



UNDERSTANDING
SACRIFICE

Activity: Honoring Sacrifice: Examining Why Dutch People Have Adopted the Graves of American Service Members



Guiding questions:

- What happened in the Netherlands during World War II?
- Why have people in the Netherlands adopted graves of fallen American service men and women?

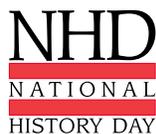
DEVELOPED BY ERICA SWENSON

Grade Level(s): 6-8

Subject(s): Social Studies, English/Language Arts

Cemetery Connection: Netherlands American Cemetery

Fallen Hero Connection: Private First Class Stanley V. Clark



Overview

During this lesson students will take notes on a variety of secondary and primary sources in order to build their background knowledge about the Dutch experience during World War II and the work of the Foundation for Adopting Graves at the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten. Students will also be introduced to a fallen soldier from Lewiston, Maine named Private First Class Stanley Clark and they will record information based on an interview with his grave sponsor, Nowy van Hedel. Finally, students will write up their different theories as to why many Dutch people are committed to the care of American graves in the Netherlands in the form of a fictional email between Nowy van Hedel and the Clark family. This lesson is designed for the end of a World War II unit.

Historical Context

On May 10, 1940, Germany launched a *blitzkrieg* attack on the Netherlands. The Dutch were caught off guard as they had remained neutral throughout World War I and hoped to continue this policy despite recent turmoil in Europe. The Germans quickly landed paratroopers throughout Dutch territory, took over key bridges, captured airfields, and seized control of a large swath of land. The *Luftwaffe*, the German Airforce, bombed Rotterdam with such ferocity that sections of the city were flattened, 800 civilians lost their lives, and 80,000 others were left homeless. Finally, on May 15, 1940, after five days of fighting, the Netherlands surrendered when Germany threatened to bomb more Dutch cities. For the next five years, the Netherlands existed as an occupied nation under Nazi control. All of the graves at Netherlands American Cemetery, where Stanley Clark is buried, have been adopted by locals who visit the graves regularly.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Describe the experience of different Dutch people during World War II; and
- Identify reasons why Dutch people adopt the graves at the Netherlands American Cemetery.

“Dutch citizens have adopted all of the 8,301 graves at the Netherlands American Cemetery. Why do many Dutch citizens remain connected with events from over 70 years ago? Why honor the sacrifice of foreign citizens? This topic presents an opportunity to explore how countries had different experiences of World War II and continue to have unique ways of preserving that history.”

— Erica Swenson

Swenson is a teacher at Bruce M. Whittier Middle School in Poland, Maine.

Standards Connections

Connections to Common Core

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Connections to C3 Framework

D2.His.1.6-8. Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.

D2.His.4.6-8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

Documents Used ★ indicates an ABMC source

Primary Sources

Interview Video with Nowy van Hedel, 2015 ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

<http://abmceducation.org/swenson-lesson?resources=1>

Secondary Sources

Akkers van Margraten / From Farmland to Soldiers' Cemetery

<http://www.akkersvanmargraten.nl>

Fallen Hero Profile: Private First Class Stanley V. Clark ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

<http://abmceducation.org/understandingsacrifice/soldier/stanley-clark>

Netherlands American Cemetery Video ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

<https://www.abmc.gov/multimedia/videos/netherlands-american-cemetery>

Netherlands American Cemetery Visitor Brochure ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

http://abmc.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Netherlands%20508_03-26-2015.pdf

Dutch Citizens Adopt Graves at Netherlands American Cemetery ★

American Battle Monuments Commission

<https://www.abmc.gov/multimedia/videos/dutch-citizens-adopt-graves-netherlands-american-cemetery>

Ian Shapira, "Americans gave their lives to defeat the Nazis. The Dutch have never forgotten," May 25, 2015

Washington Post

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/americans-gave-their-lives-to-defeat-the-nazis-the-dutch-have-never-forgotten/2015/05/24/92dddab4-fa79-11e4-9ef4-1bb7ce3b3fb7_story.html

Stichting Adoptie Graven Amerikaanse Begraafplaats Margraten / Foundation for Adopting Graves at the American Cemetery in Margraten

<http://www.adoptiegraven-margraten.nl/index.php/en/home>

Materials

- Warm Up
- Building Background Knowledge Chart
- Fact Sheet: Private First Class Stanley Clark and Nowy van Hedel
- Timeline of Major World War II Events in the Netherlands
- Email Exchange Assignment and Rubric
- Exit Ticket
- Internet access for each group of students
- Projector
- Chart paper, overhead, document camera, or blackboard space for recording class notes

Lesson Preparation

- Project (or print out) the Warm Up and Exit Tickets.
- Project (or print out) the Fact Sheet - Private First Class Stanley Clark and Nowy van Hedel.
- Make one copy of the three handouts (Building Background Knowledge, Timeline of Major World War II Events in the Netherlands, and Email Exchange Assignment) for each student.
- Cue the Netherlands American Cemetery Video from the ABMC.
- Cue link to Stanley V. Clark's Fallen Hero Profile.

Procedure

Activity One: Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

- Project or Distribute the Warm Up activity
- Think/Pair/Share: Ask students to use their prior knowledge to list different ways in which Americans typically memorialize military service men and women who have been killed in American wars.
 - Question: How do we remember or honor American military service members who have died during war?
- Ask students to share some of their answers with other students sitting nearby.
- Record some of the students' ideas. *Possible answers include: building statues, making artwork, caring for grave sites, Memorial or Veterans Day celebrations, parades, literature, researching fallen soldiers, sharing family and community stories, donating to related causes, creating a fund in the name of a fallen soldier, reading off the names of fallen service women and men in a public space, naming locations after fallen service men and women.*

Activity Two: Building Background Knowledge Chart (30 minutes)

- Distribute the Building Background Knowledge Chart. Project this chart on the board or recreate on chart paper to record student responses.
- Say: *At the Netherlands American Cemetery there are 8,301 graves of American service men and women who died during World War II. All of these graves have been adopted by Dutch citizens who have pledged to visit these graves at least twice a year and research the lives of the soldiers buried there. Nowy van Hedel is a 30-year old Dutch man who adopted the grave of Private First Class Stanley Clark from Lewiston, Maine; a soldier who just turned 20 years old. Why would Nowy van Hedel and other Dutch citizens be so interested in adopting the graves of fallen American military service men and women?*

- Project (or distribute) the Fact Sheet - Private First Class Stanley V. Clark and Nowy van Hedel. The teacher may choose to read it or ask students to read the information.
- On the Building Background Knowledge Chart, ask students to brainstorm their thoughts on the question and put their answers in box one.
 - After a few minutes, record some student answers. Students should add any new information to his or her chart.
- Divide the students into groups of two to four students each.
 - Show the ABMC video describing Netherlands American Cemetery.
 - Using the video, ask students to add information and ideas to box one. Ask students to predict different reasons why Dutch people would adopt the graves of American soldiers.
 - Record more of the students' ideas on the whole-class notes or chart at the front of the room.
- Introduce three new sources of information:
 - *Netherlands American Cemetery Brochure*
 - Timeline of Major World War II Events in the Netherlands
 - Akkers van Margraten, online testimonials of Dutch people during World War II
 - *Teacher Tip:* Choose "English" in the upper right hand corner. In the interactive timeline, Rich Prevoo, Huub Bessems, and Annie Prevoo-Fijns are good sources for students.
- Using this new information, ask students to identify and predict different reasons why Dutch people would adopt the graves of American soldiers. Students will record notes in box two of their charts.
 - Record and share some of the students' ideas. *Examples may include: Dutch people suffered during five years of German occupation during World War II (forced military service, concentration camps), many World War II battles were fought throughout the Netherlands, American soldiers stayed in the homes of Dutch people for many weeks, many Dutch people grew up with a family tradition of visiting American graves, etc.*
- Show the interview clip of Nowy Van Hedel, the man who adopted PFC Stanley V. Clark's grave. Also, allow them to link to Stanley Clark's Fallen Hero Profile.
 - Ask students to identify and predict different reasons why Dutch people would adopt the graves of American soldiers. Students will record notes in box three of their charts.
 - Record some of the students' ideas onto a whole-class notes or chart at the front of the room.

Assessment

Email Exchange Assignment (15 minutes)

- Project or distribute the Exit Ticket to students. Students may use their Building Background Knowledge Chart to write a response to the two guiding questions of the class:
 - *What happened in the Netherlands during World War II?;* and
 - *Why have people in the Netherlands adopted graves of fallen American service men and women?*
- Introduce the Email Exchange Assignment and rubric.
 - Students will use the notes that they have recorded on their Building Background Knowledge Chart to write a fictional email between Nowy van Hedel (the grave adopter) and the Clark family. In this email they will include specific details of the Dutch experience during World War II and they will also explain some reasons why people in the Netherlands want to adopt the graves of American servicemen and women.

Methods for Extension

- Students can contact and interview other members of the adoption program through the Foundation for Adopting Graves at the American Cemetery in Margraten.
- Students can write detailed thank you letters or emails to the Foundation for Adopting Graves at the American Cemetery in Margraten.
- Students can adopt graves in a local cemetery and research the history of the person buried there.
- Students can visit a local World War II memorial or a local cemetery. They could perform some community service cleanup work.
- Students can record a video message for the members of the Foundation for Adopting Graves at the American Cemetery in Margraten.
- The American Battle Monuments Commission maintains U.S. military cemeteries overseas. These cemeteries are permanent memorials to the fallen, but it is important that students know the stories of those who rest here. To learn more about the stories of some of the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice, visit www.abmceducation.org/understandingsacrifice/abmc-sites.

Adaptations

- This could be adapted for older learners by adding more layers of information. An excellent article was recently published in the May 25, 2015 *Washington Post* about the experiences of some American families of fallen soldiers and their Dutch grave adopters.
- This lesson could be adapted for younger learners by removing some of the World War II content. They can have meaningful conversations about how we remember and honor American soldiers.
- A supporting teacher could help with some of the reading during Activity Two. The map reading and timeline reading will be the most challenging.
- Teachers may want to form groups with at least one strong reader or one person who already has background knowledge about World War II.
- For the Email Exchange Assignment, a voice or film recording could replace a written email. The teacher may also choose to have students work in small groups to write and/or act out a skit between a fictional Nowy van Hedel and members of the Clark family

Warm Up

How do we remember or honor American military service members who have died during war?



Figure 1

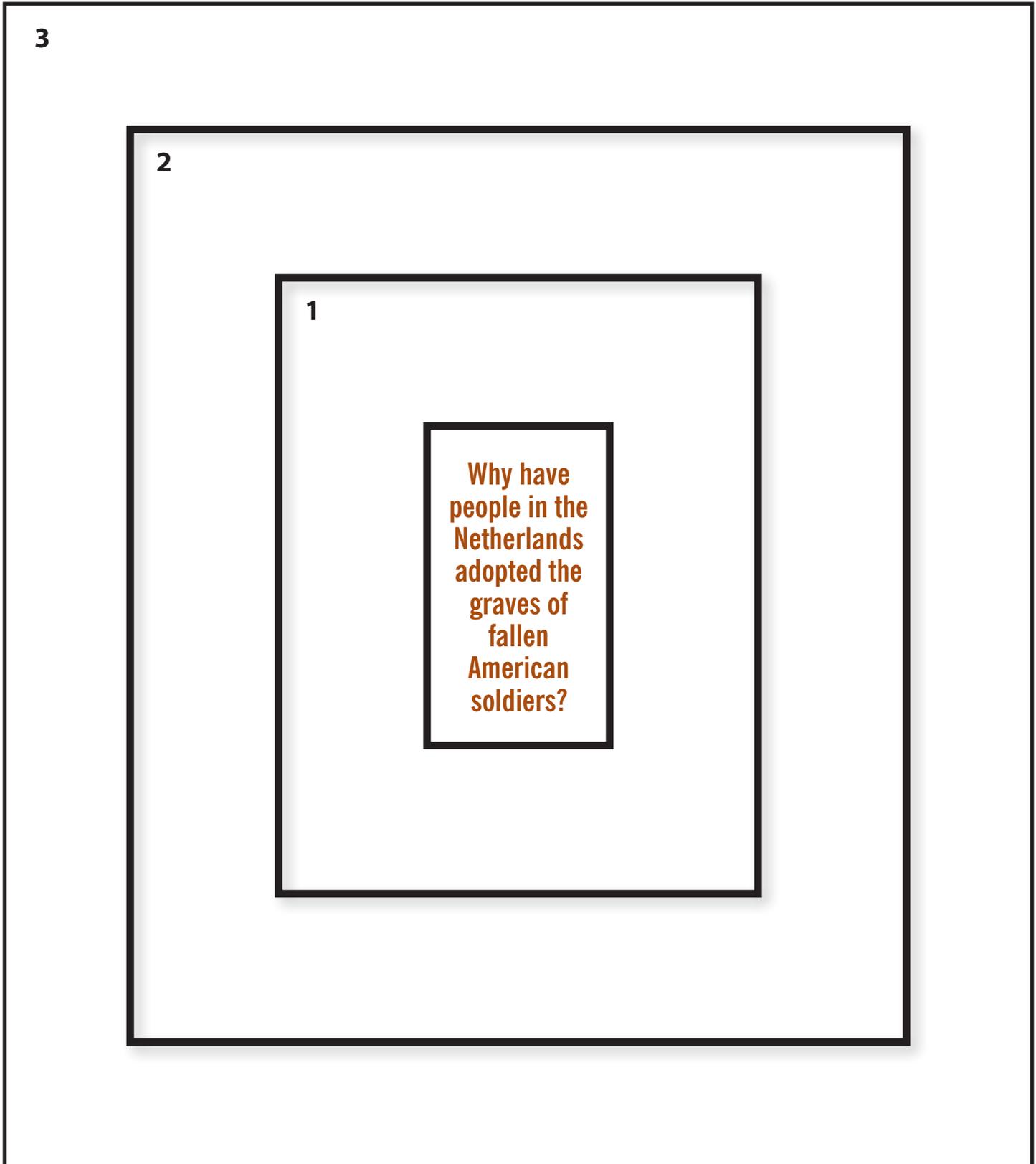


Figure 2



Figure 3

Building Background Knowledge Chart



Fact Sheet



Nowy van Hedel

Quick Facts:

- Nowy is the 30-year old Dutch man who adopted Private First Class Stanley Clark's grave in 2003.
- He works as an instructor at the local NATO base.
- He has a passion for military history and World War II reenacting.



Private First Class Stanley Clark

Quick Facts:

- Born to a large family in Lewiston, Maine (seven older brothers and four sisters!)
- Volunteered to be a Member of the 401st Glider Infantry Regiment.
- Gliders were engineless fabric and plywood planes that were towed by transport planes and then released behind enemy lines. Most gliders had to crash land and there were 40% casualty rates for some missions.
- Clark died during Operation Market Garden while fighting to defend a bridge.
- He had just turned 20 years old.

Netherlands American Cemetery Visitor Brochure

American Battle Monuments Commission



Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial
American Battle Monuments Commission



Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial
The U.S. 30th Infantry Division liberated this site on September 9, 1944. A battlefield cemetery was established here on November 10, 1944. The government of the Netherlands granted its free use as a permanent burial ground in perpetuity without charge or taxation.

American Battle Monuments Commission
This agency of the United States government operates and maintains 25 American cemeteries and 26 memorials, and monuments and markers in 16 countries. The Commission works to fulfill the vision of its first chairman, General of the Armies John J. Pershing, Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I, promised that "time will not dim the glory of their deeds."



American Battle Monuments Commission
2300 Clarendon Boulevard
Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22201
USA

Netherlands American Cemetery
Amerikase Begraafplaats 1
6269 NA Margraten Netherlands
TEL. (31) 43 43 81 208
GPS N50 49 26.0 E 5 48 22.3

Allied Operations, September 1944 – Spring 1945

KEY:  Military Cemetery  Parachute Drop  West Wall – German Defensive Line





Photo: The History Channel

The broad Allied advance across Belgium and the Netherlands included the U.S. 12th and U.K. 21st Army Groups as well as the First Canadian and Second British Armies. This advance ultimately resulted in the penetration into Germany and hastened the end of the war.

Netherlands American Cemetery and Memorial
American Battle Monuments Commission

For more information on this site and other ABMC commemorative sites, please visit
www.abmc.gov

Netherlands American Cemetery Visitor Brochure

American Battle Monuments Commission

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**ALLIED OPERATIONS,
SEPT. 1944 – SPRING 1945**

Successful Allied operations followed landings in Normandy and Southern France. However, logistical shortages slowed momentum. Autumn priority in Northern France, Belgium, and the Netherlands was given to capture of Channel ports and to advance through or around German frontier fortifications (West Wall) into Northern Germany.

Key actions in the ensuing campaign included:

SEPTEMBER 14, Maastricht was the first Dutch city to be liberated.

MID-SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER 21, U.S. First Army besieged and captured Aachen, Germany.

MID-SEPTEMBER THROUGH MARCH, saw sustained fierce fighting in the Hürtgen Forest.

SEPTEMBER 17, Operation MARKET GARDEN began in the Netherlands. Airborne and armored forces seized key bridges, but not the northernmost bridge at Arnhem.

NOVEMBER 16 – DECEMBER 15, U.S. forces advanced slowly toward the Roer River.

DECEMBER 16, German counteroffensive in the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge) stopped the Allied advance for one month.

FEBRUARY 23, U.S. Ninth Army began crossing the Roer River in Operation GRENADE.

MARCH 23-24, U.S., British, and Canadian forces launched Operation PLUNDER, crossing the Rhine River around Wesel. Its airborne component, Operation VARSITY, put U.S. and British airborne divisions north of Wesel. This cleared the way for Allied forces to encircle the vital Ruhr region and advance to the North German Plain.

Throughout the period, Allied aircraft flew hazardous strategic missions against German industrial targets and tactical missions in support of the ground forces.

Visitor Building
Here you can meet our staff and get your questions answered, sign the guest register, and rest and refresh yourself.



Court of Honor with Reflecting Pool
The names and information of the 1722 Missing in Action Army and Army Air Force are engraved on the walls flanking the reflecting pool of the Court of Honor.



The Maps
Three maps engraved on walls within the museum present: (a) the airborne Operation MARKET GARDEN; (b) crossing of the Roer and advance to the Rhine; (c) military operations from Normandy landings to war's end.



The Chapel
The chapel is on the east, or burial, side of the tower. Its bronze doors depict a Tree of Life in outline.





Layout

From the Visitor Building and museum room, the Court of Honor leads to the tower containing the chapel. Farther east, the 16 plots of the burial area are defined by the broad central mall and grass paths. The 8,301 headstones sweep in parallel arcs across the green lawn.

"The Mourning Woman" Statue
Bronze sculptures at the east end of the Court of Honor include the "Mourning Woman," three doves, and the new shoot rising from a war-destroyed tree.



Memorial Tower
The tower rises 107 feet above the east end of the Court of Honor. Its exterior walls are built of English Portland Stone.



The Crown in the Chapel
Suspended from the chapel ceiling, the lighting fixture presented by the Dutch people displays a royal crown surrounded by tiny lights recalling the skies above.



Headstone Location

PLOT:

ROW:

GRAVE:

Useful Information

DIMENSIONS: 65.5 ACRES
HEADSTONES: 8,301
LATIN CROSSSES: 8,122

STARS OF DAVID: 179
MISSING IN ACTION: 1,722
SETS OF BROTHERS: 40

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS: 6
DEDICATED: JULY 7, 1960

ABMCEDUCATION.ORG

American Battle Monuments Commission | National History Day | Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media

Timeline of Major World War II Events in the Netherlands

1914-1919	The Netherlands remains neutral throughout World War I.
September 1939	The Dutch declare neutrality at the start of World War II.
May 1940	Around 140,000 Jews live in the Netherlands.
May 10, 1940	Germans attack the Netherlands.
May 13, 1940	Dutch cabinet and royal family flee to London.
May 14, 1940	Central Rotterdam is destroyed by German bombing.
May 15, 1940	Occupied Netherlands: The Dutch surrender to Germany. After five days of fighting, there are 2,220 dead Dutch soldiers, 2,700 wounded Dutch soldiers, and 2,000 civilian casualties.
1940-1945	Hitler views non-Jewish Dutch citizens as Aryan or members of the “master race.” His intention is to make the Netherlands part of the Greater Germanic Reich.
May 1940	The Nazis set up a new government headed by the Austrian Nazi Arthur Seyss-Inquart. The former Dutch government continues to try to communicate with Dutch citizens from Britain.
1940	Bases for the Luftwaffe: Germany begins to construct air force bases throughout the Netherlands to stage <i>Luftwaffe</i> attacks on Britain. Many Allied and German planes are shot down over Dutch land (approx. 6,000 planes or three aircraft per day).
1940-1944	The Arbeitseinsatz: All Dutch men between the ages of 18 and 45 are required to work for Germany. By the end of the war, 387,000 Dutch citizens are forced to relocate to Germany in order to labor in factories that are often the focus of fierce bombing by the Allies. Those Dutch citizens who refuse to work must go into hiding.
1941	Atlantic Wall: Germany begins building defenses along the Atlantic coastline from France to Denmark. Many Dutch homes are destroyed and thousands of Dutch citizens are forced to relocate in the process.
1941	German Jews in the Netherlands are declared stateless; deportations of Jews “to work” in the East begin.
February 25 and 26, 1941	Thousands of Dutch workers strike to protest the deportations of Jews.
1941	Gleichschaltung (“enforced conformity”): The Netherlands Nazi Party is the only political party allowed in the country. All non-Nazi organizations are outlawed.
May 1942	Jews are required to wear the yellow six-pointed star on an outer garment.
May 1942	Dutch Nazis: 3% of the adult male population (over 100,000 members) belong to the Netherlands Nazi Party and 16,000 young people make up its youth branch. 20,000 to 25,000 Dutch men volunteer for the <i>Waffen-SS</i> (special German military force).
Summer 1942	Persecution of Dutch Jews: Many more deportations of Jewish men and women take place to camps like Auschwitz and Sobibor where they are often murdered. Nazis carry out these deportations with the help of Dutch police and civil service workers.
July 6, 1942	Anne Frank and her family go into hiding in Amsterdam.

Timeline of Major World War II Events in the Netherlands

January 10, 1942	Germany's Ally: Japan declares war against the Netherlands; Japan invades the Dutch East Indies (which later became Indonesia). 42,000 Dutch soldiers are taken prisoner, 100,000 Dutch civilians are arrested, and millions of colonial subjects are put into forced labor.
1940-1945	Dutch Resistance: Some Dutch citizens actively resist their occupation by forging money or ration cards, raiding distribution centers and handing out stolen ration cards, hiding fellow citizens, spying for the Allies, sabotaging German work projects, creating underground newspapers, maintaining contact with London, and even assassinating Nazi leaders.
August 9, 1945	Anne Frank and her family are arrested; the only member of the family to survive the camps is Anne's father, Otto Frank.
1944-1945	Violent Retaliation: the Nazis respond to different Dutch acts of resistance with extreme violence. They raid universities, execute hundreds of Dutch hostages, bombard neighborhoods, and, in the case of the town of Putten, deport the entire male population to labor camps.
September 5, 1944	Mad Tuesday: Many Dutch people begin to celebrate thinking they are on the eve of liberation. 65,000 Dutch collaborators move to Germany.
late 1944 to May 1945	Hunger Winter: In response to a railroad strike ordered by the Dutch government in exile, Germany cuts off all food and fuel supplies to the western provinces of the Netherlands. 4.5 million people are left without supplies: approximately 18,000 Dutch citizens starve, while thousands of others suffer from malnutrition, disease, and exposure.
September 14, 1944	Beginning of the End: First Dutch cities are liberated by the Allies (Maastricht, Gulpen, Meerssen). Much of the southern Netherlands is liberated by the end of 1944, though many sections of the northern Netherlands remain occupied until the very end of the war.
1944-1945	Some groups of American soldiers live in and around Dutch communities for weeks at a time. They often interact with locals.
1944-1945	As the Allies enter the Netherlands, a lot of violent fighting takes place in Dutch towns and throughout the countryside. The population experiences bombardment from both the Allies and Germans.
May 5, 1945	All of the Netherlands is liberated from German occupation.
May 7, 1945	Germany surrenders.
1945	Dutch Nazi leaders and collaborators are executed (sometimes without a trial) or jailed. Women who had relationships with German men or <i>Moffenmeidens</i> are publicly humiliated often by having their heads shaved.
1945	Holocaust: 75% of original Dutch Jewish population is killed during World War II. This percentage is much higher than in comparable countries like Belgium or France.
1945	The Netherlands becomes a charter member of the United Nations.

Email Exchange Assignment

Your name is Nowy van Hedel. You are a 30-year-old Dutch man who has always had a passion for World War II history. As a result, you have put in an application to adopt the grave of a World War II soldier at the nearby Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten. Typically people spend years on a waiting list until they are able to adopt a grave, but you get lucky and you are soon assigned the grave of Private First Class Stanley Clark of the 401st Glider Infantry.

You're psyched! You do as much research on your soldier as you can: you read through PFC Clark's file from the National Archives, you check out several books about the Glider Infantry Regiment, you visit sites throughout the country where he might have fought, and you perform many online searches to find information about his background. One problem: you cannot seem to locate a single photograph of PFC Clark and you still have lots of unanswered questions about him.

You have realized that you need to try to track down a living family member for PFC Clark and, after several days of searching online, you finally locate a potential email address for PFC Clark's nephew.

Your mission:

1. Write an email to PFC Clark's nephew.
2. Be sure that your email is thoughtful and sensitive — there are a lot of nutty people out there!
3. Briefly introduce yourself and why you are writing.
4. Explain some of what the Dutch experienced during World War II.
5. Explain why you have adopted the grave of this person's uncle.
6. Close by requesting an interview with this person online or over the phone.
7. Use at least five details from your notes in class throughout the sections of your letter.
8. Underline all the details that you use from your notes in class within your email.

Email Exchange Assignment Rubric

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Emerging
Content	All parts of proficient components PLUS: extra details that make the email feel more realistic an explanation of how the person discovered the family member facts about grave adoption in the Netherlands.	All required components have been included: introduction explanation of the Dutch in WWII reasons for grave adoption request for an interview	Missing one component of the email: introduction explanation of the Dutch in WWII reasons for grave adoption request for an interview	Missing more than one component of the email: introduction explanation of the Dutch in WWII reasons for grave adoption request for an interview
Supporting Examples/details	More than five supporting examples or details from the notes. All details are accurate and fully explained.	Five supporting examples or details from the notes. All details are accurate and fully explained.	Four supporting examples or details from the notes. All details are accurate, but may not be fully explained OR Four or five supporting examples are included, but one or two of the details are inaccurate and/or not fully explained.	Fewer than four supporting examples or details from the notes. OR More than two of the details may not be accurate or fully explained. OR None of the examples or details are underlined in the email.
Organization	Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs.	Information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs.	Information is organized, but the paragraph is not well-constructed.	The information is disorganized.
Tone	The tone is very appropriate to a situation in which you are writing to a family member of the deceased.	The tone is appropriate to a situation in which you are writing to a family member of the deceased.	The tone is somewhat appropriate to a situation in which you are writing to a family member of the deceased.	The tone is not correct for someone who is writing to a family member of the deceased.
Mechanics	No grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Few grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammar, spelling, or punctuation errors.

Email Exchange Assignment

From: Nowy van Hedel <nowy@yahoo.com>

To: Freddy Clark <fclark@gmail.com>

Subject: PFC Clark

Dear Mr. Clark,

