

# Teacher Tool 184: Veterans Day 2015

## Vietnam Study Guide

Study Guide for Military 11: History in the First Person: Veterans Day 2015--Vietnam

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**HEC-TV Live! Presents**  
**History in the First Person: Veteran's Day 2015—Vietnam**

**Original Air Date: November 5, 2015**

**Grade Levels: 5-12**

**Program Description:**

From the late 1950's to the early 1970's America's foreign policy objectives were dominated by Cold War fears and conflict in Vietnam. Nearly 60,000 Americans died in the conflict that was a very different war from the ones we had fought in WWII and Korea. Vietnam was also the first war that Americans could follow on their TV sets at home. What is it like to be in the military? What was it like to fight in the Vietnam conflict? What was it like to live in an era with Americans very divided about the war you were fighting? Why is it important to serve our nation? As we remember those who have fought and died for our country's freedoms, take your study of the history of America in war to the veterans who fought in them. Give your students a chance to honor veterans by hearing their stories and learning firsthand about the reality of war and the importance of service.

Our focus in this program is not on exploring the historic details of a specific war or battle in that war, but it is to bring history to life by providing students the rare and important opportunity to speak directly with those who have served our country in its armed forces and learn directly from primary sources that tell the stories of America's military. Students hear from veterans and see images and archival videos from the time of their service. Students will hear what it was like to live at the time, how the country responded to the events that led us to war, the nature of the war, and how it felt to return home from the conflict. Biographies of the veterans joining us for the program are available on our HEC-TV website Program Materials webpage for this program.

**Program Objectives:**

1. The participant will gain a greater understanding of what it means to serve our nation as a member of the armed forces and also as a veteran returning to civilian life.
2. The participant will interact with individuals providing primary source accounts of world events.
3. The participant will utilize primary sources to develop their own understanding of an historic event.
4. The participant will meet people and hear stories from diverse perspectives.

**Program Format:**

Time codes are provided in blue to help you find specific segments in the program.

All video and still images noted are primary sources from the time period of the Vietnam War.

**1. Welcome and Introduction**—Student groups and experts will be introduced and welcomed to the program. (00:00 to 05:10)

**Video and Still Images Included in this Segment:**

Excerpt from early 1960's documentary on Vietnam

Map of Southeast Asia

Map of South Vietnam

**2. Hearing from the Veterans**—Students will interact directly with the Vietnam era veterans, learning firsthand the events that led them to go to war, their service during the war, and what it was like to return home after their involvement in the conflict.

**A. Getting into the Military and Choosing Their Job in the Military** (05:11 to 11:25)

**Student Questions Included in this Segment:**

Were you drafted or did you decide to join the military yourself?

What age did you join the military?

Why did you join the Armed Forces?

**Video and Still Images Included in this Segment:**

Images of Colonel Jackson at the time he joined the military

Image of Commander Mundell's helicopter

**B. Training Experiences** (11:26 to 15:13)

**Videos and Still Images Included in this Segment:**

Video of gunner training and helicopter in operation

Video of weapons used on a Vietnam era helicopter

**C. Combat Experiences in Vietnam** (15:14 to 19:31)

1. Dealing with the terrain in Vietnam

**Videos and Still Images Included in this Segment:**

Video showing topography of Vietnam

Image of enemy gun position

Image of tunnel entrances

2. Evacuating the Wounded and Targeting Areas to Land (19:32 to 23:54)

**Videos and Still Images Included in this Segment:**

Video of medivac helicopters in action

3. Helicopter Activities and Uses During the War (23:55 to 36:18)

**Student Questions Included in this Segment:**

What was a day like in the Vietnam War?

**Videos and Still Images Included in this Segment:**

Video of reconnaissance operations

Video of Cobra helicopters in battle

Video describing assault techniques used by helicopter gunships

Video of landing under fire

4. Experiences Crashing in Helicopter and Plane (36:19 to 38:59)

**Videos and Still Images Included in this Segment:**

Still image of Commander Mundell's helicopter after crashing

5. Fighter Plane and Bomber Activities and Uses During the War (39:00 to 46:10)

**Videos to Use in this Segment:**

Video of A-4 Skyhawk in Combat

Video of Bronco Airplane used for targeting bombing locations

6. Favorite Part of Being in Action (46:11 to 48:31)

**Student Questions Included in this Segment:**

What was your favorite part about being in action?

- D. Returning from War (48:32 to 52:24)

**3. Closing Segment**--Including summary of topics discussed and final comments from guests.  
(52:25 to 58:57)

- A. Importance of Service
- B. How to Honor Those Who Serve

## Featured National Standards (Common Core):

The following **Common Core Anchor Standards** are referenced in this program:

**Writing 6**—Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

**Writing 7**—Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

**Speaking and Listening 1**—Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

**Speaking and Listening 2**—Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

**Speaking and Listening 3**—Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

## Featured National Standards (History):

### Grades 5-12:

#### Historical Thinking Standards

##### 2. Historical Comprehension

B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage by identifying who was involved, what happened, where it happened, what events led to these developments, and what consequences or outcomes followed.

C. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.

F. Appreciate historical perspectives--(a) describing the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like; (b) considering the historical context in which the event unfolded--the values, outlook, options, and contingencies of that time and place; and (c) avoiding “present-mindedness,” judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

##### 4. Historical Research Capabilities

A. Formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.

B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources, including: library and museum collections, historic sites, historical photos, journals, diaries, eyewitness accounts, newspapers, and the like; documentary films, oral testimony from living witnesses, censuses, tax records, city directories, statistical compilations, and economic indicators.

##### 5. Historical Issues—Analysis and Decision-Making

A. Identify issues and problems in the past and analyze the interests, values, perspectives, and points of view of those involved in the situation.

## Guest Biographies:

### Thomas W. Mundell Biography

Vietnam / Veteran Activist  
 Past State Senior Vice Commander  
 Department of Missouri, Veterans of Foreign Wars

**Commander Thomas W. Mundell** is a former member of the United States Army. He served two combat tours in Vietnam as an Aero Scout Gunner on Hunter/Killer Assault Teams performing Search and Destroy Operations in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and later throughout the World. He was shot down eleven times during his Military and Civilian career.

During his military career he received the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal for Valor, Air Medal for Valor, Army Commendation Medal for Valor, four Purple Hearts, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, Air Crewmember Wings and Parachutist Wings.

He served with the 135th Assault Helicopter Company, 335th Assault Helicopter Company, A Trp, 2/17 CAV, 101st Airborne Division and the 10th Special Forces Group during his military career.

Since his military career, he served with numerous Civilian and Department of Defense companies in Iran, Iraq, Israel, Afghanistan, Africa, and South America and was an Attack Helicopter Senior Combat Technical Instructor for Bell Helicopter International.

Returning to St. Louis, he transitioned to McDonnell Douglas and became a Senior Product Service Training Instructor on the F-15 and F-18 Fighter Aircraft. He then became a Senior Training Instructor for Flight Safety International. Later he became CEO of Tactical Self-Defense and Combat Aviation Systems.

He is presently the Past State Commander for the Department of Missouri, Veterans of Foreign Wars and was recently elected as the Vice Chairman of MAVO ( Missouri Association of Veteran Organizations) and is Chairman of the Board For the 501-C3 Missouri Veterans Foundation.

CERT Commander  
 SARTEC II, SEMA & FEMA Certified  
 International Fugitive Apprehension  
 POW-MIA Search & Awareness  
 Hostage crisis and negotiations  
 Military & Law Enforcement Training  
 International Weapons and Tactics Instructor  
 Humanitarian War Zone Infrastructure Development  
 Veteran benefits advisor & Public Speaker  
 Catastrophically Injured Veteran Mentor

### Col. Jack Jackson Biography:

On Veterans Day, November 11, 2009, it was Living Patriot's honor to present to retired Col. Jack Jackson, representative of District 89 in the State of Missouri with a Living Patriot Prism as a

token of our appreciation for his service to our country as a combat pilot for the United State Marine Corp. as well as his service in the House of Representatives in Missouri where he serves as the Chairman of the House Veterans Committee. Don Fedorko, founder of the Living Patriot initiative presented Rep. Jackson with the Prism at a [service held on the steps of the Soldiers Memorial](#) in St. Louis, Missouri.

Rep. Jackson is a highly decorated pilot who flew over 600 combat missions, is the recipient of 4 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 33 air medals and most recently was awarded the Legion of Merit. Rep. Jackson's [resume](#) is long and distinguished, but we want to highlight the work he has done, and continues to do to help Veterans and represent them in government.

From *STL Today*:

"The retired US Marine Corps Colonel, highly decorated Vietnam War fighter pilot and former Missouri State Representative says; "It is my hope that we will not just talk about bi-partisanship but that real patriotism will help us rise above politics and do what is best for our country." As an advocate for veteran's issues and an honored member of the VFW and American Legion Colonel Jackson is calling on his fellow veterans to rally behind the new President, "every person associated with the military, past and present should follow his leadership and respect him as Commander in Chief."

"Colonel Jack Jackson flew more than 600 combat missions in Vietnam where he was awarded 4 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 33 Air Medals, the Navy Commendation Medal for Valor and Heroism and most recently the Legion of Merit for service to his country. In 2004 Jackson retired from his post as Chief Test Pilot for the Boeing Company. Jack was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives in 2002. He was Chairman of the Joint Committee on Terrorism, Bioterrorism and Homeland Security and Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee. Jackson received the "Legislator of the Year Award" from the VFW in 2003, 2005 and 2006 and the "Legislator of the Year Award" from the American Legion in 2004."

*Fan Facebook Page:*

Raised on a farm then earning a baseball scholarship as left handed pitcher for Purdue University, Mr. Jackson earned a Bachelors Degree in Mechanical Engineering, briefly played minor league baseball, including being called up to the NY Yankees for one game, Volunteered for the United States Marine Corps, became Marine Aviator, flew 668 combat missions, received numerous medals and awards, became test pilot, earned a Masters Degree from Pepperdine University in Human Resources, also earned the military equivalent to a civilian Masters Degree in Aviation Engineering at test pilots school in Maryland. Became Senior Test Pilot in charge of the testing and development of Boeing's Marine Corps Harrier, elected to The Missouri House of Representatives, served Honorably

The following article was found in the May 1, 2001, *Lowell Tribune* on page 4, columns 7-8:

#### **Former Lowellian Honored By Governor**

Jack Jackson, a 1961 graduate of Lowell High School who flew over 600 combat missions in the Vietnam Conflict and has tested fighter aircraft for over two decades, was named a Sagamore of the Wabash by Indiana Governor Frank O'Bannon on March 13. Jackson was given the highest honor bestowed by the governor for his many years of service to his country. He has worked at Boeing Corp. for 23 years and has tested virtually every type of U.S. fighter aircraft, as well as two

Russian fighters.

The most experienced VSTOL pilot in the U.S. with over 5,000 flight hours in Harriers, the Glencoe, Missouri, resident has been involved with testing loads, spins, flying qualities, weapon separation and engines on the AV-8B Harrier. A colonel in the U.S. Marine Reserves, he earned the Navy Commendation medal with a combat V, the Legion of Merit for service to his country, and 23 air medals. He was a Harrier pilot instructor during the Desert Shield operation by the U.S.

*From Ladue News: By Paul Brown A native St. Louisan, Brown is a lifelong journalist, and previously served as a broadcaster for KMOX and KTRS radios and ABC 30. His Paul Brown Media specializes in public and media relations.*

It's a crystal-clear day at Spirit of St. Louis Airport, and Jack Jackson just can't wait to get back up in the sky. Jackson's always ready for a mission: He started flying airplanes in July of 1967; and since then, he has logged more than 16,000 take-offs and landings. A huge number of those sorties came at the controls of military aircraft, with hundreds of them being combat missions in Vietnam. Jackson was a full bird colonel in the Marines and ended his highly decorated military career with dozens of awards and medals for courage, bravery and valor in combat. After Vietnam, he played an even more significant role in the development of America's birds of war as a test pilot at McDonnell-Douglas, and then Boeing. The Colonel flew virtually every type of aircraft in the US military arsenal, and even a few captured enemy planes. Jackson's legendary aviation status is most closely associated with the AV-8B Harrier Jump Jet. Most of us know it as the fighter jet that can hover, land straight up and down, and then fly at near-supersonic speed. Jackson logged an incredible 5,500 flight hours in the cockpit of Harriers—a record that likely will never be broken. He delivered the very first Harrier built in St. Louis in 1980; and before he retired as Boeing's chief test pilot, he delivered the very last one ever built in 2004.

Jackson's mission continued in politics as a Missouri State Representative, and he took a few turns down some campaign roads. His journey finally led him to his ongoing charge of serving the needs of military veterans. "My mission now is to do whatever I can to help our veterans. I consider them a national treasure." He and I are walking through a hangar among the private jets he now flies. At 70, he's a sought-after corporate pilot, but he's also spent hours flying wounded combat vets home from hospitals or to more medical treatment. He has volunteered for the Veterans Airlift Command and Lifeline; and if for some reason he can't get a wounded warrior transported on a donated corporate jet, he's been known to fly vets wherever they need and pick up the costs himself. "I've flown some double and triple amputees, picking them up in Washington, D.C., and flying them home—they have tremendously positive attitudes."

Out on the tarmac, the Colonel and I continue to talk while he looks up at a perfectly blue sky. "I want to make people aware that even though someone has lost both their legs, they can still contribute," he stresses. "All they want to do is go home, hug their kids and their wives, then get a job and contribute—and it's our job to make that happen."

In the spirit of full disclosure, Jack and I have spent a lot of time together on tarmacs and in airplanes. I worked with him on his political campaigns, and was in the co-pilot seat of his twin-engine Beechcraft Duke for one of his least glorious but more memorable aviation episodes: We were on a campaign swing around the state in 2006; and we were taking off from the Camdenton Airport at dusk when a deer ran across the runway. We were almost airborne, going well past 100 mph, when the buck crashed into the nose and landing gear. We swerved 75 feet off the runway

and skipped across a hillside. Somehow, Jack remained in control, kept the wheels on the ground and brought us safely to a stop. The plane was totaled. So to say I admire this man for his skills is an understatement.

Saving my you-know-what that night was all in a day's work for Jack. He's been in life-or-death situations many, many times. "I had been shot up, shot down and shot to pieces in helicopters and planes, and I've had to shoot my way out of a couple of tight spots," he says. But there was one incident that is the most vivid: He was flying a Harrier when it went out of control and into something called a 'falling leaf' spin. It had never happened to anyone in a Harrier before, but Jackson pulled out of it and saved the plane and himself an instant before it would have crashed.

As for his political career, it never got the traction it needed, and Jackson thinks it was mainly because he wasn't a career politician and refused to fall in lock-step with the party power-brokers. He's still getting prodded to run for office again and concedes he'll "never say never, but it would take a lot."

His real passion these days is for the veterans and trying to make sure they get all the honor and respect they deserve—something his Vietnam War generation received very little of back then. "When we got home we weren't treated very well—everybody knows that," he says. "So I want to do what I can to make sure that no veteran is treated the way we were."

It's still obvious to me that Colonel Jack Jackson is ready for another mission—it's a beautiful day for flying.

***From: <http://thetartanterror.blogspot.com/2008/07/jack-jackie-jackson.html>***

Jack Jackson flew over 600 combat missions in Vietnam. A highly decorated veteran, Jack is the recipient of four Distinguished Flying Crosses, 33 Air Medals, Navy Commendation Medal for Heroism and Valor, a host of campaign medals and, most recently, the Legion of Merit for Service to His Country. He was called back to active duty for Desert Shield where he served as a Harrier Instructor Pilot.

Jack became a test pilot at Boeing Company in January 1978. He tested virtually every type of U.S. fighter aircraft as well as two Russian fighters (Yak38 and SU-27), accumulating over 10,000 flight hours. He made the first flights in the AV8C, AV8 Night Attack, and the AV8 Harrier II radar aircraft. In January 2004, he retired from his position as Chief Pilot-Production Test with Boeing Company where he was responsible for all production activities.

### Program-Related Activity Suggestions:

1. **Guest Biographies**—To provide students some pre-program information about the guests who joined us for the program, please utilize the guest biographies included later in this document.
2. **Responding to the Program**—Have students compare their previous understanding of what they thought it would mean to fight in a war with their view of that situation after participating in the program. What surprised them the most? What reinforced what they already believed? What new insights did they gain into the military and wartime experience? Have students share their thoughts in class discussion, journal entries, or written reports.
3. **Learn More from the Program Guests**—View additional videos available on our Educate.Today website to give your students to learn more from the guests who joined us. The videos are Military 3, Military 4, Military 5, Military 6, Military 7, and Military 8.
4. **Meet More Veterans and Hear Their Stories**—More programs from HEC-TV highlighting veterans and their service to our country can be found on our Educate.Today website. Just type “Veterans” or “Military” into the keyword search box on the website home page.
5. **Thank a Guest**—Have students write a letter to one of the guests from our program detailing an insight the student gained from hearing their story, an appreciation for their participation, and/or another focus area of their choice. You can e-mail those letters to us at [live@hectv.org](mailto:live@hectv.org) and we’ll be happy to send them on to the program guests.

### Supplemental Resources:

More information about the United States Coast Guard can be found at <http://www.uscg.mil/>.

More information about the United States Army can be found at <http://www.army.mil/>

More information about the United States Navy can be found at <http://www.navy.mil/swf/index.asp>.

More information about the United States Marine Corps can be found at <http://www.marines.mil/Pages/Default.aspx>.

More information about the United States Air Force can be found at <http://www.airforce.com/>.

More information about the National Guard can be found at <http://www.ng.mil/default.aspx>.  
<http://www.va.gov/kids>

Veterans Administration website for students in grades 6-12.

<http://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war>

History.com website on the Vietnam War

<http://www.nps.gov/vive/index.htm>

National Park Service site for the Vietnam War Memorial