The U.S. Military

April 6, 1917 marks the centennial of the entry of the United States into World War I. On that day a national ceremony “In Sacrifice for Liberty and Peace: Centennial Commemoration of the U.S. Entry in World War I” will be held at the National World War I Museum and Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri. The Library of Congress has created a special World War I portal devoted to the United States participation in the Great War. It includes Wartime Sheet Music, the diaries of U.S. army officer George S. Patton (1885-1945), the diaries, notebooks, and address books of John Joseph Pershing (1860-1948) among other things. Of the 1,900 posters created between 1914 and 1920 that the Library put together, a few will be featured in this issue about the U.S. military.

U.S. Army

The U.S. Army is the largest branch of the United States Armed Forces. Together with the Navy and the Air Force it reports to the Department of Defense. The Army is responsible for land-based military operations. Historically, its roots can be traced to the Continental Army, which fought for independence in the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783). Therefore, 1775 is treated as the year of its origin.

The Army consists of two components: the active and reserve components. The reserve is made of the U.S. Army Reserve and the Army National Guard. The mission of the U.S. Army is to fight and win our Nation’s wars, by providing prompt, sustained, land dominance, across the full range of military operations and the spectrum of conflict, in support of combatant commanders. The branch participates in conflicts worldwide and is the major ground-based offensive and defensive force of the United States.

The operational and institutional missions of the Army are integral and mutually interdependent. The Army would not be able to operate if either was missing. The operational Army consists of numbered armies, corps, divisions, brigades, and battalions that conduct full spectrum operations around the world. The institutional Army provides the infrastructure necessary to raise, train, equip, deploy, and ensure the readiness of all Army forces and allows the Army to expand rapidly in time of war.

(based on U.S. Army https://www.army.mil/)
The mission of the Navy is to maintain, train and equip combat-ready Naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas.

The U.S. Navy was founded on 13 October 1775, and the Department of the Navy was established on 30 April 1798. The Department of the Navy has three principal components:

1. **The Navy Department**, which consists of executive offices mostly in Washington, D.C,

2. **the operating forces**, which include the Marine Corps, the reserve components, and, in time of war, the U.S. Coast Guard (in peace, a component of the Department of Homeland Security). Administratively, commanders report to the Chief of Naval Operations and provide, train, and equip naval forces. Operationally, they provide naval forces and report to the appropriate Unified Combatant Commanders,

3. **the shore establishment** which supports the operating forces (“the fleet”) in the form of: facilities for the repair of machinery and electronics; communications centers; training areas and simulators; ship and aircraft repair; intelligence and meteorological support; storage areas for repair parts, fuel, and munitions; medical and dental facilities; and air bases.

The Marine Corps has been a component of the U.S. Department of the Navy since 30 June 1834, working closely with naval forces for training, transportation, and logistics. The USMC operates posts on land and aboard sea-going amphibious warfare ships around the world. Additionally, several of the Marines’ tactical aviation squadrons, primarily Marine Fighter Attack squadrons, are also embedded in Navy carrier air wings and operate from the Navy’s nuclear-powered aircraft carriers.

**Mission:** Marines are trained, organized and equipped for offensive amphibious employment and as a “force in readiness.”

One of the most iconic places connected with the history of Marine Corps is Mount Suribachi on Iwo Jima, Japan. On February 23, 1945 the soldiers from the 5th Division of the 28th Regiment made a victory over Japanese army in one of the most important battles in the Pacific theater of WWII, commemorated in one of the most recognizable photographs from WWII taken by Joe Rosenthal.

Today, more than 70 years after the battle, re-united American and Japanese veterans work together “to advance common interests in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.” During the 72nd Reunion of Honor ceremony on March 25, 2017, the Commander of Marine Forces Pacific Lt. Gen. David H. Berger said, “We didn’t come here only to see once again what this volcanic island feels like. We came here today, for this reunion, to think about the past and ask what we must do to prevent that type of horrific battle from ever happening again.”

At present the U.S. Navy has 322,809 active duty personnel, 108,789 of ready reserve and 210,966 civilian staff. Navy vessels include ships, submarines, aircraft carriers and aircraft.


The United States Air Force (USAF) is the aerial warfare service branch of the United States Armed Forces. It was at first part of the United States Army, which on 18 September 1947 under the National Security Act of 1947 formed as a separate branch of the military. In this way it is the most recent branch of the U.S. military to be formed, and is the largest and one of the world’s most technologically advanced air forces.


The Air Force is headed by the civilian Secretary of the Air Force, who reports to the Secretary of Defense, and is appointed by the President with Senate confirmation. The highest-ranking military officer in the Department of the Air Force is the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, who exercises supervision over Air Force units, and serves as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Air Force combat and mobility forces are assigned, as directed by the Secretary of Defense, to the Combatant Commanders, and neither the Secretary of the Air Force nor the Chief of Staff have operational command authority over them.
American Military Ranks: Enlisted

**Private**: a soldier of the lowest military rank.

**Private first class**: designated by a single chevron and a rocker stripe it is more common among soldiers who have served in the U.S. Army for one year or more.

**Specialist**: one of the four junior enlisted ranks in the U.S. Army, above private first class and equivalent in pay grade to corporal. Unlike corporals, specialists are not considered junior non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Specialist E-4 is the most common rank held by US Army soldiers.

** Corporal**: considered a “lateral promotion” from E-4 Specialist and usually only occurs when the soldier has been selected by a promotion board to become an E-5 Sergeant and is serving in an E-5 billet such as a fireteam leader in a rifle squad. The lateral promotion is used to make the soldier a non-commissioned officer without changing the soldier’s pay.

**Sergeant**: In the United States Army, although there are several ranks of sergeant, the lowest carries the title of sergeant. Sergeant is the enlisted rank in the U.S. Army above specialist and corporal and below staff sergeant, and is the second-lowest grade of non-commissioned officer.

staff

sergeant first class

master sergeant

first sergeant

sergeant major

command sergeant major

sergeant major of the army
American Military Ranks: Officer

Second lieutenant: the normal entry-level rank for most commissioned officers in the Army, Air Force and Marine Corps, equivalent to the rank of ensign in the Navy and Coast Guard.

First lieutenant: a junior commissioned officer. It is just above the rank of second lieutenant and just below the rank of captain.

Captain: a company grade officer rank, with the pay grade of O-3. It ranks above first lieutenant and below major.

Major: a field grade military officer rank above the rank of captain and below the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Lieutenant colonel: a field grade military officer rank just above the rank of major and just below the rank of colonel.

Colonel: the most senior field grade military officer rank, immediately above the rank of lieutenant colonel and immediately below the rank of brigadier general.


Major general: a two-star general officer rank, with the pay grade of O-8.

Lieutenant general: a three-star general officer rank, with the pay grade of O-9.

General: a four-star general officer rank, with the pay grade of O-10.

General of the Army: a five-star general officer and the second highest possible rank in the United States Army.

General of the Armies: the highest possible rank in the United States Armed Forces. The rank has only been held twice in history: John J. Pershing and a posthumous promotion to George Washington in 1978.
It is not easy to be admitted to West Point. Candidates must receive a nomination from a member of Congress, a Delegate/Resident Commissioner, and the President or Vice President of the United States. Students are officers-in-training and are referred to as “cadets” or collectively as the “United States Corps of Cadets” (USCC). They are collectively referred to as “The Long Gray Line”.

Tuition for cadets is fully funded by the Army in exchange for an active duty service obligation upon graduation. There are approximately 1,300 new students entering the Academy each July, with about 1,000 cadets graduating.

Upon graduation cadets receive the degree of a bachelor of science. Their performance is evaluated on the basis of their academic achievement, but also depends on military leadership performance, and participation in competitive athletics. Cadets Honor Code states that “a cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do.” Community life is extremely important. All cadets reside on campus and on weekdays eat breakfast and lunch together.

Most graduates are commissioned as second lieutenants in the Army. There are also foreign cadets who are commissioned into the armies of their native countries.

Famous West Point graduates include the 18th and the 34th American presidents, Ulysses S. Grant and Dwight D. Eisenhower, astronauts, business people, government officials and, needless to say, military officials.
His first name is spelled “Tadeusz” or “Thaddeus” while his surname is written “Kościuszko” or, less frequently, “Kosciusko.” This Polish-Lithuanian military engineer that became both Polish and American national hero was born Andrzej Tadeusz Bonawentura Kościuszko on February 4 (or 12), 1746.

Kościuszko was a military engineer and leader who made his name fighting for Poland’s independence at the time when it began to disappear from the map of Europe, its territory annexed by Russia, Prussia and Austria. In 1794 he led the Kościuszko Uprising as Supreme Commander of the Polish National Armed Forces.

His war engineering talents showed early and he received a thorough military education first at the Corps of Cadets in Warsaw and then in France.

In 1776, Kościuszko moved to North America, where he offered his services in the fight against the British on the American side in the American Revolutionary War. As an accomplished military architect, he was entrusted with designing and overseeing the construction of state-of-the-art fortifications, including those at West Point, New York. He was granted the key role in the British defeat at Saratoga. In 1783, in recognition of his services, the Continental Congress promoted him from the rank of colonel to brigadier general. It is no exaggeration to say that the strong U.S.-Poland relationship and shared commitment to freedom date back to the American Revolution, when Polish heroes such as Tadeusz Kosciuszko and Kazimierz Pulaski (Casimir Pulaski) aided the American cause.

At the end of the Revolutionary War, Kościuszko returned to Poland and led an uprising against the nation’s partition. Notwithstanding a few victories, the uprising was unsuccessful and Kościuszko was caught by Russian forces at the Battle of Maciejowice in 1794 and imprisoned for two years. Following the death of Tsarina Catherine the Great, Kościuszko was released and returned to the United States, where he was welcomed as a hero. Thomas Jefferson, with whom he shared ideals of human rights, counted him among his close friends. In 1798 Kościuszko wrote a will in which he dedicated his American assets to the education and freedom of U.S. slaves. Kościuszko never returned to his native land, which remained partitioned for the rest of his life. From America he went to Switzerland where he died in exile on October 15, 1817.

2017 marks the 200th anniversary of his death and was proclaimed The Kościuszko Year in his native country.
The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a security alliance of 28 countries from North America and Europe. It was formed when the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington on April 4, 1949.

The Parties to this Treaty reaffirm their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments.

Secretary of State Dean Acheson signs the Atlantic defense treaty for the United States, April 4, 1949 in Washington. Vice President Alben W. Barkley, left, and President Harry Truman converse during the signing. (AP Photo)
They are determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilisation of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law. They seek to promote stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defence and for the preservation of peace and security. They therefore agree to this North Atlantic Treaty [...] 

NATO’s fundamental goal is to safeguard the Allies’ freedom and security by political and military means. NATO remains the principal security instrument of the transatlantic community and expression of its common democratic values. It is the practical means through which the security of North America and Europe are permanently tied together.

The core of the Alliance is Article 5 of the Washington Treaty -- an attack against one Ally is an attack against all, which is a promise of collective defense. This article was invoked for the first and only time after the September 11 attacks, after which troops were deployed to Afghanistan under the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

The treaty ensures consultations among Allies on security matters of common interest (Article 4). Peacekeeping in Kosovo and new threats to security such as cyber attacks, and global threats such as terrorism and piracy that affect the Alliance and its global network of partners are examples of security matters of common interest.

Three NATO members (the United States, France and the United Kingdom) are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council with the power to veto and are officially nuclear-weapon states. NATO’s headquarters are located in Brussels, Belgium, while the headquarters of Allied Command Operations is near Mons.

NATO is an Alliance that consists of 28 independent member countries across North America and Europe, the newest of which, Albania and Croatia, joined in April 2009. An additional 22 countries participate in NATO’s Partnership for Peace program, with 15 other countries involved in institutionalized dialogue programs. The combined military spending of all NATO members constitutes over 70% of the global total. Members’ defence spending is supposed to amount to 2% of GDP.

Some of the ongoing missions of NATO include ones in the Balkans and the Mediterranean. NATO also conducts training exercises and offers security support to partners around the globe, including the European Union in particular but also the United Nations and the African Union.
MARCH-APRIL 2017 TRIVIA QUESTION

How many countries are currently in NATO?

Send the answer (with your home address) to:
KrakowAIRC@state.gov

The 1st, the 10th and the 13th correct answer will be awarded with a book prize.

Deadline: May 10

February 2017 Answer:

There were various answers to the February Trivia Question. You gave different reasons for Americans moving homes.

The winners are:

Maria, Marzanna from Częstochowa and Zbigniew from Zduńska Wola

CONGRATULATIONS!!!
The prizes will be sent to you by mail.

Exercise 1 SPEAKING

Work with another student. Divide the two photos from the collection of WWI posters between the two of you.

First, describe your photo to the other student.
Then, in a conversation, compare and contrast the pictures.
Finally discuss the following topics:
The role of women in the military
The role of war photography and the role of war journalists

Exercise 2 SPEAKING

Work in a group of 4 people. Prepare to a discussion about the role of history in our life.

Is history among your favorite school subjects? Why? Why not?

What are the advantages of learning about big historic events including conflicts and wars?

Can humans learn from their past mistakes? Can wars and military conflicts be avoided?
THE NAVY NEEDS YOU!
DON'T READ AMERICAN HISTORY - MAKE IT!

U.S. NAVY RECRUITING STATION