

4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grades Lesson Plan  
“Keep Moving Forward”  
The Tuskegee Airmen



WREATHS  
— across —  
AMERICA

# Wreaths Across America

## Lesson Plan

Teacher:	Date:
Grades: 4 & 5	Lesson: Keep Moving Forward, Veterans Day, Black History Month-The Tuskegee Airmen

<p><b>OBJECTIVES:</b> CCSS.ELA- RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions). CCSS.ELA- RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).</p>	<p><b>STRATEGIES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drawing/Coloring</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Think/Pair/Share</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Questions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Small Groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Large Group</li> </ul>
<p><b>MATERIALS:</b></p>	<p>Computer/laptop; internet (with access to YouTube); Smart Board; copies of Understanding Character <i>The Red-Tail Angels</i>; copies of Word Search Puzzle <i>The Red-Tail Angels</i>; copies Character Traits Compare/Contrast Worksheet;</p>
<p><b>Engage:</b> Hook the students</p>	<p><b>Explain:</b> The Tuskegee Airmen were the first African American military pilots in the United States Army. The airmen were trained at Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama during World War II. The men had to overcome obstacles in the army, like racial segregation, which is the practice of separating people based on the color of their skin. The Tuskegee Airmen proved their combat capabilities in battle, by achieving a remarkable record of escorting bombers. They had one of the lowest loss rates among fighter groups. They became highly respected fighter pilots and paved the way for the integration of the military. They were known for their distinctive red tail markings on their planes, earning them the nickname "Red Tails." Think/Pair/Share Activity- Pair the students with a partner. Explain the T/P/S directions and the definition of resilience-the ability to bounce back from difficult experiences and to keep going. It's also the ability to adapt to stress and adversity. The students will think of their answer, get with their partner, and share their answer. T/P/S Question: How did the Tuskegee Airmen show resilience?</p>
<p><b>Explore:</b> Students make sense of a concept through observations.</p>	<p>Play the You-Tube Read Aloud, <i>The Red-Tail Angels</i> Author-Tiffany Gaestel; Illustrator-Franco Rivolli. <a href="https://youtu.be/Y8JlhVH2UZQ?si=OaVNkJumi0_NYkwb&amp;t=44">https://youtu.be/Y8JlhVH2UZQ?si=OaVNkJumi0_NYkwb&amp;t=44</a> 4<sup>th</sup> Grade-Hand out copies of Understanding Character <i>The Red-Tail Angels</i>. Allow students time to complete the worksheet. 5<sup>th</sup> Grade-Hand out copies of Character Traits Compare/Contrast Worksheet. Allow students time to complete the worksheet. Hand out wordsearch puzzle. Allow students time to complete the puzzle.</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b> Teacher introduces formal vocabulary and language to students.</p>	<p>World War II                      integration Tuskegee, Alabama              airmen racial segregation                berating</p>
<p><b>Elaborate:</b> Students apply what they have learned.</p>	<p>Describe in depth a character in a story, drawing on specific details in the text. Compare and contrast two or more characters in a story, drawing on specific details in the text.</p>
<p><b>Evaluate:</b> assessment.</p>	<p>Teachers will select which activities to use as formal/informal assessments.</p>
<p><b>Enrichment/Service-Learning Project</b></p>	<p>Just as the Tuskegee Airmen served their country during World War II, students will brainstorm a way to serve their local community in honor of the Tuskegee Airmen. See a list of potential projects on the last page.</p>

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### Understanding Character, The *Red-Tail Angels*

1. When did this story begin?
2. What did Charlie's dad mean when he said, "Now, you show those men what it means to be a fighter, this is no small thing, the army finally having "us" to fly planes." Who was he referring to as "us"?
3. Why did Charlie refuse to look back at his Pop when he boarded the bus for Tuskegee?
4. Why did Charlie feel that same dread sitting in his bunk?
5. What did the author mean by "A man heading into war was like a blind man walking along the edge of a cliff, would he sense and successfully respond to the dangers around him, or would one misstep lead him to death."
6. Where was Charlie's home?
7. What did Charlie always seem to have in his hand that caused a great deal of teasing by the other men in the barracks?
8. What does the answer to #7 tell you about Charlie?
9. What was so significant about Charlie's unit?
10. What problems did Charlie's unit encounter because they were Black?
11. How were the characters in the book similar, how were they different?

Character	Similar	Different
Charlie		
Tex		
Smitty		
Mac		

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### Understanding Character, The *Red-Tail Angels*

10. When did this story begin? **April 1943**
  
11. What did Charlie's dad mean when he said, "Now, you show those men what it means to be a fighter, this is no small thing, the army finally having "us" to fly planes." Who was he referring to as "us"? **Charlie's dad was referring to African Americans having the opportunity to fly planes for the army during World War II.**
  
12. Why did Charlie refuse to look back at his Pop when he boarded the bus for Tuskegee? **Charlie did not want his Pop to see the fear in his face, the fear in his whole body.**
  
13. Why did Charlie feel that same dread sitting in his bunk? **Charlie felt the same dread sitting in his bunk because the next morning his squadron was shipping out to the war, Charlie wondered if he was really ready.**
  
14. What did the author mean by "A man heading into war was like a blind man walking along the edge of a cliff, would he sense and successfully respond to the dangers around him, or would one misstep lead him to death." **Answers will vary, should include that a man going into war should always pay attention to his surroundings.**
  
15. Where was Charlie's home? **Charlie's home was in Philadelphia.**
  
16. What did Charlie always seem to have in his hand that caused a great deal of teasing by the other men in the barracks? **Charlie always had a book in his hand.**
  
17. What does the answer to #7 tell you about Charlie? **Charlie was a very studious person and he was interested in learning.**
  
18. What was so significant about Charlie's unit? **Charlie's unit was the first all-black air unit going into active combat.**
  
10. What problems did Charlie's unit encounter because they were Black? **Charlie's unit experienced racial segregation. They were looked down on, until they showed their military comrades how good they were at protecting the other pilots.**

11. How were the characters in the book similar, how were they different?

Character	Similar	Different
Charlie		
Tex		
Smitty		
Mac		

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## Character Traits Compare & Contrast

Directions: Select 3 characters from the book. Drawing from the text, write 4-character traits or adjectives that describe each character in the space provided. Do you have character traits that are similar or the same as some of the characters in the book? If so, list them in the space provided below.

### Title of the Book

### Character 1

### Character 2

### Character 3

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Character traits I share with Character 1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Character traits I share with Character 2: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Character traits I share with Character 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Wreaths Across America Lesson Plan

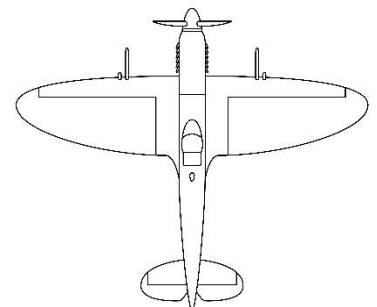
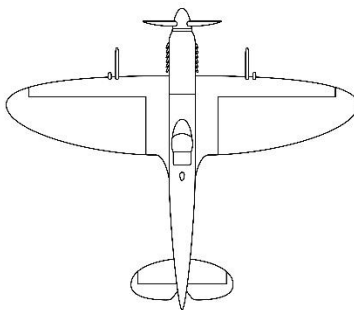
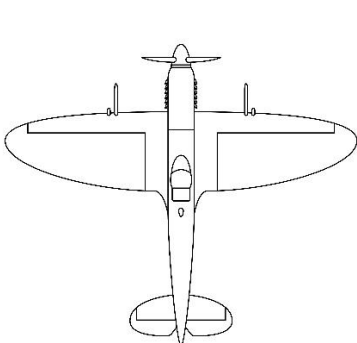
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## Word Search *The Red-Tail Angels*

Z	B	R	I	E	F	I	N	G	A	F	D	Q	R
X	S	W	E	D	C	R	F	V	A	U	I	B	E
M	A	N	E	U	V	E	R	G	C	S	V	T	D
N	H	B	T	U	S	K	E	G	E	E	E	Y	T
D	U	E	J	M	I	Q	K	P	L	L	B	O	A
A	P	R	Q	O	W	I	U	E	U	A	O	Y	I
R	L	A	L	A	B	A	M	A	A	G	M	K	L
E	S	T	J	D	H	D	G	Z	D	E	B	M	A
D	R	I	L	L	E	D	X	A	I	R	M	E	N
E	C	N	N	V	B	Q	A	Z	X	S	O	W	G
V	E	G	C	F	L	A	N	K	I	N	G	N	E
I	D	E	R	V	C	O	C	K	P	I	T	F	L
L	V	C	O	M	B	A	T	P	I	L	O	T	S

squadron	Tuskegee	Red-Tail Angels	dare devil
drilled	ace	berating	briefing
airmen	Alabama	dive bomb	maneuver
flanking	combat pilots	fuselage	cockpit



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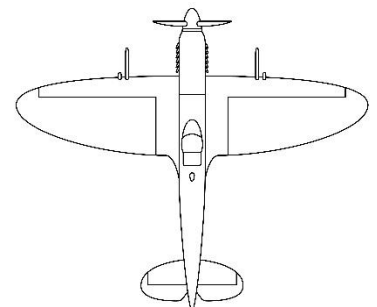
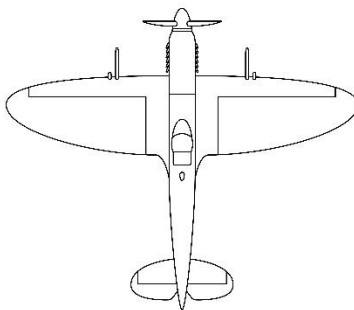
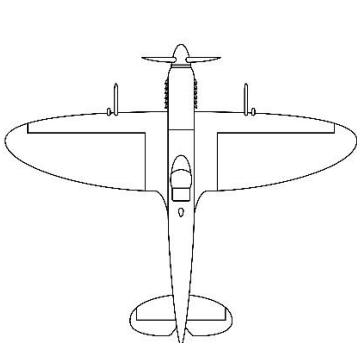
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### Word Search *The Red-Tail Angels*

Z	B	R	I	E	F	I	N	G	A	F	D	Q	R
X	S	W	E	D	C	R	F	V	A	U	I	B	E
M	A	N	E	U	V	E	R	G	C	S	V	T	D
N	H	B	T	U	S	K	E	G	E	E	E	Y	T
D	U	E	J	M	I	Q	K	P	L	L	B	O	A
A	P	R	Q	O	W	I	U	E	U	A	O	Y	I
R	L	A	L	A	B	A	M	A	A	G	M	K	L
E	S	T	J	D	H	D	G	Z	D	E	B	M	A
D	R	I	L	L	E	D	X	A	I	R	M	E	N
E	C	N	N	V	B	Q	A	Z	X	S	O	W	G
V	E	G	C	F	L	A	N	K	I	N	G	N	E
I	D	E	R	V	C	O	C	K	P	I	T	F	L
L	V	C	O	M	B	A	T	P	I	L	O	T	S

squadron	Tuskegee	Red-Tail Angels	dare devil
drilled	ace	berating	briefing
airmen	Alabama	dive bomb	maneuver
flanking	combat pilots	fuselage	cockpit



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### Grades K-5 Action Plans

1. Draw pictures or make cards for servicemen and women overseas or veterans at a local VA Hospital or VA Home. [Operation Gratitude](#) sends over 250,000 packages to Servicemen and Women, and First Responders annually, the link above provides guidelines for participation in their program.
2. Make cards for Senior citizens in your community for the various holidays. Teachers/Parents can help their children by:
  - \* contacting local nursing homes, senior centers and VA Homes to determine the procedure they have for community involvement, the numbers of residents, etc.
  - \* setting up a calendar as a reminder to your child letting them know when certain holidays are coming.
  - \* providing materials: crayons, paper, coloring sheets for younger students
  - \* setting up a time for delivery of the cards to the facility, or help your child mail the cards at the Post Office.
3. Decorate placemats to be used for Senior citizens during the holidays with a special note or picture! Many agencies deliver meals to Seniors who have mobility problems and are on a fixed income. Teachers/Parents can help their children by:
  - \* contacting local agencies that provide meals for Seniors, coordinate with the agency to provide placemats for an upcoming holiday
  - \* talking with your child's teacher to see if this could be a classroom project
  - \* provide materials,
4. [Donate gently used or new stuffed animals](#) to a local fire department or police station to give to children in emergencies.
5. During your birthday month, donate cake mix, frosting, candles, and an age-appropriate toy in a box. Donate items to a local food pantry or school social worker for families in need of a birthday cake. Let your child decorate the bag/box with a birthday message. Parents can help their children by:
  - \* contacting a local food bank or their child's school to arrange a drop-off point
  - \* purchasing the items to donate
  - \* taking their child to be a part of the drop-off
6. Collect school supplies, coloring books/crayons or games to donate to local homeless shelters or local children's hospitals.
  - \* contacting a local food bank or their children's hospital to arrange a drop-off point
  - \* purchasing the items to donate
  - \* taking their child to be a part of the drop-off
7. Make a no-sew fleece blanket for a child in need with [Project Linus](#), or a Veteran in need with [Soldiers' Angels](#). Parents can help their children by:
  - \* log on to the Project Linus or Soldiers' Angels to check out the specifications for the blankets,
  - \* help their child purchase materials
  - \* help their child make the blanket if necessary
  - \* take their child to ship or deliver the blanket