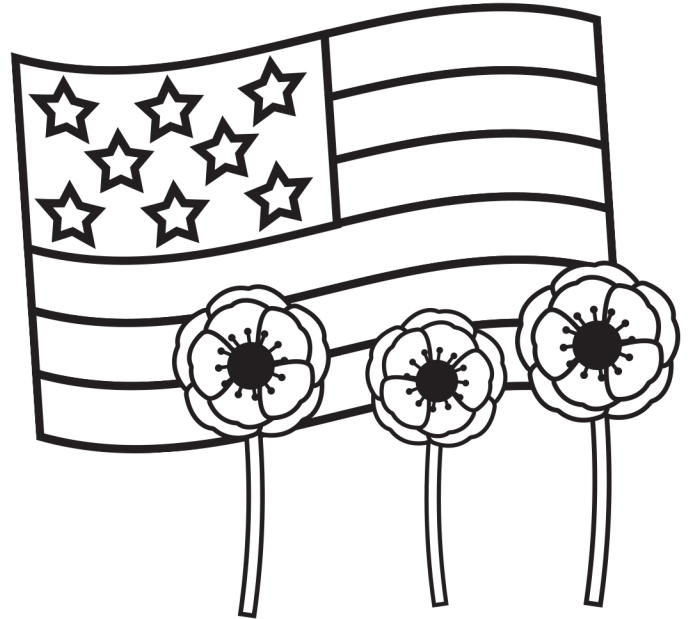


Memorial Day is a special day when Americans honor the brave men and women who died while serving in our military. We celebrate it on the last Monday in May every year.

Long ago, this holiday was called Decoration Day. After the Civil War, people decorated soldiers' graves with flowers and flags. This tradition grew into Memorial Day, which now honors all Americans who died in any war.



Memorial Day is different from Veterans Day. Veterans Day (in November) honors all people who served in the military. Memorial Day honors only those who died while serving. It is a solemn day of remembrance.

The red poppy is a symbol of Memorial Day. Poppies grew on the battlefields in Europe during World War I. Today, people wear or place red poppies to remember soldiers who gave their lives. It is a simple way to say, "I remember."



On Memorial Day, the American flag flies at half-staff from sunrise until noon. At noon, it is raised to full height. This shows respect for the fallen and honors living veterans who continue to defend our freedom.

Many Americans visit cemeteries and place flags or flowers on graves. At 3:00 p.m., we observe the National Moment of Remembrance - one minute of silence to honor those who gave their lives for our country.

Memorial Day reminds us that freedom is not free. It was earned by the courage and sacrifice of American heroes.