



LESSON PLAN

Send Something Special

Topic: **Send a Soldier a Care Package** | Grade Level: **Middle School**

Subject: **Social Studies** | Time: **50 minutes plus time to collect and send items**

OBJECTIVE(S):

Students will better understand the sacrifices made by deployed service members and will learn how to send a soldier a care package. They will determine what items to include before packing and sending care packages.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- *Holiday Cheer* video from the MilitaryKidsConnect.org website
- List of "Suggested Items for Military Care Packages"
- "Care Package List" Worksheet
- Go to "Related Materials" in on-line version of this lesson plan to access all required links: www.militarykidsconnect.org/p/lp/mid

OTHER RESOURCES REQUIRED:

- Computer with classroom display and Internet access
- Free shipping supplies (*see "Tips" below*)
- Customs forms (available at U.S. Post Offices)

LESSON

Suggested Activity Set-up and Discussion (3 minutes)

- Introduce lesson by reviewing with the class that there are U.S. soldiers deployed to Afghanistan and other countries, often for a year (or even longer). It can get lonely, and it helps service members to know that people back home remember and appreciate them.
- Inform students they are going to watch a video about a teenage girl who found a way to let hundreds of soldiers know they weren't forgotten.

Video (4 minutes)

- Cue and screen *Holiday Cheer* video

Teacher-Led Discussion (5 minutes)

- Nicole was inspired by her father and his military service. What about Nicole's story inspired you?
- Nicole's care package drive centered around the Christmas holiday, but troops appreciate receiving care packages any time of the year. The class will make care packages and send them to deployed service members.

Small-Group Work (25 minutes)

- Divide class into small groups
- Distribute "Suggested Items for Military Care Packages" list and "Care Package" Worksheet to all students, and the name and mailing address of one soldier to each group (*see "Tips" below*)
- Direct students to:
 - Write the soldier's name and address on their worksheets
 - Review the "Suggested Items for Military Care Packages" list and use the "Care Package" Worksheet to decide which item(s) each student will contribute. Encourage students to brainstorm other items a soldier might enjoy receiving. If computers are accessible to students, have them do additional research for appropriate care package items on-line.
 - Share worksheets with parents and get parental consent
- Students will have 1 week to bring in their items. At the end of the week, each group will:
 - Compose a letter to their soldier and sign their names
 - Work with the teacher to wrap and address their care packages

From www.MilitaryKidsConnect.org – A Department of Defense website for military youth coping with deployment.

Tips

- Free military shipping kits and instructions for filling out shipping forms can be found at <http://alyssamarieaarhaus.com/tag/usps-customs-form/> (*Allow 7-10 days for shipping kits to arrive*)
- Visit the Post Office website for guidelines about sending a military package <https://www.usps.com/ship/apo-fpo-guidelines.htm>

Suggested Items for Military Care Packages

Food

- Canned fruit
- Peanut butter
- Jelly
- Ketchup
- Mayo
- Mustard
- Pickle relish
- Salsa
- Beef jerky
- Dry cereal
- Dried fruit
- Granola bars/cereal bars/protein bars
- Gum
- Hard candy (*no chocolate—it melts*)
- Cookies
- Pudding cups

Toiletries

- Cough drops
- Baby oil
- Cotton balls
- Dental floss
- Deodorant
- Laundry soap
- Hand lotion
- Mouthwash
- Q-tips®
- Shampoo
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen

Fun Stuff for “downtime”

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Batteries (AA, C, D, or 9-volt)
- Football
- Soccer
- Board games
- Playing cards
- Frisbee
- Nerf® balls
- Puzzle books/word search books
- Yo-yos
- Magazines
- Jumprope
- CDs and DVDs

Other Items

- Twin-sized fitted bedsheets (dark colors)
- Pillowcases
- Hats
- Bandanas
- Socks (white or black)
- Dustcloths
- Clothesline with clothes pins
- Sewing kits
- Tools
- Earbuds
- Flipflops

WORKSHEET
Care Package List

Student's name: _____

Soldier's name and address:

Item(s) I would like to contribute to the care package:

Items are due on _____

Parent approval required:

(Parent's Signature)