in service. These experiences as a military kid make me feel that I can understand what Memorial Day means in a significant way.

All of these reasons make me think about how incredibly grateful I feel to have a dad who serves in the United States Navy and is still with us, when some families do not have that privilege. All of my experiences have led me to believe that what Memorial Day means to me is honoring the sacrifice and courage of those who have fallen in military service to our country.



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Genevieve Miranda Date: 11/27/2023

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E-Mail Address: JerryUCSD@yahoo.com

Name of School: Frost Middle School Grade: 8

Number of Words in Essay: 349

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: Gerald Miranda, Branch 70

Sponsor's Address: 8920 Rhyme Ct

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Parent/Guardian Name: Gerald N. Miranda

Parent/Guardian Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Note: Please type or write legibly.

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god place
gill gaede



What Memorial Day Means to Me

Memorial Day celebrates the sacrifices of veterans who lost their lives protecting the United States at home and abroad, in war and in peacetime, at sea, or on the front lines. These veterans paid with their lives to make the world a safer and better place, giving me the opportunity to grow up in a free country. To me, remembering these veterans is significant because I come from a family that has served our nation for four generations. Memorial Day gives me the time to reflect on my family's service and makes me appreciate the things that I have like a good home, a good education, and my parents.

Some of my friends don't appreciate what this day really means since they don't have family members in the military. They use the day to sleep in and go shopping because there is no school. However, I see it differently. Of the 11 federal holidays, Memorial Day is the one that holds the most personal significance to me because of my dad's naval career and now my brother's service.

As a military child, I have learned the importance of sacrifice. I moved four times, and my dad was deployed more than eight times when I was younger. Not having him around made me realize the struggle and hard times the families go through when their soldiers and sailors die for our country. I've learned to appreciate the veterans who fought for our freedom to preserve our way of life. They served their country with honor, and they should be remembered.

When I was young, I didn't know what Memorial Day was for, but as I grew up, I realized its importance. We all mourn the loss of our loved ones differently, but Memorial Day brings us all together not to mourn but to celebrate the lives of these men and women who died to make America not only safe but a better country for their kids. In the future, I truly hope that many more Americans will come to understand the special meaning of this holiday.

EC



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Victoria Senyo Date: 12/1/23

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Name of School: Benjamin Tasker Middle School Grade: 8th

Number of Words in Essay: 349

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City: Arnold State: MD Zip: 21012-1947

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Parent/Guardian Name: Gifty Senyo

Parent/Guardian Signature: 

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*3rd Place
8th grade*



“What Memorial Day Means to Me”

Memorial Day holds a significant place in my heart as it epitomizes the utmost sacrifice made by countless brave men and women who selflessly laid down their lives in service to our great nation. As a middle school student, I recognize that this day carries a profound meaning that goes beyond the barbecues and long weekends. Memorial Day is a time for reflecting on the dedication and patriotism displayed by our fallen heroes; Honoring their sacrifices, and expressing our gratitude.

For me, Memorial Day serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by members of the armed forces. It's a day to express gratitude for their unwavering commitment to protecting the freedom and values we cherish. Whether it be soldiers who fought in World War II, the Vietnam War, or more recent conflicts, their bravery and selflessness in the face of danger inspire my own sense of responsibility.

Memorial Day compels me to recognize the families left deriving from fallen heroes. It's important to acknowledge the pain and loss endured by the loved ones who had to say goodbye to their sons, daughters, husbands, wives, and parents. This day serves as a reminder that it's not only the service members who sacrifice but their families as well.

Memorial Day unites the nation. On this day, people come together, regardless of political ideologies or differences, to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice. It serves as a moment to put aside our divisions and stand united in our appreciation for our heroes. Witnessing the unity and sense of patriotism displayed by people of all ages and backgrounds reinforces my belief in the strength and resilience of our nation.

Memorial Day instills in me a sense of responsibility to carry forward the legacy and virtues demonstrated by those who gave their lives in the service of our country. It pushes me to strive for excellence and to value and protect the liberties that our nation was built upon. Through education, activism, and public service, I aim to honor those who came before me and ensure their sacrifices were not in vain.



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

“What Memorial Day Means to Me”

Name: Caleb Wilhelm Date: Nov. 29, 2023

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E-Mail Address: cheryl-lynn43@hotmail.com

Name of School: Homeschooled Grade: 9

Number of Words in Essay: 341

Sponsoring Branch is:

**Wolverine Branch 298
10930 Wildlife Drive
Greenville, MI 48838-8182**

Parent/Guardian Permission: I understand that my student is participating in FRA's Americanism Essay Contest and authorize FRA to publish photos of him/her if he/she should receive recognition for this entry.

Parent/Guardian Name: Cheryl Wilhelm

Parent/Guardian Signature: Cheryl Z. Wilhelm

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All entries submitted will automatically be sponsored by Branch 298. Please mail to the address listed above as sponsoring branch.



1st Place
9th grade

What Memorial Day Means to Me

The steps of the church were lined with family and friends on May 8th of 2023, as we laid my 100-year-old great-grandpa to rest, a World War II veteran and a father of thirteen. Just a few weeks later and a couple miles away, crowds lined the streets paying respect to a man they never knew. The body of Corporal Clark Worline, who went missing in action in 1950, was repatriated after his exhumed remains returned from North Korea. Both of these men served in the U.S. military, but only one of them enjoyed the freedoms he bravely fought to protect.

Soldiers who gave their lives never had the chance to have a family, a job, or enjoy their earned freedoms. The sacrifices they made remind me of the heavy burden returning soldiers bear in memory of their fallen comrades. That is the unfinished story of many soldiers like Corporal Worline. Their hopes and dreams died with them on the battlefields. Their grieving families lived the rest of their lives wondering what their futures might have been.

Memorial Day is one day out of the year when I remember that all the freedoms I take for granted came with a price tag of American lives. I can pursue a career of my choice, help others in my community, and become a contributing member of society because of their sacrifices. Brave patriots gave us the freedoms of press, religion, free speech, and voting, but it was the future generations of American soldiers who protected those rights.

This Memorial Day I will stand for the flag and kneel for the fallen. I will thank the soldiers who safely came home and listen as they retell stories of those who did not return. I will live my life in a way that will honor the Americans who died fighting to secure the amazing opportunities I have. I will make every day a day of remembrance for the fallen warriors who gave up everything and never returned to the beautiful country I call home.

5w



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Katie Labao Date: 12/01/2023

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Name of School: Westridge School for Girls Grade: 9

Number of Words in Essay: 291

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: Art Batalca Branch 302 Carson CA.

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Parent/Guardian Permission: I understand that my student is participating in FRA's Americanism Essay Contest and authorize FRA to publish photos of him/her if he/she should receive recognition for this entry.

Parent/Guardian Name: Edward Allan Labao

Parent/Guardian Signature: *E. Labao*

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*2nd Place
9th grade*



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Rev. 7-22

What Memorial Day Means to Me

To me, Memorial Day is a day of remembrance. It is a day to commemorate and honor those who have given their lives for the sake of our country. Without the countless individuals who have made sacrifices for the greater good of the nation, America would not be the significant power that it is today.

While we Americans enjoy the luxury of freedom, we must never lose sight of the cost. It is too often that we forget about the sacrifices that were made for our freedom; for our liberties. Memorial Day serves as a reminder of that—a reminder of those who have fought long and hard for America. One quote in particular stands out to me. It says; “Our flag does not fly because the wind moves it. It flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it.” I believe that these words encompass the significance of the day, and the foundation of America in general. It is a reminder that our nation has been built upon the backs of all of those who were lost in the battle for our country. America is fueled by the devotion and loyalty of its soldiers, which is why we fly the flag high in memory of those who were willing to pay the price of our freedom.

America has taken revolutionary strides forwards as a nation; however, it is equally important that we look back and acknowledge those who have paved the way for us. On Memorial Day, we recognize the valiant soldiers who have fallen in the fight for our freedom, rights, and independence. Their bravery and allegiance to their country has opened countless doors for future generations of Americans—and it is essential that we celebrate them.

1st Plc
9th Grade



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Collin Murphy Date: 11/16/23

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Name of School: St. Patrick Catholic High Grade: 9th

Number of Words in Essay: 328

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: 307 Old Naval Home #FRHG

Sponsor's Address: Fleet Reserve Association / 1800 Beach Blvd. Unit 244

City: Gulfport State: MS Zip: 39507

Parent/Guardian Permission: I understand that my student is participating in FRA's Americanism Essay Contest and authorize FRA to publish photos of him/her if he/she should receive recognition for this entry.

Parent/Guardian Name: Kim Murphy

Parent/Guardian Signature: Kim Murphy

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3rd Plc
9th grade



1st Plc
9th grade



What Memorial Day Means To Me

Memorial Day is significant on the American calendar, serving as a ceremonial tribute to the brave soldiers who sacrificed their lives for our nation. To me, Memorial Day carries profound meaning, serving as a powerful reminder of the actual cost of freedom and the importance of gratitude for our country.

First and foremost, Memorial Day is a day of remembrance, a time to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect the liberty of our country, our families, our friends, and the promise of a secure future. As a ninth-grader, I may not have directly experienced the impact of war, but I recognize the gravity of the sacrifices made by our military heroes. Their courage and selflessness, choosing duty over personal comfort, highlight the unimaginable challenges they faced to secure the freedoms we enjoy today.

Memorial Day is also a personal day for me, an opportunity to recognize and honor family members who served. Both of my grandfathers served in the Navy for several years, and Memorial Day is a moment to reflect on their contributions, visiting cemeteries adorned with American flags. It's a time to acknowledge the families left behind, expressing gratitude for their enduring strength and the sacrifices they endured.

Gratitude is a central theme of Memorial Day. It is a day to show appreciation for the veterans who continue to protect our country and the families who bear the heavy burden of their loved ones' service. Despite our differences, Memorial Day unites us as a nation, reminding us of our shared history and the sacrifices that connect us all.

In conclusion, Memorial Day is special for me, prompting reflection on the price of freedom and the heroic soldiers who paid that price. It is a day to honor and appreciate the sacrifices made for our country, acknowledging the past, enjoying the present, and striving for a better future while never forgetting the heroes who made it all possible.

WC



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Alexander Zhang Date: November 6, 2023

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Name of School: Basis Independent Fremont Grade: 10th

Number of Words in Essay: 350 words

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: Robert G. McColley / Roseville / 230-CA

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City: Roseville State: California Zip: 95747-8362

Parent/Guardian Permission: I understand that my student is participating in FRA's Americanism Essay Contest and authorize FRA to publish photos of him/her if he/she should receive recognition for this entry.

Parent/Guardian Name: Patty Kham

Parent/Guardian Signature: 

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*1st place
10th grade*



What Memorial Day Means to Me

Under the somber sunlight of early morning on Memorial Day, as a Boy Scout and proud American, I was eager to pay my respects to the fallen heroes of our nation. Dressed in a khaki uniform decorated with neckerchiefs and badges that told stories of my achievements, I methodically walked amongst the tombstones. I paused at every burial site, carefully placing flags into the earth. Each gravesite had a unique story of a veteran with their own family and dreams. Having two cousins currently enlisted and two aunts who served in the armed forces alongside their husbands whom they met when they began their military journeys nearly three decades ago, I have gained an immense admiration for our heroes. As I placed each flag, my thoughts were captivated with the compelling stories of incredible sacrifices and admirable bravery that my aunts, Narissa and Samantha, my uncles, Colby and Mark and my cousins, Aidan and Tyler have shared over the years. For me, Memorial Day has become an emotional touchstone that highlights the importance of service, sacrifice, and selflessness.

Despite the geographic distance between us, I've always maintained a close bond with my aunts and uncles. This connection is further strengthened by my cousins who illuminate the true cost of freedom by risking their lives at a young age. Inspired by my family's commitment to American freedom and sense of duty, I have developed a profound sense of pride that has significantly deepened my appreciation for our republic and values.

As I've matured, the flags I placed have taken on a more profound significance. I've realized that our veterans are not just symbols of America but are individual lives with their own legacies and aspirations. The American flag on my desk serves as a constant reminder not just of my aunts, uncles, and cousins, but of all who have served. On Memorial Day, I pay tribute to these heroes, hoping that the magnitude of their sacrifices will resonate as deeply with others as it does with me. Without their ultimate sacrifice—defending equality, justice, and freedom—America would not exist today.

10-4

NE/NEG



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Michael Meng Date: 11/29/23

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Name of School: The Lawrenceville School Grade: 10

Number of Words in Essay: 350

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: 124-NJ

Sponsor's Address: 721 Pine St.

City: Lakehurst State: NJ Zip: 08733-2719

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Parent/Guardian Name: Kui Meng

Parent/Guardian Signature: Kui Meng

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*2nd Place
10th grade*



What Memorial Day Means to Me

Memorial Day takes a narrative of tragedy and transforms it into hope, built upon the courage and hardships that have shaped the fabric of our nation. It serves as a painful reminder of the countless sacrifices made by our veterans and service members, and is a day to honor those who, with unwavering commitment, laid down their lives to protect the freedoms we cherish today.

The first time that my parents and I visited Washington, DC, we decided to visit the Vietnam and Korean War Memorials. While observing the names and faces on the seemingly endless walls, I was overcome with guilt. Reading each tribute to our nation's soldiers, I realized that each name marked the life of a strong individual who left their loved ones in order to fight for our freedoms. I felt privileged, knowing that not only I, but also those in countless other countries we've sought to protect, am able to express freedoms and live in a safer world because of their sacrifices.

My eyes began to tear as I saw myself in the reflection of the wall, knowing these fallen warriors would never get to see the world they helped protect. To honor and remember the lives that our nation lost, I made it my goal to continue their legacy by doing my best to keep our country great. When I make decisions, I think about what our troopers would have wanted when they imagined the free world they were fighting for, and how my actions can best support that vision.

I'm proud that our country so bravely works to help other countries in grasping the freedoms we enjoy in our own country. Along with serving as an echo of the ones we lost in the struggle for our rights, to me, Memorial Day is a reminder to build hope and forward the memories of the people we can't see today. Though their lives may have been lost, their spirit remains. We owe it to them to build a great future for our country, in honor of their sacrifices and the opportunity they've given us.

EC



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

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Name of School: Lejeune High School Grade: 10th

Number of Words in Essay: 331

Sponsoring Member/Branch/Unit: Alex J. Nevglowski Sr. Branch #208

Sponsor's Address: 200⁵³³ Bell Ridge Ln.

City: Hubert State: NC Zip: 28539

Parent/Guardian Permission: I understand that my student is participating in FRA's Americanism Essay Contest and authorize FRA to publish photos of him/her if he/she should receive recognition for this entry.

Parent/Guardian Name: Erain A. Orellana

Parent/Guardian Signature: [Signature]

Note: Please type or write legibly.

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*3rd place
10th grade*



What Memorial Day Means to Me

Memorial Day holds a profound significance in my life as the son of a dedicated Marine with 18 years of service. It transcends the long weekend and barbecues; it symbolizes a serious tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. As a 15-year-old deeply involved in the military lifestyle, Memorial Day becomes a powerful reminder of the sacrifices my father's comrades have made.

My dad, a Marine with nearly two decades of service, represents the spirit of selflessness and duty. On Memorial Day, I find myself reflecting on the countless individuals who, like my father, dedicated their lives to protecting our freedom. The day serves as a powerful reminder of the brave souls who fought bravely and paid the ultimate price for the concepts we hold dear.

In our household, Memorial Day is not just about honoring the fallen but also about acknowledging the persistence and courage of those who continue to serve. It is a day to express thankfulness for the friendship and bonds forged within the military community. As a military son, Memorial Day causes me to appreciate the sacrifices my father has made and the challenges he faces in fulfilling his duty to our country.

The day also serves as an opportunity for reflection, encouraging me to contemplate the broader decisions of service and sacrifice. It builds a sense of responsibility and pride, knowing that my family is part of a larger group of individuals committed to safeguarding the values that define our nation.

In conclusion, Memorial Day holds a unique significance for me as a military son. It is a day of remembrance, recognition, and reflection. As I witness my father's never-failing commitment to the Marine Corps, Memorial Day becomes a powerful reminder that freedom is not free and that behind every salute is a story of sacrifice. This day serves as a united expression of gratitude for those who gave everything for the land of the free.



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

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Number of Words in Essay: 341

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Parent/Guardian Name: Gerri Stevens

Parent/Guardian Signature: *Gerri Stevens*

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*1st place
11th grade*





What Memorial Day Means to Me

Memorial Day, to me, is a sacred quilt woven with threads of gratitude and sacrifice. It is a day when the heartbeat of the nation syncs with the echoes of heroes who gave their last full measure of devotion. On this day filled with the ineffable weight of gratitude and solemnity, we stand at the crossroads of remembrance knowing that the price of freedom is never cheap. In the quiet reflection of this day, I find inspiration to contribute to a nation worthy of their sacrifice.

To me, Memorial Day transcends the barbecues and the long weekend. It is a summons to reflect on the cost of liberty and the weight of our collective responsibility. It is an invitation to peer into the soul of a nation shaped by the courage of those who faced adversity with unwavering resolve. Memorial Day is a call to action — a pledge to honor their sacrifice not only with words but with deeds that uplift the ideals they defended. In this symphony of memory, let us be instruments of unity and healing. Let us bridge the gaps that sometimes divide us, remembering that the freedom they fought for belongs to every American, regardless of background or belief. It is a shared inheritance that demands our stewardship.

These brave men and women don't need to just be in our thoughts one day a year but every single day because they have certainly earned the respect. On Memorial Day, we are not just recalling history; we are forging the future. In the quiet moments of reflection, let us recommit ourselves to the values that bind us together — liberty, justice, and the pursuit of a more perfect union. The fallen may have left this world, but their spirit marches on in the cadence of our shared commitment to a nation worthy of their sacrifice. In the poignant silence of this day, let us find inspiration to be better, to do better, and to build a legacy that, one day, others will honor with the same reverence we reserve for the heroes we remember today.

WC



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

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*2nd place
11th grade*



What Memorial Day means to me

Memorial Day is a very significant day of remembrance for me. It serves as an occasion to honor and pay tribute to the brave men and women who sacrificed their lives for our nation. For me, Memorial Day is a day of valor and gratitude for those who sacrificed for our freedom and safety.

On this day, I take the time to appreciate the immense courage and selflessness displayed by those who sacrificed themselves. Their dedication to this country is inspiring, and it reminds me of the impact that their service has had on our nation. I feel an essence of thankfulness for their sacrifices, I'm reminded of the debt of gratitude we owe to them for sacrificing themselves for our prosperity.

To me Memorial Day serves as a reminder of the importance of freedom and liberty. Remembering those who fought and died for our country is a matter I don't hold lightly. It leads me to contemplate the value of these fought for freedoms and to recognize that lives were given so that I could have them. I feel a sense of responsibility to honor the fallen by upholding the ideals that they fought and died for. Moreover, Memorial Day to me represents a time for me to express my solidarity and celebrate the lives and triumphs of the fallen. I'm aware of the immeasurable hardships they have endured defending my home and I'm honored to celebrate their sacrifices by acknowledging their contributions.

To conclude, Memorial Day to me serves as a powerful emblem of remembrance of the sacrifices made by those who had the courage to defend our country. It brings me to reflect on the value of my freedom. I'm grateful for our fallen hero's commitment to upholding the principles and ideals of which still stand strong in our nation today. This day holds an irreplaceable spot in my heart and encourages me as a citizen who's liberties and freedoms were paid for by the blood of our people to honor and remember the extraordinary and courageous individuals who have given their lives for our country.

KW



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

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Parent/Guardian Name: BOZENA COMIEREE

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*3rd place
11th grade*



[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

What Memorial Day Means to Me

Growing up, I was always taught about the significance of Memorial Day. In elementary school, we often engaged in activities such as writing letters to honor famous veterans who had passed away. As I progressed to middle school, Memorial Day assemblies became a serious occasion where we observed a moment of silence to pay tribute to the soldiers who sacrificed their lives in protecting our country. However, it wasn't until high school that I learned about the grim realities of war that are often overlooked.

During my sophomore year, my history teacher chose to screen the movie "1917," and it was a deeply influential experience. Witnessing the brutality of the battles, visualizing the families waiting anxiously at home, and trying to fathom the unimaginable pain each soldier endured left me profoundly moved. This revelation prompted me to reflect more deeply on the true cost of war and its profound impact on the lives of those who have served and their families.

Every Memorial Day, I find myself in a state of mourning for the families whose loved ones did not return from the battlefield. The sacrifices made by these individuals, and the subsequent losses suffered by their families, weigh heavily on my heart. It is a day of reflection, gratitude, and solemn remembrance for those who gave their lives to protect our country.

This experience not only influenced the way I perceive war but also strengthened my commitment to my role as a Scout. Throughout history, there has consistently been a connection between the military and the Scouts BSA. I consider it a privilege to support veterans in my community through acts of service and volunteering. Through these acts of service, I now rest assured that my efforts as a Scout are making a meaningful contribution to my community, nation, and, ultimately, the world.

11-2

0312

NE/NEAK

1st place
12th



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

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Number of Words in Essay: -

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Parent/Guardian Name: Ghulam Ghous

Parent/Guardian Signature: *Ghulam Ghous*

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1st place
12th Grade



OVERALL GRAND WINNER

Rev. 7-22

“What Memorial Day Means To Me”

Memorial Day holds a special place in my heart as a time to honor and remember the brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the military. It is a day of reflection and gratitude for their selflessness and dedication to protecting our freedom. “Our flag does not fly because the wind moves it.. It flies with the last breath of each soldier who died protecting it.”

To me, Memorial Day is more than just a long weekend or a chance to enjoy barbecues and the start of summer. It's a solemn reminder of the sacrifice made by our fallen heroes and time to pay tribute to their courage and valor. On this day, I take a moment to remember the stories and faces of those who laid down their lives for our country. Their sacrifice serves as a powerful reminder of the cost of freedom and the importance of preserving it.

Memorial Day also serves as a reminder of the impact of war on families and loved ones left behind. It's a day to honor the resilience and strength of the families who lost a loved one in service to our nation. Their unwavering support and sacrifice deserve the utmost respect and gratitude. In addition to honoring our fallen heroes, Memorial Day is an opportunity for me to express my appreciation to the men and women currently serving in the military. Their dedication and commitment to our country inspire me, and I am grateful for their service. As I reflect on the significance of Memorial Day, I am reminded of the values that our nation was built young: freedom, justice and equality. Memorial Day is a time to remember, honor, and express gratitude for the brave individuals who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. It's a day to reflect on the true meaning of freedom and recognize the sacrifice made by military members and their families. Let us never forget their service and let us strive to live in a way that honors their memory.

By:

11/30



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

Name: Chloe Havener Date: 11-30-23

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Number of Words in Essay: 345

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Parent/Guardian Name: Brandon Havener

Parent/Guardian Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

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*1st Place
12th Grade*



What Memorial Day Means To Me

Flying across the country alone at twelve to visit my uncle near Washington D.C. was a mix of excitement and nerves. I was thrilled to see the capital, explore museums, and spend time with my uncle and cousins. Making this trip alone made me nervous, but also added to the excitement!

Little did I know, this trip would profoundly transform my understanding of Memorial Day.

Memorial Day had always been a day off school for me. A chance for a family getaway, the unofficial start of summer. My perception began to shift after I visited the WWII Memorial at the National Mall.

As I walked through this massive monument, I was struck by a deep awareness. This wasn't just a monument; it was a tribute to real people who had sacrificed their lives defending us and the world from terrible atrocities. These were not just names in history books; they were individuals who exhibited bravery, courage, and commitment.

I remember not feeling sadness, but more a profound sense of honor. Standing in a place dedicated to remembering these brave souls felt like a privilege. It was a moment of realization that these were the people Memorial Day was truly about.

Reflecting on that experience, I realize that it might not have fully sunk in at the time, but it has definitely shaped my perspective since. Memorial Day has become more than simply BBQs and the onset of summer. It's a day for remembering and ensuring that the sacrifices of those who came before us are never forgotten.

Now, when Memorial Day rolls around at the end of May, my family still enjoys the long weekend with BBQs and trips. But for me, there's an added layer of reflection. I take a moment to remember and honor those who paid the ultimate price for the freedoms I enjoy today. It's a day to celebrate our liberties and remember the cost at which they were earned, a reminder of the true meaning of being in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

w c

15T



FRA AMERICANISM ESSAY COVER SHEET

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Parent/Guardian Name: Richard Fetro

Parent/Guardian Signature: 

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*3rd Place
12th Grade*



” What Memorial Day means to me.”

I am surrounded by a vast amount of stone heads, each of which is etched with the name of a serviceman or woman who gave their life for me but whom I will never get the opportunity to thank. Their spirits and stories surround me as I pray for their loved ones who lost them. The servicemen and women put their lives on the line, endure emotional and physical stress, and often face lengthy and unpredictable shifts away from loved ones. While some individuals endure physical harm, others sacrifice their lives in the line of duty for our nation. On Memorial Day, we honor those courageous members of the armed forces who put the needs of their country first to serve and defend us.

A gentle wind causes the freshly planted flags to proudly flutter in remembrance of the brave people who have given their lives for our independence. There is a pleasant aroma of fresh air, the sky is blue and clear, and the sun shines brilliantly. Brightly colored flowers are growing this time of year, and I received a red poppy from a veteran that I pin on my blouse every year, reminding me of the sacrifices each member of the military has given to me. Attending the parade on Memorial Day is an emotionally powerful and patriotic experience for me. The flags, floats, and bands that honor the history and culture of the United States of America are all visible. These Memorial Day parades give me the opportunity to pay tribute and commemorate the courageous individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. As I watch the parade's veterans and servicemen march by, I can't help but feel blessed, proud, and united with my fellow Americans because of these courageous fallen angels.