

SECTION 4: EXPLORING THE KOREAN WAR FURTHER

THE KOREAN WAR LEGACY FOUNDATION (KWLF)
VETERANS INTERVIEW ARCHIVE

The focus of this publication has been on teaching the history and legacy of the Korean War from a British perspective. It is our fervent hope that the materials in this publication provide UK teachers with a bank of resources that will update their subject knowledge and also provide them with classroom-ready resources that help them to teach this fascinating and incredibly significant period of world history in the twentieth century.

Of course, as Dr Han's article at the start of this publication points out (1A, 'Quo vadis?'), history is huge and multi-faceted. In a publication such as this, we cannot even cover the full story of the Korean War as it affected Britain, let alone its wider significance in other countries and globally.

With this in mind, the aim of this final section is to make teachers and students aware of some of the impressive other resources that are available for the study of the Korean War.

For many years, the Korean War Legacy Foundation (<https://koreanwarlegacy.org>) has been interviewing veterans of the Korean War from all the states that took part. After collecting over 1,100 interviews, the KWLF teacher fellows tagged the interviews with metadata and identified short, compelling video clips from each interview that would be useful in the classroom. The result is an unparalleled and incredibly precious resource to historians and teachers.

KOREAN WAR LEGACY FOUNDATION

INTERVIEW ARCHIVE DOCUMENTARY HISTORY TEACHING TOOLS ABOUT US

Korean War Legacy Project

Explore the origins and outcomes of the Korean War, the challenges that soldiers faced, and its rich legacy exemplified by the democratization and rapid economic development of South Korea. [Learn More »](#)



Learn more about the Korean War and its aftermath in this online memory bank and companion interactive library

Memory Bank



Chapters telling the story of the Korean War with dozens of veteran video clips used as primary source

History



Our teaching tools feature inquiries and other activities to help students understand the Korean War

Teaching Tools

THE MEMORY BANK

The Memory Bank is the entry point to the Foundation's coverage of the Korean War, its events and its legacy. It has several interconnected sections,

which can also be accessed from the main menu at the head of the page.

THE INTERVIEW ARCHIVE

The Interview Archive is perhaps the jewel in the crown of the Foundation's resources. There are over 1,100 interviews, 3,000 short video clips and over 2,000 photographs. It is a treasure trove for historians and has been shown to be immensely

popular and engaging for young students as well. The Archive is made manageable by careful curation and can be simply browsed or searched using a range of key criteria.

The screenshot shows the 'Interview Archive' page of the Korean War Legacy Foundation. The page features a navigation menu with links for 'INTERVIEW ARCHIVE', 'DOCUMENTARY', 'HISTORY', 'TEACHING TOOLS', and 'ABOUT US'. The main heading is 'Interview Archive' over a background image of soldiers. Below the heading, there are several search and navigation options:

- [View All Veterans](#)
- [Search Clips by Tag](#)
- [Advanced Search](#)
- Keyword Search:**
- [Guide to Accessing the Archive](#)

The 'Advanced Search' section includes the following filters:

- Type of Item:**
 - Video Clip
 - Full Interview
 - Photo
- Keyword:**
- First Name:**
- Last Name:**
- State of Birth:**
- Home State:**
- Country:**
- Prisoner of War:** Was POW
- Branch of Service:**
 - Air Force
 - Army
 - Coast Guard
 - Marine Corps
 - Navy

On the right side, there are three expandable tag lists:

- POLITICAL/MILITARY TAGS +**
- GEOGRAPHIC TAGS +**
- SOCIAL TAGS +**

At the bottom, there are 'Search' and 'Start Over' buttons. A note indicates 'Select tags from lists at right'.

Here are just a few examples of the materials that can be found in the Interview Archive:



Gerald 'Gerry' Farmer

Gerry Farmer

0:15 / 1:01:00

A guy came along with his tie and he said, 'Have you heard about a place called Korea? There's a war starting out there, and it's going to be a big war, you know.' And I said 'No.' And that's the first time I heard about Korea. We were young then and newspapers, we didn't read newspapers and we didn't have television. You just went about your normal business.

<https://koreanwarlegacy.org/interviews/gerald-gerry-farmer/>



Keith Gunn

Keith Gunn

0:02 / 1:34:22

You always look back at war and say was it worth it. If you look at Korea now, even with the present situation with North Korea, which is on a very touchy basis, even then you've got to say with the progress being made in Korea and South Korea... You've got to say 'yes, it was worth it'.

It was a forgotten war, I don't think it was forgotten as it was quite ignored and never considered. Even today when anniversaries occur and they talk about the Falklands War and Iraq War, Korean War never gets mentioned... It's totally wrong because it was the first major United Nations effort and one would think that would [have] captured people's imagination, but for some reason no.

<https://koreanwarlegacy.org/interviews/keith-gunn/>



Charles Ross

Charles Ross

0:02 / 1:34:08

That was our final battle with the Third Battalion of the 8th K. We were overrun there. But this went on. This happened on the night of November the 1st – that's when they first hit us. The following morning the firing ceased – early in the morning. And by the time daylight come I looked around and I couldn't see anymore. I was lying in a ditch and my two men who had been with me were gone. But during the excitement – we fought all night. We fired at anything we could see that didn't have a steel helmet on. See, we still had our summer uniforms on. We'd not been issued winter uniforms yet. And the Chinese that we were fighting – we didn't know that they were Chinese. We thought they were North Koreans. And they had on these POW caps. So that was my means of identifying who's – who were fighting. But I'm thinking still, that they were North Korean soldiers. So I'd shoot anyone with a POW cap on. And the following morning when I looked around, I didn't see anybody moving or anything. And I raised up to take a look, thinking I may be the only survivor.

<https://koreanwarlegacy.org/interviews/charles-ross/>



Richard Faron

Richard Faron

6:36 / 41:55

Some of my difficult times had to do with kids that you inevitably saw in the streets. I mean they were waifs. They were starving you know. They didn't have much and it always tore at me. And hired some of these children to be what we called house boys. And we had mama-sans. And they were always very polite, I mean extremely polite. I wish my kids had been that polite. But I felt sorry for them. You just had to feel sorry for them. And we did a lot for them. We had one of the young kids, I remember, he was I guess seven when we picked him up off the streets in Seoul. And we picked him up because he was stealing fruit from our operation. So what we tried to explain him was, 'You don't have to steal it. All you have to do is ask for it.' But he didn't know that. And we took him in.

<https://koreanwarlegacy.org/interviews/richard-faron/>

HISTORY

Through a series of chapters, this section provides a chronology of the Korean War while also acknowledging multiple perspectives on this complex period and wrestling with the enduring

legacy of the war. The chapters tell the story of the war both chronologically and thematically and are unique in their use of veteran oral history clips as primary source materials.


INTERVIEW ARCHIVE DOCUMENTARY HISTORY TEACHING TOOLS ABOUT US 

The chapters tell the story of the Korean War from beginning to end. Unique to the chapters are the dozens of Korean War veteran video clips that are used as primary source and offer depth and context for the complications and contradictions of war. The interview archive includes thousands of veteran videos, photographs, and documents related to the Korean War in an easily searchable format.

CHAPTERS



1. Significance of the May 1948 Election



2. Prewar Context: Western



3. Multiple Perspectives on the Korean War



4. North Koreans Stream Toward Pusan



5. Holding the Pusan Perimeter



6. Changing the Game at Incheon

INTERVIEW ARCHIVE



The interview archive is a collection of thousands of curated resources related to the Korean War. The archive is easily searchable using filters and key terms and includes:

- Full length veteran interviews
- 1-3 minute interview clips
- Artifacts donated by veterans
- Department of Defense photographs
- Primary Source Documents

View Library »

There are 17 chapters, which range from the early Cold War context of the late 1940s, through key events of the war itself, to the process of memorialising the war and understanding its legacy. There are thematic sections as well, such as the role of women in the war and the role of African Americans.

Each section provides an overview piece and also links to selected interviews from the Veterans Archive.

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Multiple Perspectives on the Korean War

But as with all historical interpretation, there are other perspectives to consider. The Soviet Union, for its part, denied Truman's accusation that it was directly responsible. The Soviets believed that the war was "an internal matter that the Koreans would [settle] among themselves." They argued that North Korea's leader Kim Il Sung hatched the invasion plan on his own, then pressed the Soviet Union for aid. The Soviet Union reluctantly agreed to help as Stalin became more and more worried about widening American control in Asia. Stalin therefore approved Kim Il Sung's plan for invasion, but only after being pressured by Chairman Mao Zedong, leader of the new communist People's Republic of China.

A historian's job is to account for as many different perspectives as possible. But sometimes language gets in the way. In order to fully understand the Korean War, historians have had to study documents, conversations, speeches and other communications in multiple languages, including Korean, Chinese, English, Japanese and Russian.

In 1995, the famous Chinese historian Shen Zhihua set out to solve a major problem posed by the war. Many people in the west had argued for decades, as Truman did, that North Korea invaded South Korea at the direction of the Soviet Union. Skeptical of that argument, Zhihua spent 1.4 million **yuan** (\$220,000) of his own money to buy declassified documents from Russian historical archives. Then, he had the papers translated into Chinese so he could read them alongside Chinese government documents.

Zhihua found that Stalin had encouraged Mao Zedong to support North Korea's invasion plan, vaguely promising Soviet air cover to protect North Korean troops. However, Stalin never believed that the United States and the UN would enter the war, and was reluctant to send the Soviet Air Force

ORAL HISTORIES

Featured Clips have been selected from the interviews that are cited and viewable within the chapters

JAMES ARGIRES

HOWARD BALLARD

TEACHING TOOLS

The Foundation has been working for many years with teachers to promote knowledge and understanding of the Korean War and also to provide practical help for teachers in the form of

ready-to-use inquiry-based resources, just like the ones written for British teachers in this publication. There are 15 separate resources, all downloadable and classroom-ready.

TEACHING THE C3 FRAMEWORK

Grades 3-5 Korean War Inquiry

Whose Voices Are Heard in History?

<https://www.nps.gov/kowa/>

Supporting Questions

- Whose experiences are recognized in Korean War monuments?
- What role did soldiers of color play in the Korean War?
- What contributions did women make to the Korean War?
- Why are some voices omitted in the telling and honoring of history?

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1

TEACHING THE C3 FRAMEWORK

Grades 3-5 Korean War Inquiry

Whose Voices Are Heard in History?

C3 Framework Indicators	D2.HS.3.3-5. Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped significant historical changes and continuities. D2.HS.16.3-5. Use evidence to develop a claim about the past.		
Staging the Compelling Question	Examine a photograph of a Korean War monument from the National Mall. Consider the race, gender, age, and nationality of the people memorialized. https://www.nps.gov/kowa/index.htm		
	Understand		Assess
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	Supporting Question 4
Whose experiences are recognized in Korean War Monuments?	What role did soldiers of color play in the Korean War?	What contributions did women make to the Korean War?	Why are some voices omitted in the telling and honoring of history?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Create a list of the groups of people you see in the monument.	Create a table organizing examples of contributions that people of color made in the Korean War.	Identify three quotes from women regarding their roles and positions in, and contributions to, the Korean War.	Write a one-paragraph summary of each of these articles' claims and the evidence they provide.
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
Source A: Image of, and artist's design rationale for, Washington State Memorial Source B: Image, New Jersey State Memorial Source C: Image, Harry S. Truman at a war memorial in St. Joseph, Missouri	Source A: Oral history, Congressman Charles Rangel Source B: Image and link, Patriot Nations exhibit, National Museum of the American Indian Source C: Fact sheet, African Americans in the Korean War	Source A: Oral history, Voelka "Jean" Thompson Source B: Oral history, Shirley Toepfer Source C: Oral history, Mary Reid	Source A: Excerpt from article, "Whitewashing the Past" Source B: Excerpt from article, "Army Removes Cloud Over Black Korean War Unit"
Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, or essay) that discusses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical sources while acknowledging competing views.		
Taking Informed Action	ACT Create an oral history project to contribute to the KWLF archives that adds to the diversity of the collection.		

152

DOCUMENTARY FILM

In 2018, the Korean War Legacy Foundation produced a documentary on the legacy of the Korean War. The 40-minute documentary follows Arden Rowley, a Korean War veteran, and his great-grandson, Cayden Sherwood, as they travel back to South Korea to remember his wartime

experiences, while discovering the unique history and miraculous progress that the Korean people have achieved over the past 65 years. The film connects the past to the present and is a perfect classroom resource on the Korean War.