



LESSON PLAN

Military Deployments

Topic: **Communication & Military Deployments**
Subject: **English**

Grade Level: **Middle School**
Time: **50 minutes**

OBJECTIVE(S):

Students will learn about deployment and reintegration for youth with a parent in the military by watching a short video about a military family's deployment experience.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- *Communication is the Key* video from MilitaryKidsConnect.org website
- "Teacher Discussion Questions"
- "Communication is Key" 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

LESSON

Suggested Activity Set-up and Discussion (2 minutes)

- Teacher sets up lesson by defining deployment and how it affects communication among family members:
 - Define deployment: a service member has to be relocated for his or her job. For example, during times of war, service members might be deployed to areas of conflict.
 - Explain that when parents deploy, kids miss talking to them every day. Depending on the deployment, communication can be difficult.
 - Explain that students will watch a video about how one family kept in touch with their deployed parent.

Video (11 minutes)

- Cue *Communication is the Key* video from the MilitaryKidsConnect.org website.

Teacher-Led Large Group Discussion (7 minutes)

- Lead class discussion of the video (See "Teacher Discussion Questions").

Small Group Activity (30 minutes)

- Break students into pairs and distribute the "Communication is Key" Worksheet.
- Upon completion of the worksheet, students engage in a class discussion of their answers.

Teacher Discussion Questions

After the video, lead the class in a discussion about their reactions. Suggested probes include:

- Does anyone have experience with military deployments?
- Do you think this family's experiences with deployment are "typical"?
- What feelings or thoughts did the siblings in this video have about their dad deploying and returning home?
- This family created a family newsletter to keep their dad connected while he was gone. What other ways could they have kept their dad involved in their lives during his absence?
- What experiences similar to a parent leaving for deployment might non-military families have? In what ways are these non-military experiences the same or different than a military deployment?
- How might you help out a friend who is going through a big change in his or her family, such as a military deployment or (*experiences students suggested above*)?

SMALL GROUP WORKSHEET

Communication is Key

1. What are some of the feelings or thoughts military kids are likely to have when their parent is deployed far away for a long time?
2. What factors likely contributed to this family not coping with the first deployment very well?
3. What did the family do differently during the second deployment that led to a better outcome?
4. Name two pieces of "advice" family members offered to other kids at the end of this video.
5. Which child did you identify with the most in the video? Why?
6. This military family had to cope with a huge change in their lives – twice! Identify two situations non-military kids might have that are similar to the experiences of this family.
7. How does going through an experience once help or hurt when the same experience happens to you again?
 - a. Ways it helps having been through the experience before:
 - b. Ways it makes the second time you go through an experience tougher:
8. What "words of advice" would you give someone who is coping with a huge change in his or her life?