

## Paper Poppy Family Activity

On Memorial Day in the United States, you are sure to see red paper poppies being sold, worn, and displayed in memory of members of the Armed Forces that gave their life in the line of duty. (Learn more about why red poppies below.) Observe Memorial Day with the young people in your life by making your own red paper poppies and sharing the reason behind it with them. We've got three easy versions using common items you might already have around the house. If your family or community has lost a member of the Armed Forces in the line of duty, remember them by writing their name on the back of your poppy.

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum would like to display paper poppies from around the state to show that Wisconsin will never forget those that gave the ultimate sacrifice. If you would like to add your paper poppies to our display, please send them to the following address. Thank you!

Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
Attn: Education Department  
30 W. Mifflin St.  
Madison, WI 53703



## Paper Poppy Using Cupcake Liner

Supplies:

Paper cupcake liner

Red and black markers or crayons



Color:

Color the outer ring of the cupcake liner red and the center black.



Name of fallen service member: (Optional)

For Memorial Day, write the name of a member of the Armed Forces that died in the line of duty on the back of the paper poppy. It can be someone from your family, community, or a name from a list of casualties.

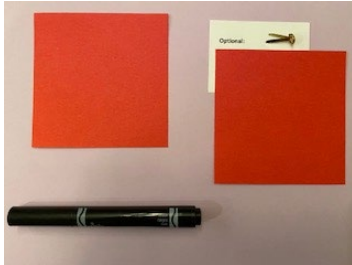
Finished poppy:



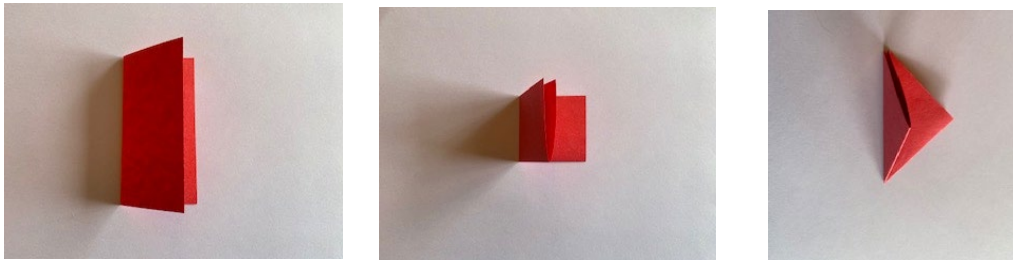
## Paper Poppy Using Construction Paper

### Supplies:

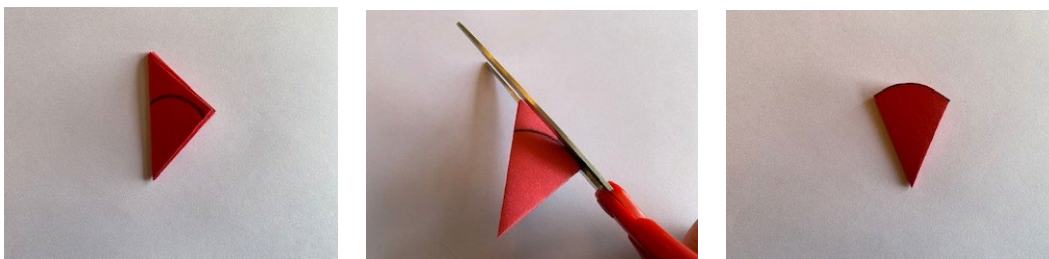
One square of red construction paper (about 3" or 4" square), black marker or crayon, scissors, optional second square of red construction paper and paper fastener or staple.



Step 1: Fold paper in half. Fold in half again. Then fold diagonally, center to outside corner.



Step 2: Draw arch across folded triangle, and cut along that line.



Step 3: Unfold and color the center with black marker. Optional – For Memorial Day, write the name of a member of the Armed Forces that died in the line of duty on the back of the paper poppy. It can be someone from your family, community, or a name from a list of casualties. Optional – make a second flower and attach with paper fastener or staple.

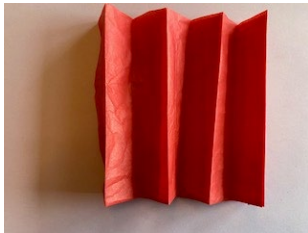


## Paper Poppy Using Tissue Paper

Supplies: Two pieces of red tissue paper (about 3"x 6", or 4"x 8"), wire twist tie, black marker.



Step 1: With the two pieces of tissue paper stacked to create two layers, accordion fold the tissue paper back and forth. Optional – For Memorial Day, write the name of a member of the Armed Forces that died in the line of duty on the back of the paper poppy. It can be someone from your family, community, or a name from a list of casualties.



Step 2: Secure the wire twist tie around the middle of the folded tissue paper. Gently separate the two layers of tissue paper.



Step 3: Use the black marker to color the center of the tissue paper flower.



## Why Poppies for Memorial Day

Observed on the last Monday in May, for many, Memorial Day marks the unofficial start of summer. It is a day to honor and remember all those who have died while serving in the armed forces for our country. It was originally known as Decoration Day. Grand Army of the Republic leader, General John A. Logan, chose May 30, 1868 as a national day to honor and remember those killed during the Civil War by laying flowers (decorations) on their graves. This was the first official Decoration Day and it was held at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Some forty years later, during World War I, a Canadian surgeon and soldier, John McCrae, wrote the poem "In Flanders Fields." In 1915, after the Second Battle of Ypres, McCrae noticed red poppies growing across the land where the fighting had raged. To McCrae, the poppy symbolized the blood shed by his fellow soldiers. When an American woman, Moina Michael, read McCrae's poem in the *Ladies Home Journal*, she was moved by it. She decided to make and sell silk poppies as a way to remember those who had died and to help support veterans. The idea was said to have originated in France and spread quickly to Britain and beyond. While today in those countries the poppy is associated with Remembrance Day, November 11th, the day World War I officially ended (our Veterans Day), in America, the red corn poppy is synonymous with Memorial Day. The VFW and American Legion sell artificial poppies to benefit veterans, which today symbolize Americans who have died while serving in the Armed Forces during all eras.

"In Flanders Fields"

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae

~ May 3, 1915

(As published in Punch Magazine, December 8, 1915)



## Additional Memorial Day Reading Suggestions

### Children

1. *The Wall* by Eve Bunting and illustrated by Ronald Himler is the story of a father and son visiting the Vietnam War Memorial.
2. *A Day for Rememberin': Inspired by the True Events of the First Memorial Day* by Leah Henderson with illustrations by Floyd Cooper tells the story of what is considered to be the first Memorial Day, called Decoration Day, in 1865 from a different point of view.
3. *The Poppy Lady: Moina Belle Michael and Her Tribute to Veterans* by Barbara E. Walsh, illustrated by Layne Johnson tells how one woman made the poppy a Memorial Day symbol honoring those who gave their life in service to the United States.
4. *America's White Table* by Margot Theis Raven, illustrated by Mike Benny, explains a family setting the traditional empty table in memory of a fallen service member.
5. *Memorial Day Surprise* by Theresa Martin Golding, illustrated by Alexandra Artigas gives special meaning to the popular Memorial Day parade.

### Young Adults

*Flags of Our Fathers Heros of Iwo Jima* by James Bradley and Ron Powers, Adapted for young people by Michael French. Grades 8 - 12