



*The White House Commission
on Remembrance*

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- Event:** A Remembrance Ceremony to be observed by schools prior to Memorial Day sponsored by the *White House Commission on the National Moment of Remembrance*.
- Purpose:** To inform students across the country of the *National Moment of Remembrance* and the importance of honoring those who died for their freedom and encourage the participation of students and their families in this act of national unity at 3 p.m. on Memorial Day.
- When:** Before Memorial Day, at a time designated by the school.
- Duration:** Ten minutes
- Place:** Either: individual classroom, school auditorium or at school's flagpole.

SCRIPT

READER 1:

Instructions: Each reader should have a card with the instructions on it.

For 136 years, our Nation has observed a day to honor those who died for our freedom. It is called Memorial Day and this year it is on Monday, May 31. Most of us think of Memorial Day as a day of swimming and barbeques, but it's much more important than that. The purpose of the original "Decoration Day," as it was called in 1868, was to decorate the graves of the men who died during the Civil War. The tradition has been carried through all the wars since.

Today, we have a reminder of why Memorial Day is so important. Many of us heard that Pat Tillman died late last month. Corporal Tillman's story is just one that should make us think. Pat was a pro-football player with a multi-million dollar contract. He gave it up to join the Army to serve his country. Once in the Army, Tillman trained for and became a Ranger, one of the most dangerous Army jobs.

On April 24, Pat Tillman gave his life in Afghanistan defending us from terrorism. He was killed in action and became a national hero. The truth is, he was a hero before he was killed, just as all who fight for us are heroes. They give their lives so that we can enjoy the pool and barbeque and all the other things that we love.

Please pause for a moment on Memorial Day at 3 p.m. to remember our heroes.



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READER 2: The casualties of war are not only those who died in battle but also the families they left behind. President Abraham Lincoln, our 16th President, wrote of "...the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom," in a letter during the Civil War to a mother who lost five sons.

READER 3: And now we are proud to begin our Roll Call of Remembrance, which pays tribute to all those who died in our wars, conflicts and incidents.

Instructions: As a student reads the name of a war, a bell is rung. We suggest using 12 student readers.

With honor and pride, we remember those who died in the:

Revolutionary War
War of 1812
Mexican War
Civil War
Spanish-American War
World War I
World War II
Korean War
Vietnam War
Gulf War
Conflicts and Incidents
Peacekeeping Missions
War on Terrorism

READER 4: On Memorial Day, for the *National Moment of Remembrance*, wherever you are, at 3 p.m., stop whatever you are doing. Place your hand over your heart, as a gesture of gratitude and respect, and remember those men and women who died for us.