

Dear YOUNG AMERICAN

What Is the Medal of Honor?

Students will:

- understand what the Medal of Honor means to the United States
- identify the symbols, brief history, and design of each Medal and the branches which they represent

Teacher Preparation:

Select a Recipient Portrait of Valor from the Dear Young American webpage. This document will be used at the end of this lesson.

Introductory Activity:

Read this brief description of the Medal of Honor:

The Medal of Honor is the United States' highest award for military valor in action. And while over 150 years have passed since its inception, the meaning behind the Medal has never tarnished. Etched within are the very values that each Recipient displayed in the moments that mattered—bravery, courage, sacrifice, integrity. A deep love of country and a desire to always do what is right. A distinguished award presented only to the deserving, the Medal tells a story of its own.

Ask students to reflect and share their thoughts on what the description means.

Whole Group Activity:

As a class, watch “The Medal of Honor: Inspire the Future.” Instruct students to take notes, focusing on the design features of the three different Medals.

Individual Activity:

Have each student write a one-paragraph description of one of the three Medal of Honor designs. Direct students to visit www.cmohs.org to watch the video again and to find more in-depth information about the Medals.

Whole Group Activity:

Facilitate a brief discussion with students about the designs of the Medal of Honor. Ask them to share reasons they believe concepts or values were included (or even excluded) from the Medal designs.

Whole Group Activity:

As a class, read the selected Recipient Portrait of Valor.

For Next Time: Ask students to demonstrate what they learned from the lesson

For next time, ask students to think about what Medal of Honor Recipients might be like. What are their backgrounds? What did they have to experience in order to receive the Medal of Honor? What values might they hold dear? Encourage students to ask family members or family friends if they have any knowledge about the Medal of Honor.