

Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam Video Guide

Directions: Pay attention to the film and answer the questions, the teacher will not answer any questions for you but they may pause the film occasionally to let you record the yearly casualty statistics.

Vietnam Body Count Chart (you will come back to this chart throughout the film)

Year (down) Casualties (across)	Americans troops in action	Americans killed in action to this point	Total Americans wounded to this date
1965			
1966			
1967			
1968			
1969			
1970			

1. What events took place that caused American to enter into conflict in Vietnam? Did the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution pass unanimously? What did Senator Morse of Oregon have to say about the decision to send troops to Vietnam? Was he right?

2. When did the first troops land in Vietnam, over the next few months how many more would arrive? What reasons did U.S. soldiers believe they were fighting for in Vietnam? How did a soldier describe the dangers of marching through elephant grass?

3. "We own the day, _____ owns the night." ~ A G.I. saying. How does the soldier describe the "VC" (Viet Cong)? How does another soldier describe what Vietnam is like as a country and what does he hope their purpose is to be fighting there? What simple phrases does he use to communicate with the locals? (list and define at least 2)

4. What happened to the “lucky” soldier (PFC Raymond Griffiths) who wrote home to his sister for fear of scaring his parents with the struggles of the war? Do the soldiers think they’ll ‘win’ in Vietnam? What do the soldiers keep doing despite this belief?

5. What happened at Khe Sanh in 1968? How many North Vietnamese _____ against how many Marines _____ at Khe Sahn? What happened during Tet? What did the U.S. do to relieve the forces fighting at Khe Sanh?

6. What did one of the soldiers say was the ‘biggest mistake’? Did Lt. Jacques make it? How many days since the siege began did the Marines finally break out of Khe Sanh? How was the Tet Offensive successful for the enemy even though their forces were defeated?

7. How does a Silver Star recipient describe what the ‘real heroes’ are? How does another soldier describe whether it is worth it to fight and die in Vietnam at this time? Who wins the 1968 Presidential election?

8. How did the soldiers describe Christmas in Vietnam? Do the soldiers really want to find and confront the enemy? What does Nixon start to do in the summer of 1969? What happened at My Lai?

9. What did a Vietnam nurse describe her time in Vietnam? What happened at Kent State University? What started that appeared to give a sign the fighting was almost over?

10. How many died in the Vietnam war? How many soldiers came home?

