

Sample Questions for Interviewing a Vietnam Veteran

Developed by the students of Ms. Lindy Poling's Lessons of Vietnam Class, Millbrook HS

Before going to Vietnam:

- Were you drafted or did you volunteer?
- How old were you at the time?
- Were you married at the time you went to war?
- What were your opinions about the war when it started?
- Were you from a small town or a big city?
- Did you have any friends, family members, classmates, or acquaintances who also served in Vietnam?
- What were some of your hobbies or personal interests?
- Where did you receive your training? Do you think it was adequate?
- Did you know anything about Vietnam as a country?
- Did you have any opinions about U.S. involvement in Vietnam at the time?

During the Vietnam War:

- What was your first impression of Vietnam?
- Describe your commanding officer. Was he well respected? What did you think of him?
- What were your living conditions like?
- Did you have contact with your family/friends while you were in Vietnam?
- Did you have access to news going on in the U.S. while you were in Vietnam?
- What was your job assignment?
- What was your daily routine?
- Did you sustain any injuries/wounds?
- What was the weather like in Vietnam?
- How was the food?
- Were you ever scared or fearful?
- Did you make any close friends during the war?
- What are your personal opinions about President John F. Kennedy and President Lyndon B. Johnson?
- What did you do for leisure/fun?
- How would you describe your morale? What was the overall morale of your comrades?
- Did your attitude about the war change as it progressed? If so, how?
- Did you witness any racial discrimination within your platoon?
- Do you feel like relationships among the soldiers changed after the death of Martin Luther King, Jr.?
- How did the members of your platoon regard the Vietnamese?
- What are your thoughts on how the war was handled by the Media?
- What was your main mission while in Vietnam?
- What was the biggest challenge that you experienced during the war?

After the Vietnam War:

- How were you treated when you came home?
- Did you have any difficulty readjusting to society when you returned?
- Did you benefit from the G. I. Bill?
- Did you lose any close friends during the war? Do you still keep in touch with the friends you made there?
- Have you ever joined a veterans group?
- It seems every veteran fought a different war. Do you feel that way?
- Do you ever experience flashbacks?
- Do you have any regrets?
- What are your views on draft dodgers?
- How do you feel about the U.S. government's handling of the POW situation?
- What is your view of the use of Agent Orange?
- Have you ever visited The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.? If so, how do you feel about it?
- Do you think that the United States won or lost the Vietnam War?
- What do you think about the Domino Theory today?
- Have you ever been back to Vietnam or would you like to go back?
- Would you serve your country again if you were called?
- What does Veterans Day mean to you?
- What does Memorial Day mean to you?
- In your opinion, what are the *lessons of Vietnam*?
- Were there any lessons you learned that you have been able to carry through life?
- If you could change anything about war, what would it be?
- In your opinion, what should we teach our children today about Vietnam?
- Are there any books or movies related to the Vietnam War/Vietnam Era you would recommend?
- Was Vietnam worth it?
- What do you envision as the role of our military today? In the future?