Ned and the General: A Lesson about Deployment
Written by Ron Madison ♦ Illustrations by David Covolo

Goal: Children will learn about deployment and its effects on their friends whose parent(s) serve in the National Guard.

1. Show the cover of the book and ask the children to read the title.

2. Ask about the diversity of the children on the cover.

3. Ask if they know why some of the children have their hands over their hearts, while others are saluting.

4. Read the story stopping from time-to-time to ask:

   a. “Jim’s Story” (pp. 2-3) – What emotion is Jim feeling? Why does he feel this way? Why does Jim hate the Army? Where is his dad going? What does Ned do for his friend Jim?

   b. “Alex’s Story” (pp. 4-5) – Why are the kids dressed in old Polish style clothes? What was Alex doing at the party? Why was he smiling when his eyes showed sadness? How long has his mom been away?

   c. “Vicki’s Story” (pp. 6-7) – Who is Alex’s sister? How does Vicki stay busy? and Why? What does Ned ask Vicki? Why is she “scared to death?”

   d. “J.P.’s Story” (pp.8-9) – Why does J.P. pack a bag and leave his home? Does he find his dad? Why not? Who gives J.P. a hug in his dreams every night? Why was J.P.’s dad different? How does J.P.’s dad make him feel better?

   e. “Kathy’s Story” (pp. 10-11) – How does Kathy really feel? Who takes care of Kathy and her family? Do Kathy and her family watch TV? Why not? Who helps Kathy and her family? Is Kathy proud of her dad?

   f. “Mrs. Arcurio’s Class” (pp. 12-14) – What question does Mrs. Arcurio ask her class? Why does Jim not tell anyone about his dad being gone? What does Rosa say she would do if her dad was gone? What would she have trouble with? Why was Jim surprised about how the others said they would feel? What do the other children say they would do to help a friend who had a parent that was away? When Jim tells his teacher about his dad, what does she say to him?


g. “Grandpa John” (pp. 15-17) – What does Ned tell his friend Johnny about? What does Johnny tell Ned about his Grandpa John? What did Johnny’s Grandpa John show him once? Why was being a general so hard for Grandpa John? What did he want to do more than anything else?

h. “The General’s Story” (pp. 18-21) – Why do Johnny and Ned stop to see Johnny’s Grandpa John, the General? What question does Ned ask the general? What is the general’s reply to Ned? What else does the general tell Ned?

i. “Jim’s New Role” (pp. 22-23) – Is Ned’s friend Jim still mad? Why not? What has Jim decided to do to help him deal with his dad being gone?

5. Ask if any of them has a friend whose parent is away serving in the military.

6. Ask if any of them have a parent in the military.

7. Ask if any of them know someone in the military, like the general (or any other person), who might help them deal with their feelings.

Activities:

- Have the children write a letter to their friend who has a parent away serving in the military.

- Ask a member of the military to visit your classroom and speak with the children about being a service member.

- Talk about why someone chooses to be a military member. Draw pictures of patriotic symbols.