

Teacher Inquiry Kit: K-5

Gertrude Bradley Fann

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| Title | Gertrude Bradley Fann: WWII Nurse Corps |
| Author(s) | Laura Douglas |
| Grade Level | K-5 |
| Soldier | Gertrude Bradley Fann |
| Tribal Affiliation | Member of Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians |
| Branch of Service | Cadet Nurse Corps Service |
| Dates of Service | 1944-1945 |
| Essential Question | What role did Nurse Corps nurses like Trudy Bradley Farr play in World War II? And how did this work influence their careers after WWII? |
| Contextual Paragraph | Gertrude Bradley Fann was born in 1920 and raised with six siblings by her father General Washington Bradley, a non-Indian tribe member, and Julia McCoy Bradley. She grew up on the Cherokee Reservation in Birdtown, North Carolina, though she's just 1/32 Cherokee. Her father farmed, and Fann and her siblings helped with canning and growing much of their food. There was no indoor plumbing, and light came from kerosene lamps on the reservation. Fann completed high school at the main school in Cherokee and continued to Bacone College, a Baptist-operated school for Native Americans in Muskogee Okla. |

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| | <p>Trudy Bradley Fann was in college when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the United States entered World War II. Fann recalled, "Every girl in my class decided to become a nurse." She was in training at Knoxville General Hospital (KGH) when the Cadet Nurse Corps (CNC) formed, and she joined the Navy Nurse Corps as a way to serve her country.</p> <p>In 1944, Trudy Bradley Fann, along with two of her Knoxville General Hospital classmates rode a troop train all the way across the country to Oak Knoll Navy Hospital in Oakland, California. Fann recounted that Oak Knoll "had big open wards, and there were about 8,000 patients. It was hard to see some of what these boys had been through, but they were excited that it was close to being over with. We treated more Marines than sailors because they were closer to the combat usually."</p> <p>World War II ended shortly after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and Bradley Fann was in San Francisco during the V-J Day celebrations. Shortly thereafter she got a job as a nurse at the Oak Ridge Nuclear Facility in Tennessee. Soon after, she met Ray Fann on a blind date. He had just gotten out of the Navy and they soon married. Fann recalls that her friends gave her a big wedding, something that wasn't common on the reservation.</p> <p>Fann worked at the Veterans Administration (VA) hospital in Johnson City, Tennessee, and raised 5 children. After retiring with 30 years of nursing at the VA Hospital mainly in surgical service, she worked another 10 years at the Johnson City Specialty Hospital.</p> <p>After retirement, Fann spent a year in Odessa, in the Ukraine, just after the fall of communism, with Mission to the World out of Atlanta, and continued to be active with the Knoxville General Hospital alumni association. She still receives a small dividend from the Cherokee casino revenues, and votes for chief and for the tribal representative from Birdtown.</p> <p>Trudy Bradley Fann celebrated her 99th birthday in 2021. Fann has 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.</p> |
| C3 Standards | C3 Standards: https://www.socialstudies.org/standards/c3 D2.His.2.K-2. Compare life in the past to life today. |

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| | <p>D2.His.2.3-5. Compare life in specific historical time periods to life today.</p> <p>D2.His.3.K-2. Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change.</p> <p>D2.His.14.3-5. Explain probable causes and effects of events and development</p> |
| <p>Primary Source 1</p>  | <p>https://jcnewsandneighbor.com/wartime-va-nurse-trudy-fann-reflects-on-full-life/#prettyPhoto</p> |
| <p>Title of Primary Source</p> | <p>Wartime Nurse Trudy Bradley (Fann) with fellow nurse corps colleague and three WWII soldiers</p> |
| <p>Suggested questions for the source (3-5)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe three things you see in this image. 2. What can you infer from this photograph? 3. What do you think Trudy Bradley Fann and the others were doing picture doing? 4. What role or services did Trudy Bradley Fann and others who served in the Nurse Corps provide toward the WWII war efforts? Describe 3 tasks or jobs that these nurses performed. |
| <p>Possible discussion prompts beyond the questions. (2)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think would have happened to wounded soldiers if the Nurse Corps did not exist? 2. What do you think life as a nurse during WWII was like? How is that different from today? How is it similar? |
| <p>Primary Source 2</p>  | <p>https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.70090/</p> |
| <p>Title of Primary Source</p> | <p>Interview with Gertrude Bradley Fann</p> |

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| <p>Suggested questions for the source (3-5)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did Trudy Bradley Fann learn from her experience at as nurse during WWII? 2. Do you think that Trudy Bradley Fann was proud to serve her country? Give three examples 3. Discuss three examples of Trudy Bradley Fann’s faith and the role it played in her life. 4. What event led to Trudy Bradley Fann enlisting in the Navy Nurse Corps? |
| <p>Possible discussion prompts beyond the questions. (2)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did Trudy Bradley Fann’s upbringing reflect how she is as an adult? 2. How did Trudy Bradley Fann feel about the Japanese military? |
| <p>Primary Source 3:</p>  | <p>https://www.uso.org/stories/2714-8-facts-to-know-about-the-navy-nurse-corps</p> |
| <p>Title of Primary Source</p> | <p>“Respected as an Officer, Honored as a Navy Nurse” Navy recruiting poster</p> |
| <p>Suggested questions for the source</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. According to this article, how many different wars have the Navy Nurse Corps nurse been utilized? Name them. What role did nurses play in each of these different wars? 2. Who was the first African American to serve in the Navy Nurse Corps? What year did she join? Why was this important? 3. In what year was the United States Navy Nurse Corps created? When did Navy Nurse Corp nurses receive full military rank? 4. What was the name given to the first Navy Nurse Corps nurse? Explain why they were given this name. |

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| | 5. During WWII, eleven Navy Nurse Corps nurses were captured as prisoners of war. Describe what it was like being a prisoner of war for these nurses. |
| Possible discussion prompts beyond the questions. (2) | 1. Does the Navy Nurse Corps still exist today? What role does it play in today's military? |
| Primary Source 4:  | https://kgh.knoxcotn.org/trudy-fann-class-of-1945-on-aging/ |
| Title of Primary Source | Trudy Fann (Class of 1945) on Aging |
| Suggested questions for the source | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. According to Trudy Bradley Fann, list three health conditions that strong social support positively impacts. Why do you think this could be true? 2. What is the first thing that Trudy Bradley Fann attributes to long life? Do you follow Fann's advice on this? 3. Fann says, "Accept your aging whether it is 35, 65, or 85." What do you think this means? Give examples of people who DO NOT accept their aging. |
| Possible discussion prompts beyond the questions. (2) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Would you like to live as long as Trudy Bradley Fann? Why or why not. Do you know anyone as old as Fann? 2. Discuss with family members or friends that are different ages about how they feel about long life. Do you think their opinions have changed over time? Why do you think this? |

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| <p>Primary Source 5:</p>  | <p>https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/museums/nmusn/explore/photography/diversity/women-in-the-navy/wwii/navy-nurses.html</p> |
| <p>Title of Primary Source</p> | <p>Captain Sue S. Dauser, (NC) USN - Superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps Photographed at the Navy Department, circa 1944. Official U.S. Navy Photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives. https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhnc/our-collections/photography/numerical-list-of-images/nara-series/80-g-k/80-G-K-14000/80-G-K-14406.html</p> |
| <p>Suggested questions for the source</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the photographs of nurses in the Navy Nurse Corp. Describe the different uniforms that they are wearing. How is this different from what you see nurses wear? 2. What activities did the Navy Nurse Corp nurses do for entertainment? Why do you think this? 3. Who was the first nurse to serve in combat and in what year? In what battle did she assist? Why is this important? 4. List three locations where the Navy Nurse Corps served. |
| <p>Possible discussion prompts beyond the questions. (2)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List three of the locations where these photographs were taken. Why do you think the Navy Nurse Corp nurses were at these locations? |
| <p>Works Cited</p> | <p>Case, Mike. "8 Facts to Know About the Navy Nurse Corps." USO.org, May 11, 2022, https://www.uso.org/stories/2714-8-facts-to-know-about-the-navy-nurse-corps.</p> <p>Fann, Gertrude Bradley. "Trudy Fann (Class of 1945) on Aging," KGH School of Nursing, May 4, 2015, https://kgh.knoxcofn.org/trudy-fann-class-of-1945-on-aging/</p> |

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Veterans History Project. "Gertrude Bradley Fann." *American Folklife Center*. Library of Congress, October 26, 2019, <https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.70090/>.

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