

U.S. MILITARY

DESCRIPTION OF SESSION

This session provides participants an opportunity to learn more about the U.S. military. Specifically, participants will understand how the mission, careers, and people of the military provide service to our country and contribute to our freedom.

CATEGORIES

- Exploring: Law & Government
- Life Skills: College & Career Prep
- U.S. Department of Education: Law, Public Safety, Corrections & Security

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Discuss the history of U.S. military service.
- Describe the variety of careers available in the military.

SUPPLIES

- Laptop computer or equipment to view videos

PREPARATION

Depending on the activities you choose:

- Arrange for a veteran or currently serving military member to speak to the group.
- Arrange a tour of a local recruiting office.
- Coordinate a visit to a local high school that sponsors a Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) unit.
- Coordinate a visit to a local National Guard or Reserve unit weekend activity.

VIDEOS AND RESOURCES

Reminder: Any time you use an outside source, be sure you follow the content owner's or website's permission requirements and guidelines.

Advisors should review these materials before showing them to ensure that they are appropriate for the post.

ADVISOR NOTE: Included in this activity lesson plan are an abundance of videos and other resources. You may certainly keep this session to your typical meeting timeframe, but you may also want to gauge your post's interest level. If your Explorers are highly interested, you may want to consider doing multiple sessions on this topic.

- About the Army: History—<http://www.goarmy.com/about/what-is-the-army/history.html>
- About the Army: Serving Your Way (Active Duty, Army Reserve)—<http://www.goarmy.com/about/serving-in-the-army/serve-your-way.html>
- About the Army: Types of Soldiers (Enlisted Soldiers, Officers)—<http://www.goarmy.com/about/serving-in-the-army/types-of-soldiers.html>
- U.S. Air Force History—<https://www.airforce.com/mission/history>
- “Bigger Picture of Being a Soldier”—<http://www.goarmy.com/videos/play/bigger-picture-of-being-a-soldier-army-overview.html>
- “Joining Overview”—<http://todaysmilitary.com/joining>
- Parents’ Stories— <http://todaysmilitary.com/guidance/parents-stories>
- Inside Look page (videos: “Officer Paths Overview,” “Earning a Degree,” and “Called to Serve”)—<http://todaysmilitary.com/inside-look>

ADVISOR NOTE: Text in italics should be read aloud to participants. As you engage your post in activities each week, please include comments, discussions, and feedback to the group relating to **Character, Leadership, and Ethics**. These are important attributes that make a difference in the success of youth in the workplace and in life.

ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Choose one or more of the following:

Provide an overview of some of the differences between military life and a job outside of the military. Be sure to touch on some of the unique aspects of military life.

Or divide the participants into small groups and have them brainstorm what they know about the different branches of the military. Have them share their perceptions with the larger group.

Or have the participants discuss why they might be interested in joining the military.

Activity 1

Military Overview

Show Explorers the Army history materials (<http://www.goarmy.com/about/what-is-the-army/history.html>) and the Air Force history materials (<https://www.airforce.com/mission/history>). Lead a discussion about how these branches of the military evolved and their specialized missions.

Show Explorers the “Joining Overview” video (<http://todaysmilitary.com/joining>) and lead a discussion about their thoughts on the military’s role in your community, our country, and our world.

Activity 2

Military Careers

With the Explorers, review the Jobs in Today's Military information sheet found at http://cdn.todaysmilitary.com/JobsinTM_Educators.pdf. Divide Explorers into small groups and have them discuss what they learned about jobs in the military. In the larger group, have participants share what types of military jobs interest them, what surprised them, and what they did not understand.

Have a veteran or currently serving military member speak to the post about his or her experience, why he or she served, and how it impacted his or her life. Give participants the opportunity to ask questions.

Activity 3

Army Physical Fitness Test

Find the requirements for the Army Physical Fitness Test and discuss with participants the importance of being physically fit while serving in the military. Have participants take the test.

Activity 4

Recruiting Office/JROTC Visit

With the post, visit a local recruiting office to learn about military service from an official recruiter. Have participants meet with several recruiters and ask questions about careers, service, and the importance of enlisted service.

As an alternative, if there is a JROTC program at a local high school, arrange a visit for the participants to meet the students, discuss with the faculty the importance of the program, and learn more about why students enroll in this program.

Activity 5

National Guard Visit

Have the post visit a local National Guard or Reserve weekend drill. Choose a one-hour period for participants to observe the unit in an activity where they can meet military personnel, see their equipment, and discuss the impact of service.

ADVISOR NOTE

Some sample questions are below. They are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own questions that relate to your post or specific focus area.

REFLECTION

- *What did you learn that surprised you?*
- *What did you learn that makes you think the military would be a good career fit for you?*
- *What did you learn that makes you think the military would not be a good career fit for you or would be a concern to you?*
- *What are some benefits to being a member of the military vs. having a traditional non-military job?*
- *Discuss these other aspects of military life: camaraderie; living on base or with your peers; formal hierarchy structure; sense of family; sense of pride in protecting your country.*

ADVISOR AND OFFICER REVIEW

After the meeting, address the following:

- Identify what was successful about the meeting.
- Identify what needed improvement.
- Schedule an officer and Advisor planning meeting to prepare for the next post meeting or activity.

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