

Teacher Inquiry Kit: 6-12

Linda M. Koon Woods

Title	Linda M. Koon Woods
Author	Laura Israelsen
Grade Level	6th - High School
Soldier	Linda M. Koon Woods
Tribal Affiliation	The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Branch of Service	Air Force, 46th Communications Squadron
Dates of Service	1962-1966 Vietnam War Cold War
Essential Question	<p>What is significant about this veteran's service to their country?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What demonstrates Linda's dedication to her country? ● Although she did not serve in combat, why was her service important? ● In what way is Linda representative of women in the military? ● How did Linda show her patriotism and what is her legacy?
Contextual Paragraph	<p>Linda Woods is an advocate and example of service; she discusses the idea that Native Americans feel responsibility to this land which contributes to their high participation in the military. She says they feel that they should go to great lengths to protect it. Natives are honored at every Powwow and considered warriors, even the women. Linda has a difficult childhood and home experience growing up. She didn't want to stay in her town and couldn't afford college. A friend's mother served in WWII, and she admired her. She was inspired by this friend and her dad who had served in WWII, so she decided to enlist. The Air Force appealed to her because she wanted to fly. Linda enlisted and was bussed from Traverse City to Detroit where she was sworn in and inducted into the Air Force. She did her basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.</p>

	<p>They didn't send many women overseas in the Vietnam War and she served stateside. She was sent to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana where the elite US Air Force teams were housed. She worked as a switchboard operator with the other members of her squadron. In the 1960's when the Civil Rights Act was passed, she was working in the south where the bathrooms and water fountains were labeled "white" and "colored". She would ask where she should go because she wasn't either. The blatant racism was very difficult for her to see and experience. Linda's most memorable experience happened when she heard Kennedy was shot. She came into the barracks where they announced it over the loudspeakers and the base went into red alert. As part of a SAC base, their top priority was to be ready for anything. It was a scary time. Women were not allowed to serve in combat during her service. She did complete basic training but could not be in a combat position. Linda married a fellow soldier and moved to Sacramento, then Oakland and got a job in San Francisco. She worked for Western Union and used her Air Force switchboard training to get that job. She was also able to get her first house using GI benefits. Linda used the GI Bill to pay for her schooling. She has a Master's Degree in social work and works as a Social Worker and Director of Substance Abuse. She joined the American Legion and serves as secretary. She was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame and works to memorialize and focus on the strengths that veterans bring to the country and her community. She is a charter member listed in the Women in the Military Memorial in Washington DC in the Arlington Cemetery.</p>
C3 Standards	<p>C3 Standards: https://www.socialstudies.org/standards/c3 D2.His.3.3-5. Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped significant historical changes and continuities. D2.His.4.K-2. Compare perspectives of people in the past to those of people in the present.</p>
<p>Primary Source 1: Permanent Link</p> 	<p>Linda M. Koon Woods Collection (AFC/2001/001/26934), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress</p>

Title of Primary Source	Linda Koon Woods Veterans History Project Video Interview
Suggested questions for the source	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why do Native Americans serve in the US military in such high numbers? 2. How did Linda Woods' service in the Air Force prepare her for future employment? 3. What benefits did she earn for serving in the military? How did she take advantage of them? 4. In what ways was her military service transformative in her life? 5. Linda mentions facing racism as a Native American woman in the deep south during her time at Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana in 1962. What does she specifically mention seeing and experiencing? How did she handle this in 1962? What do you think of her response?
Primary Source 2: Permanent Link 	Tribal Member Named to Women's Hall of Fame 
Title of Primary Source	Traverse City Record Eagle E-Paper Article: Tribal Member Named to Women's Hall of Fame
Suggested questions for the source	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the significance of the eagle to Native Americans? 2. What do the 35 eagle feathers represent? Do the colors have specific meaning? 3. Explore the images associated with this article, what do you notice? What is included on the staff? Why are those items part of the story? 4. What is the effect on people who see this staff? Is it important to the community? Why or why not? 5. What special significance does this eagle staff have for female veterans?
Primary Source 3 Permanent Link	Veteran of the Day Facebook Reference to Veteran of the Day

	
Title of Primary Source	Veteran of the Day Linda Woods
Suggested questions for the source (3-5)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has Mrs. Woods' military experience carried over to her community service and employment during the rest of her life? 2. Why does the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs sponsor and post the Veteran of the Day? Can you think of a Veteran to nominate? Read closely to find out how. 3. What is a switchboard? Why would the job of a switchboard operator have been important to a military base in 1962? 4. She completed basic training, but women were not allowed to be in combat. Why was this the policy in 1926? How has this policy changed over time?
Primary Source 4 Permanent Link 	Military Women's Memorial at Arlington Cemetery
Title of Primary Source	Linda Woods Charter Member of the Military Women's Memorial
Suggested questions for the source (3-5)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Linda Woods received recognition for her military service and is a recognized part of the database that you can access on site in Arlington Cemetery in Washington D.C. She is honored to be part of this memorial. Is there a need for a separate memorial for women in the military?

	<p>Why or why not?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Explore the website, paying particular attention to this opening video. What stands out to you? 3. Explore the memorial through this 3D tour. What do you notice about the architecture? Do you see any engravings, symbols or special notations? What is their significance? 4. Find the “Sister Stones”, what were they cut from and what do they symbolize? 5. Explore the galleries and list five things that stand out to you related to women in the military. 6. What has changed over time for women and their service in the military?
Works Cited	<p>Linda M. Koon Woods Collection(AFC/2001/001/26934), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.26934/.</p> <p>selms@record-eagle.com, SARAH ELMS. “Tribal Member Named to Women's Hall of Fame.” <i>Eagle</i>, Traverse City Record, 10 Oct. 2015, https://www.record-eagle.com/news/lifestyles/tribal-member-named-to-womens-hall-of-fame/article_b0470ce5-eb3f-5e16-83bf-f164ed5e9508.html/.</p> <p>“#Veteranoftheday Air Force Veteran Linda M. Koon Woods.” <i>Vantage Point</i>, US Department of Veteran's Affairs, 18 Apr. 2018, https://blogs.va.gov/VAntage/47291/air-force-veteran-linda-m-koon-woods/.</p> <p><i>Military Women's Memorial</i>, Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation (WIMSA), 29 June 2022, https://womensmemorial.org/.</p>