

# KOREA: THE FORGOTTEN WAR

BY FIONA TAPP

**GRADES:**

9-12

**DURATION:**

5 classes

**SUBJECTS:**

Geography, History, Language Arts,  
and Social Studies

**KEY CONCEPTS AND THEMES:**

War, Peace, Propaganda, Racism,  
Capitalism, and Communism



## EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Expand their knowledge of the Korean War, including key battles and Canada's role;
- Understand distinctions between communism and capitalism;
- Understand the lasting impacts of war and armistice on the people living in both North and South Korea today;
- Understand propaganda and how it is used to persuasive effect in wartime;
- Learn about MASH (Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals), their historical significance, and the challenges faced by medical personnel;
- Use a variety of skills to comprehend videos and text, including using their prior knowledge and interpreting skills, and asking questions to clarify their understanding.

## MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Prepared **Worksheets #1-5**
- Computers or devices with internet access
- *Korea: The Forgotten War* video series

SCAN THE QR CODE TO  
ACCESS THE MATERIALS.



### **PART 1: CONFLICT ORIGINS**

[https://vimeo.com/958626873/  
8f2907a5a2](https://vimeo.com/958626873/8f2907a5a2)



### **PART 2: INITIAL RESPONSE**

[https://vimeo.com/958627401/  
95e1574f72](https://vimeo.com/958627401/95e1574f72)



### **PART 3: CANADIAN CONTRIBUTION**

[https://vimeo.com/958628148/  
9409010043](https://vimeo.com/958628148/9409010043)



### **PART 4: THE BATTLE OF KAPYONG**

[https://vimeo.com/958628544/  
9bc291e46a](https://vimeo.com/958628544/9bc291e46a)



### **PART 5: THE BATTLES OF HILLS 355 AND 187**

[https://vimeo.com/958629193/  
4790fo3b1b](https://vimeo.com/958629193/4790fo3b1b)



### **PART 6: CANADA AND KOREA POST-WAR**

[https://vimeo.com/958630031/  
odf6e3e213](https://vimeo.com/958630031/odf6e3e213)



### **PART 7: VETERAN LOU BAILEY**

[https://vimeo.com/958630777/  
8bc44b313b](https://vimeo.com/958630777/8bc44b313b)



### **PART 8: VETERAN JESSIE CHENEVERT**

[https://vimeo.com/958630962/  
e677cfdfoa](https://vimeo.com/958630962/e677cfdfoa)



### **PART 9: VETERAN GEORGE GUERTIN**

[https://vimeo.com/958631270/  
c4248b7fo8](https://vimeo.com/958631270/c4248b7fo8)

## KEY VOCABULARY

**Capitalism:** An economic system defined by private ownership of the means of production, individual entrepreneurship, and a market-driven approach, where the pursuit of profits guides resource allocation

**Communism:** An ideological belief that envisions a classless, stateless society where collective ownership of the means of production leads to equality and the absence of private property

**Domino Theory:** The Cold War belief that if one country fell to communism, neighbouring countries would follow suit like a row of falling dominos

**Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK):** The official name of North Korea

**Iron Curtain:** The ideological and physical division between communist and non-communist countries, often used to describe the geopolitical context of the Korean War

**Massive Retaliation:** A Cold War strategy that involved responding to aggression with overwhelming force, often associated with U.S. nuclear deterrence policies

**Propaganda:** Information, especially biased or misleading, used to promote a political cause or point of view

**Republic of Korea (ROK):** The official name of South Korea

**Stalemate:** A situation in which neither side in a conflict can make significant advances or gain a decisive advantage



## BACKGROUND



Before the World War II, Korea was one unified country that had been under Japanese rule from 1910 to 1945. After the war, Korea was divided along the 38th parallel into two zones of occupation, with the Soviet Union occupying the north and the United States occupying the south.

On June 25, 1950, North Korean forces led by Kim Il-Sung invaded South Korea, aiming to reunify the country under communist rule. The United Nations condemned the invasion and called for military intervention to support South Korea.

The United States, commanded by General Douglas MacArthur, led a UN coalition that included troops from various countries to defend South Korea. China, fearing the presence of Western forces on its border, intervened on the side of North Korea in late 1950, escalating the conflict. The war reached a stalemate around the 38th parallel, with neither side gaining significant ground. Armistice negotiations began in 1951, and in 1953 an armistice was signed, effectively ending the fighting. However, no formal peace treaty was ever signed and, technically, the Korean War continues to this day.



After the war, Korea remained divided into North and South, with the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) serving as a buffer between the two. The conflict had a significant impact on the geopolitics of the Cold War, solidifying the division between communist and non-communist blocs in East Asia.

The Korean War resulted in a large number of casualties, with millions of soldiers and civilians losing their lives. The war's legacy includes the ongoing division of Korea, with North Korea remaining a communist state and South Korea developing into a prosperous democracy.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Introduce students to the topic by reading them the background information and after, either as a class or individually, watch [Korea: The Forgotten War video series](#).

### **ACTIVITY 1** **CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM**

As a class, discuss how the two sides (Soviet and UN coalition) had opposing philosophical beliefs about how the country of Korea should be ruled and governed, based on complex economic and political ideologies. Read **Worksheet #1, Part A** as a class to understand the definitions and the differences between capitalism and communism.

In pairs, students will read the scenarios in **Part B** and sort them into either communist or capitalist ideologies. Afterwards, ask students to identify both an advantage and a disadvantage from each system. Be sure to discuss how the original ideas/philosophies may differ from theory to practice, especially in wartime.

### **ACTIVITY 2** **THE TWO KOREAS**

As a class, discuss the division of the two Koreas after World War II. Explain how families were separated and, for many, they were never reunited again.

Show students this [video clip](#) from Reuters, then have them read this [article](#) from Quartz and look at the photos from family reunions arranged through a lottery system. Briefly discuss the students' reactions to the video and photos.

After, ask students:

- What emotions did they notice?
- Why do they think these reunions are significant?

Pose these questions to the class:

- What are the long-term effects of being separated from family members for decades?
- How do you think these reunions influence relations between North and South Korea?
- What can be done to support separated families?

#### **FAST FACTS:**

The lottery system included 57,000 people who registered to take part, but were not picked and many have died waiting over the 70+ years they have been unable to see their families.

Ask students to read the letters on **Worksheet #2, Part A**. Then for **Part B**, they will plot some life events that could have occurred in the last 70 years that these families missed out on—these could include births of children, graduations, weddings, birthdays, deaths, etc.

Next, have students complete **Part C** of the worksheet. Here they will imagine that they were separated from their families during the division of the two Koreas and must write an application for the reunion lottery.

### ACTIVITY 3

#### MOBILE ARMY SURGICAL HOSPITALS (MASH UNITS)

Write “The Role of Women” on the board and ask the class to brainstorm the roles and jobs women may have taken up during the Korean War. Ideas may include:

- Nurses in MASH units and other medical facilities
- Clerks and administrative roles
- Telephone operators
- Support staff (i.e. cooking/cleaning/maintaining facilities)
- Volunteers
- Factory workers

As a class, read the diary entry of a nurse on **Worksheet #3** and instigate a discussion about the daily lives of nurses and doctors working in the MASH units. (You may also wish to show some clips from *M\*A\*S\*H* the TV show, such as [this one](#).) Afterwards, ask students to imagine they are a patient recovering after treatment at a MASH unit. They will write a letter home to their families describing their ordeal, using the space provided on the worksheet. Students can include details from any videos and/or the nurse’s diary entry if needed.

### ACTIVITY 4

#### HONOURING BLACK AND INDIGENOUS VETERANS

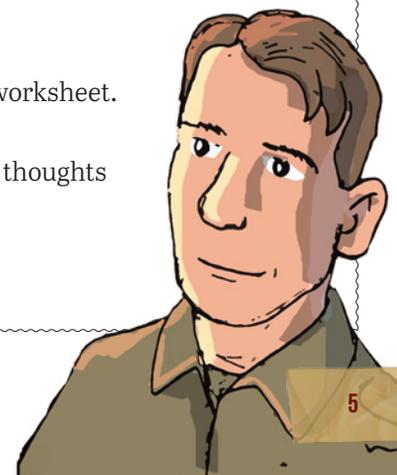
As a class, watch the video entitled “Enlistment” from the Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) [website](#), which features Indigenous veteran Noel Knockwood. You may wish to show several of the other videos featuring Mr. Knockwood as well.

Next, students will learn more about Black and Indigenous Canadian soldiers. Distribute **Worksheet #4** and have students read the following two articles from VAC, either individually or in small groups:

- “[Black Canadians in uniform](#)”
- “[Indigenous Veterans](#)”

Once they have finished, students will record their answers to questions 1-5 in **Part A** of the worksheet.

Use these questions to prompt a class discussion, and encourage students to share their thoughts and responses.



To complete **Part B** of the worksheet, students will write a brief profile about one of the following veterans, or another BIPOC veteran of their choosing who served in the Korean War:

- Clarence “Gus” Este
- Lloyd Michon
- Errol Patrick
- Noel Knockwood
- Russ Moses
- Tommy Prince

Suggest that students begin searching for information through the [Veterans Affairs Canada](#) website, the [Black Canadian Veterans](#) website, or through other online resources.

**Extension activity:** Ask students to give a short presentation about their veteran’s life and service.

## ACTIVITY 5 PROPAGANDA IN WARTIME

Explain how during wartime there are physical battles taking place but also battles for hearts and minds. Write “propaganda” on the board and ask the class for definitions. Inform students that each side of the Korean War was trying to sell the idea of war and victory to their countries.

Distribute **Worksheet #5** and, as a class, read through the techniques used in propaganda. Next have students look at the examples of propaganda from the Korean War and try to identify the techniques being used. They can record their answers on the worksheet.

**Extension activity:** Ask students to find an advertisement from home that incorporates some of the same propaganda elements to get a message across. Students will present their advertisements to the class.

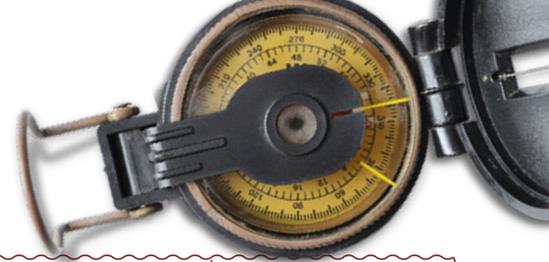


## GENERAL RUBRIC



| ASSESSMENT                         | LEVEL 1<br>(50-59%)  | LEVEL 2<br>(60-69%)  | LEVEL 3<br>(70-79%)   | LEVEL 4<br>(80-89%)   | LEVEL 4+<br>(90-100%)  |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| <b>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</b> | Student demonstrated a limited knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.  | Student demonstrated some knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.   | Student demonstrated a good knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.  | Student demonstrated a great knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.   | Student demonstrated an outstanding knowledge and comprehension of the key concepts, issues, and themes.   |
| <b>THINKING AND INQUIRY</b>        | Student's planning and processing skills were not evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with limited proficiency. | Student's planning and processing skills were somewhat evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with some proficiency. | Student's planning and processing skills were evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with good proficiency. | Student's planning and processing skills were very evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with great proficiency. | Student's planning and processing skills were extremely evident; student demonstrated critical and creative thinking processes with outstanding proficiency. |
| <b>COMMUNICATION</b>               | Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with limited proficiency.   | Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with some proficiency.  | Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with good proficiency.                                     | Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with great proficiency.  | Student communicated their understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes with outstanding proficiency.   |
| <b>APPLICATION</b>                 | Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with limited proficiency.           | Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with some proficiency.                | Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with good proficiency.       | Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with great proficiency.            | Student used knowledge and understanding of the key concepts, issues, and themes to complete their assignments with outstanding proficiency.                 |

## SPECIFIC RUBRIC



| ASSESSMENT        | LEVEL 1<br>(50-59%)  | LEVEL 2<br>(60-69%)   | LEVEL 3<br>(70-79%)   | LEVEL 4<br>(80-89%)  | LEVEL 4+<br>(90-100%)   |
|-------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| <b>ACTIVITY 1</b> | Student demonstrated a limited understanding of what led to the Korean War and the differences between communist and capitalist ideologies.                            | Student demonstrated some understanding of what led to the Korean War and the differences between communist and capitalist ideologies.                            | Student demonstrated a good understanding of what led to the Korean War and the differences between communist and capitalist ideologies.                            | Student demonstrated a great understanding of what led to the Korean War and the differences between communist and capitalist ideologies.                            | Student demonstrated an outstanding understanding of what led to the Korean War and the differences between communist and capitalist ideologies.                            |
| <b>ACTIVITY 2</b> | Student demonstrated a limited understanding of the lasting impacts of war and armistice on the people living in both North and South Korea today.                     | Student demonstrated some understanding of the lasting impacts of war and armistice on the people living in both North and South Korea today.                     | Student demonstrated a good understanding of the lasting impacts of war and armistice on the people living in both North and South Korea today.                     | Student demonstrated a great understanding of the lasting impacts of war and armistice on the people living in both North and South Korea today.                     | Student demonstrated an outstanding understanding of the lasting impacts of war and armistice on the people living in both North and South Korea today.                     |
| <b>ACTIVITY 3</b> | Student demonstrated a limited understanding of the historical significance and importance of the MASH units and the role of women during the Korean War.              | Student demonstrated some understanding of the historical significance and importance of the MASH units and the role of women during the Korean War.              | Student demonstrated a good understanding of the historical significance and importance of the MASH units and the role of women during the Korean War.              | Student demonstrated a great understanding of the historical significance and importance of the MASH units and the role of women during the Korean War.              | Student demonstrated an outstanding understanding of the historical significance and importance of the MASH units and the role of women during the Korean War.              |
| <b>ACTIVITY 4</b> | Student demonstrated a limited understanding of the contribution of Indigenous and Black soldiers during the Korean War and the importance of honouring their service. | Student demonstrated some understanding of the contribution of Indigenous and Black soldiers during the Korean War and the importance of honouring their service. | Student demonstrated a good understanding of the contribution of Indigenous and Black soldiers during the Korean War and the importance of honouring their service. | Student demonstrated a great understanding of the contribution of Indigenous and Black soldiers during the Korean War and the importance of honouring their service. | Student demonstrated an outstanding understanding of the contribution of Indigenous and Black soldiers during the Korean War and the importance of honouring their service. |
| <b>ACTIVITY 5</b> | Student demonstrated a limited understanding of the term “propaganda” and how to identify techniques used to manipulate the public.                                    | Student demonstrated some understanding of the term “propaganda” and how to identify techniques used to manipulate the public.                                    | Student demonstrated a good understanding of the term “propaganda” and how to identify techniques used to manipulate the public.                                    | Student demonstrated a great understanding of the term “propaganda” and how to identify techniques used to manipulate the public.                                    | Student demonstrated an outstanding understanding of the term “propaganda” and how to identify techniques used to manipulate the public.                                    |