



## **TEACHER STUDY GUIDE**

## 9 THE AMERICAN VETERANS



*I. D. "Inny" Cerbini of USS Hancock (CV-19) in 1945*

The six veterans all joined the United States Navy in their teens. During World War II, the sailors were not much older than the high school students they met fifty-eight years later.

### **"BLUEJACKETS" OF WORLD WAR II**

The United States Navy numbered 125,202 officers and men in 1940 and 3,380,817 in 1945. Some 38% of United States Navy personnel volunteered, while 62% were drafted. During World War II 36,950 Navy personnel were killed and 37,778 were wounded in combat operations. 157 United States Navy (military) vessels were sunk during the war. An apprentice seaman received base pay of \$50.00 per month (\$564.45 in 2005 dollars) while a Chief Petty Officer received base pay of \$138 per month (\$1,557.88 in 2005 dollars).

## 28 USS ESSEX (CV-9)



*Lt. Yoshinori Yamaguchi's D4Y3 Suisei dive bomber approaches USS Essex (CV-9)*

To be an African-American in the United States Navy in 1944 meant serving as a mess steward. Despite an African-American winning the Medal of Honor at Pearl Harbor, the Navy refused to allow African-Americans to serve outside the Stewards Department. By 1944, however, the urgent need for manpower had removed some racial barriers, and African-Americans were given combat positions as gunners, among the most dangerous jobs aboard warships in the Pacific. On November 25, 1944, a group of African-Americans aboard Essex were serving their first alert as gunners on 20-millimeter cannons. Eight of them would be dead within a few minutes.

## 16 THE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

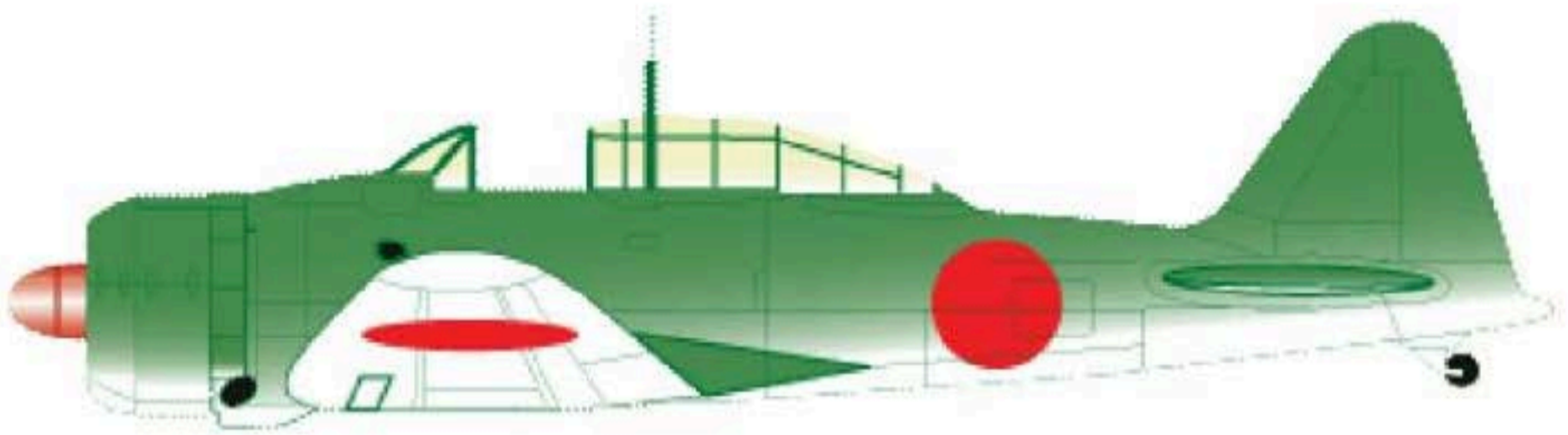


High school students from four different countries took part in this project. They all learned a great deal from the veterans; more than they could have from any history book.

According to the ERIC Digest, in a 1986 survey, only 53 percent of high school students knew that Joseph Stalin was the leader of the Soviet Union, 45 percent did not know that Japanese-Americans were forced into internment camps, and only 40 percent knew, within two years, when the Normandy invasion occurred.

*Day of the Kamikaze* hopes to correct these problems in education by making the story of World War II accessible to high school students by having veterans interact with young adults while discussing their past. MFA Productions LLC hopes to produce other videos with similar themes.

## 34 MITSUBISHI A6M ZERO-SEN FIGHTER



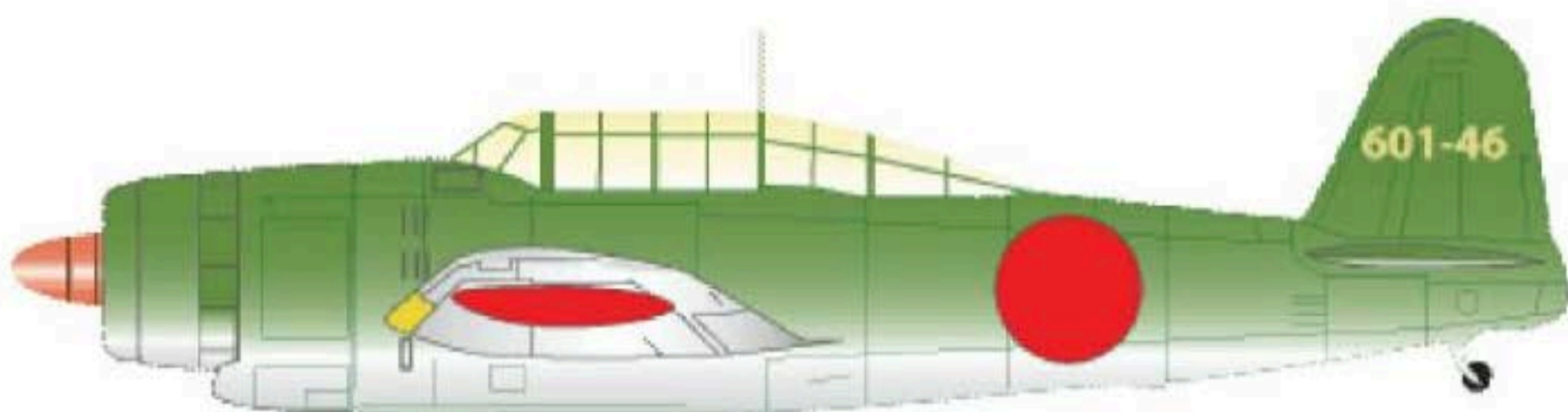
The Mitsubishi A6M Zero-Sen Naval fighter was revolutionary when it was introduced in 1940. Like most other Japanese fighters, it lacked self-sealing fuel tanks and pilot armor, which increased its speed. The two 20-millimeter cannon and two 12.7-millimeter machine guns gave it a powerful armament.

First used over China, the A6M was the standard shipboard fighter from Pearl

Harbor through the rest of the war. Americans tended to label any single-engine plane a “Zeke” – the Allied code name – since it was so ubiquitous. In the hands of a skilled pilot, it was a deadly weapon.

However, by November 1944 the Zero-Sen was outclassed by the American shipboard fighters, the F6F Hellcat and the F4U Corsair, both in performance and armament. The rigid wooden tail and the lack of self-sealing fuel tanks made the A6M burn if light damage was inflicted on it. Plus, the toll on Japanese pilots meant that most were green fliers right out of flight school. To simplify training and maximize effectiveness, the Japanese Imperial Navy began using kamikazes

## 35 YOKOSUKA D4Y SUISEI DIVE BOMBER



In 1942, The limitations of the fixed undercarriage dive bomber were evident. The Imperial Japanese Navy undertook the development of a very fast dive bomber with an enclosed bomb bay and retractable landing gear. The Yokosuka D4Y was implemented as a reconnaissance plane and dive bomber to fit that requirement. It was the fastest dive bomber of World War II, but still not as fast as the Allied fighters it opposed.

One of the few warplanes fitted with both a round radial engine (shown) and a liquid-cooled engine that gave the nose a pointed, distinctly different shape, the D4Y was flown by pilots that had less and less training. By November 1944, the success of the kamikaze technique led to the development of a kamikaze version in 1945. The D4Y4 was packed with explosives.

The lack of training, combined with the lack of pilot armor or self-sealing fuel tanks, made the D4Y easy to ignite with a few rounds of incendiary tracers. By the end of the war, thousands of young