



Iowa National Guard Youth and Teen Program
Family Programs Office
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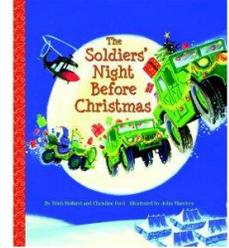
Book: The Soldier's Night Before Christmas

Author: Trish Holland and Christine Ford

Ages: 5-10

Lesson:

1. Begin by showing the students the cover of the book. Then read the title of the book to the children. Have the students infer what the book might be about based on the cover and title.
2. How many of you have heard the original version of this story, The Night Before Christmas?
3. We are going to read a different version of that story...this one talks about Soldiers. How many of you know someone in the military?
4. Begin reading the story, pausing throughout to ask the following questions:
 - a. The story mentions the Soldiers dreaming of back home, why do you think they would be dreaming of home?
 - b. What similarities do you notice between the original story and this version?
 - c. What do you think the Soldiers in Humvees were delivering to the Soldiers at the base?
 - d. What do you think the author meant when he described the Sergeant with eyes 'sharp as lasers'?
 - e. How do you think the Sergeant brought Christmas from home to the troops?
 - f. In the story, the Soldiers salute each other, what are things we can do to show respect to each other?
 - g. If you could have one thing for Christmas, what would it be? Why?
5. After reading the story, ask the students how they thought the Soldiers felt after receiving all the gifts from home? Why do you think they felt that way?



Activities:

1. Compare and contrast: Using the original version, compare and contrast it with this version. It helps students identify similarities between what they do and what Service Members do, especially those deployed to a different country.
2. Have students write Holiday cards/letters to Service Members overseas or veterans within their community.
3. As a tie into poetry, have older students write a version of this story applicable to their grade.

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4. There are many vocabulary words in this book which may be unfamiliar to children...prior to reading, it might be a great idea to talk about these words (i.e. sentries, Humvee, Blackhawks, convoy, armored, etc.)

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