



Name _____

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The Wall

The Wall honors 2,700,000 men and women who served in Vietnam between 1959 and 1975. It is a silent tribute to the 58,267 men and women who died during that long war. The idea for the memorial came from a wounded veteran. His name is Jan Scruggs. He was deeply concerned and unhappy. The war had caused anger and division in the United States. He wanted to make up for the poor attitude shown towards returning veterans. They were not welcomed as earlier war veterans had been. Congress approved his idea. Supporters began raising money for a memorial. The fund collected nine million dollars. The money came from individuals and community groups. No government funds were used.

Of the 1,421 designs that were submitted, Maya Lin won the national competition for her

wall design. She was a college student at the time. Her parents had fled from Communist China to America. (She had received only a B- from her professor for the same design.) Her black granite wall of names was not popular right away. However, people soon recognized the beauty and simplicity of the monument. Construction began in March of 1982. It was finished in November of the same year. Later, a statue of the "Three Fighting Men" was added. This was in 1984. A flagpole flying the American flag was also added. You can visit the monument anytime. It is open seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. Many former soldiers and family members visit it. They search for the names of loved ones carved on the wall.

Check Your Understanding

1. Who led the effort to create a memorial for Vietnam veterans?
 - a. army generals
 - b. Jan Scruggs
 - c. Maya Lin
 - d. the president of the United States
2. From the context of the passage, which of the following can you infer about the Vietnam War?
 - a. Many Americans had opposed the war.
 - b. Many Americans weren't very supportive of returning veterans.
 - c. The war was very popular.
 - d. both a and b
3. Which of the following is the best topic sentence?
 - a. paragraph one, last sentence
 - b. paragraph two, last sentence
 - c. paragraph one, first sentence
 - d. paragraph two, first sentence
4. What is the wall made of?
 - a. green jade
 - b. gray granite
 - c. black granite
 - d. black marble

