

# Current Events



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This resource incorporates activities aligned to the following [Common Core Standards](#):

**Reading Standards for Informational Texts: Key Ideas and Details:** 1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. 2. Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text. 3. Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events). **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:** 7. Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

**Writing Standards: Text Types and Purposes:** 2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/ effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. **Research to Build and Present Knowledge:** 9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**Speaking and Listening Standards: Comprehension and Collaboration:** 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. 2. Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.

# The New York Times

## *Rare White House Ceremony for Medal of Honor*

By Jackie Calmes      July 12, 2011

**WASHINGTON** — President Obama grasped the prosthetic right hand of Sgt. First Class Leroy Arthur Petry in congratulations on Tuesday, awarding him the Medal of Honor for actions in Afghanistan that included saving two comrades' lives by hurling away a grenade as it exploded.

This is only the second time since the Vietnam era that the nation's highest military honor has been awarded to a soldier who survived combat in a conflict still under way; the other awards were given posthumously. Mr. Obama bestowed the first award last fall to another veteran of Afghanistan, Staff Sgt. Salvatore A. Giunta, who was present in the East Room along with medal recipients from past wars.

Seven Medals of Honor have gone to soldiers killed in Afghanistan or Iraq. Mr. Obama called them "members of the 9/11 generation" of service members.

Sergeant Petry, an Army Ranger and father of four who has served two combat tours in Iraq and six in Afghanistan, was nominated by his colleagues and honored for his actions on May 26, 2008. Then 28 years old, he came under fire with other Rangers during an operation in mountainous eastern Afghanistan, near Pakistan, to clear a compound where a top Qaeda commander was believed to be hiding among insurgents.

"Today we honor a singular act of gallantry," Mr. Obama said at the White House ceremony. "Yet as we near the 10th anniversary of the attacks that thrust our nation into war, this is also an occasion to pay tribute to a soldier, and a generation, that has borne the burden of our security during a hard decade of sacrifice."

Sergeant Petry was shot in both legs and was seeking cover behind a chicken coop with two other Rangers when a grenade exploded nearby, wounding the others. When a second grenade landed feet away, Sergeant Petry scooped it up and threw it as it detonated. The blast ripped away his right hand and filled him with shrapnel. He applied a tourniquet to his wrist and continued to radio for support and direct the operation before being evacuated.

Sergeant Petry was credited with saving the lives of the other soldiers, both of whom were at the White House. Mr. Obama told the audience that in an Oval Office meeting before the ceremony, Sergeant Petry “gave me the extraordinary privilege” of seeing a plaque bolted to his prosthetic hand and inscribed with the names of other Rangers from the 75th Regiment who have died.

“They are quite literally part of him, just like they will always be part of America,” Mr. Obama said.

Both before and after affixing the medal and its blue ribbon around Sergeant Petry’s neck, Mr. Obama grasped his right hand and shook it.



President Obama giving the medal to Leroy Arthur Petry. Credit...Doug Mills/The New York Times

Mr. Obama also used the occasion to once again claim progress in Afghanistan. Quoting from President Ronald Reagan, who spoke of Rangers in World War II, Mr. Obama said of Sergeant Petry and other Afghanistan veterans, “These are the heroes who helped end a war.”

***Correction: July 14, 2011***

*An article on Wednesday about President Obama’s awarding the Medal of Honor to Sgt. First Class Leroy Arthur Petry misstated the sergeant’s age. He is 31, not 28. (That was his age at the time of his actions in Afghanistan, which included saving two comrades’ lives by hurling away a grenade as it exploded.)*

*A version of this article appears in print on, Section A, Page 15 of the New York edition with the headline: Top Honor for Army Ranger Who Thought Quickly in Heat of Combat.*

After reading the article, answer the following questions:

1. Why was Leroy Arthur Petry awarded the medal of honor?
2. This is the second time since the Vietnam war era that what has happened?
3. What did Mr. Obama call the 7 soldiers who were killed in Afghanistan or Iraq that were awarded medals of honor?
4. Describe what happened to Sergeant Petry in Afghanistan.
5. What is bolted to Petry's prosthetic hand?
6. What former president did Mr. Obama quote and what was it that he said?

## Medal of Honor for Sergeant First Class Leroy Arthur Petry

President Obama awards Sergeant First Class Leroy Arthur Petry, U.S. Army, the Medal of Honor for his courageous actions during combat operations against an armed enemy in Paktya, Afghanistan in May, 2008. July 12, 2011

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KSI9jmZL9o>

After watching the award ceremony, discuss your reactions with the class. Name a few things you learned in the video that was left out of the article. Were you surprised to learn that Sergeant Petry was from New Mexico? Have you ever heard of the Medal of Honor? What other awards like it are you aware of? Share with the class.



Students will be assigned to read about one of the four Hispanic veterans below. At home read and write a summary in your own words about the veteran you were assigned. In class, you will be grouped with three other classmates who learned about the other three veterans. You will share your summaries with the group and write down what you learned about the other Hispanic veterans.

**Marcelino Serna**

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/racism-deprived-latino-wwi-hero-marcelino-serna-medal-honor-he-n1238940>

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**Maria Dolores Hernandez**

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1999-oct-30-me-27986-story.html>

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**Roy P. Benavidez**

<https://www.dallasnews.com/news/2020/06/09/who-was-roy-benavidez-the-man-whose-name-some-say-should-replace-confederate-generals-at-fort-hood/>

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**Carmen Lozano Dumler**

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2016/6/24/18478065/carmen-lozano-dumler-puerto-rican-nurse-who-blazed-trails-in-army>

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