



NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF THE MARINE CORPS™

1954-1975: IN THE AIR, ON LAND AND SEA

Vietnam War Gallery Worksheet

This worksheet will help you better understand the role of the Marine Corps in confronting the threat of communism in Southeast Asia.

START. Begin at the entrance to the Vietnam War Gallery on the first floor of the museum.

1. **True or False.** Vietnam was the United States' longest war.
2. The first Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) landed in Vietnam in 1965 (year).
3. 450,000 Marines, including 36 women, served in Vietnam. These Marines suffered over 66,000 casualties. 1/4 (25%) of the names on the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* in Washington, DC belong to a Marine.



4. Explain the **Domino Theory** first proclaimed by President Eisenhower in the 1950s.

The Domino Theory was aimed at resisting the loss of America's security "piece by piece." President Eisenhower compared the potential spread of communism in Southeast Asia to a row of falling dominos.

5. How did events in the **Gulf of Tonkin** in August 1964 lead to increased American involvement in Vietnam?

North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked the USS Maddox in international waters in the Gulf of Tonkin. This event led President Johnson to ask Congress for the authority to use military force.

Watch the video on the belly of the A-4E Skyhawk to answer question 6.

6. Vietnam was America's first helicopter war.

7. To whom is the **Leftwich Trophy** awarded each year?

The Leftwich Trophy is awarded each year to the outstanding company grade Marine officer.

8. What was the mission of the "Recon" Marines in Vietnam?

The Recon Marines took the war deep into enemy strongholds. They gathered intelligence and intercepted and engaged enemy troops.

9. What rifle (pictured below) replaced the M14 as the basic Marine shoulder arm during the Vietnam War?

M-16



10. Explain how Marines used both the M-134 mini gun and the M18A1 Claymore mine in Vietnam.

M-134 Mini Gun: Designed for use in aircraft and helicopters, it had a rotating barrel capable of firing 4,000-6,000 rounds per minute.

M18A1 Claymore: An offensive and defensive weapon, it was loaded with 700 steel balls projected in an arc out to 100 meters.

11. How did the Marines' **CAP (Combined Action Program)** patrols attempt to win the "hearts and minds" of Vietnamese civilians?

Under CAP, Marines assigned rifle squads to villages to live with and fight beside the locals. Respecting local customs, these Marines gained intelligence about the Viet Cong.



12. The most common breed of dog used by Marines in Vietnam was the German shepherd. How did these "War Dogs" assist Marines?

War dogs helped Marines "sniff out the enemy" and look for booby traps and ambushes.

13. A massive communist offensive (known as the Tet Offensive) erupted across Vietnam on 30 January 1968, shattering a cease fire announced for Tet, the national holiday. Much of the fighting focused in and around the city of Hue, the ancient imperial capital of Vietnam.

14. How did Navy Corpsmen and Navy Chaplains support Marines during the Vietnam War?

Part of the Navy-Marine Corps Team, Navy Corpsmen and Chaplains risked their lives to assist Marines. They attended to combat casualties and ministered to the spiritual needs of Marines.



15. Lance Corporal Charles "Chuck" Mawhinney, a Marine scout-sniper, had 103 confirmed enemy kills and 216 probable kills.

16. As you exit the rear of the Purple Foxes' CH-46 helicopter into the **Hill 881 South** exhibit, describe what you see, hear, and feel. What do you think Marines fighting on this hill experienced?

Answers will vary and may include: dead and wounded Marines; helicopter noise; artillery; sandbags; American flag; gunfire; shouting of orders; heat.



17. The 77-day siege of the isolated Marine base at Khe Sanh by 2 NVA (North Vietnamese Army) divisions was the longest battle in the nation's longest war.

18. What was the significance of **Operation Dewey Canyon** in 1969? What was unique about the 122mm Soviet gun captured during this operation?

During Operation Dewey Cannon, Marines under the command of Col. Robert Barrow ambushed the enemy and discovered weapons and supplies buried by the enemy. The Soviet gun captured during this operation was the largest artillery piece captured during the war.



19. At the end of **Operation Frequent Wind**, Master Sergeant Juan Valdez was the last Marine to leave Vietnam. He carried with him the United States Embassy's American flag. On the map at left, circle the city from which the last Americans departed Vietnam in April 1975.

20. What was the total number of *fatalities* suffered by the Marine Corps in Vietnam?

7,880 10,965 **13,089** 16,126

**Fatality figures were recently updated to 13,095.

21. What was the total number of *combat casualties* suffered by the Marine Corps in Vietnam?

27,456 39,490 55,287 **64,481**

**Casualty figures were recently updated to 64,487.

Exit the Vietnam Gallery and re-enter the *Legacy Walk* to answer the final question.

22. The Bell UH-1 Iroquois (Huey) served in the Vietnam War as a troop transport, aerial ambulance, flying command post, and gunship. The helicopter suspended from the ceiling above you is the actual Huey flown by Captain Stephen Pless. Captain Pless earned the Medal of Honor for bravery under fire. He was the only Marine aviator during the Vietnam War to earn this award.

National Museum of the Marine Corps

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