

# Citation Investigation: Analyzing Narrative

## OBJECTIVES

### Students will:

- read and analyze a Medal of Honor citation
- organize parts of the citation into the correct order
- identify the act of heroism for which the Medal of Honor was received
- define key vocabulary in a Recipient's citation
- evaluate the narrative for audience, purpose, and style

**Medal of Honor Focus: Gary Beikirch, U.S. Army, Vietnam War. Any Recipient can be substituted for this lesson, but the teacher will need to adapt the worksheet accordingly. Note that this lesson is also appropriate for Recipients for whom there is no living history video, including those who were awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.**

### For the Teacher:

Find an appropriate Recipient citation and space the text so that the citation can easily be cut into 4 to 6 sections; print out several copies. (Gary Beikirch's citation is included here; those of other Recipients can be found on [themedalofhonor.com](http://themedalofhonor.com).) The citation pieces should be shuffled and placed in an envelope.

### Introductory Activity:

Introduce students to a Medal of Honor citation. It may be described as a birth certificate, which is specific to one person. The Medal of Honor citation is the official government document that describes the actions for which the Recipient was awarded the medal. The document will use language and terminology specific to the military.

### Small Group Activity:

Place the students into groups and hand out the envelopes. Each group will remove all the sections from the envelope. Students will then work together to place the sections in the correct order of the official government citation. It is suggested that teachers time this activity (in a game-like format).

### Whole Group Activity:

When all students have completed organizing their citations, the teacher will ask the students what strategies they used to place the sections in the correct order. Possible answers include looking for beginning, middle, and end words, or transition words like "first," "second," etc. The teacher will reveal the actual order of the citation, one section at a time, noting when groups are no longer in contention for the correctly completed citation.

### Small Group Activity:

Give students a paper copy of the Recipient's citation and the Text-Dependent Questions Worksheet about the citation. The students will work in groups to complete the worksheet, being sure to select direct quotations from the citation to support their responses.

**Concluding Activity:**

The teacher will discuss the students' answers for the worksheet and discuss the action for which the Medal of Honor was awarded. Each student will write a summary of the act of heroism using key words and phrases from the citation.

**Assessment:**

Worksheet, student summary

**Resources:**

Recipient citation, worksheet

**Extended Activities:**

Ask students to rewrite the citation using a different voice, medium, or audience. Complete the same activity for a different Medal of Honor Recipient.

## Gary Beikirch's Medal of Honor Citation

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Sgt. Beikirch, medical aidman, Detachment B-24, Company B, distinguished himself during the defense of Camp Dak Seang. The allied defenders suffered a number of casualties as a result of an intense, devastating attack launched by the enemy from well-concealed positions surrounding the camp.

Sgt. Beikirch, with complete disregard for his personal safety, moved unhesitatingly through the withering enemy fire to his fallen comrades, applied first aid to their wounds and assisted them to the medical-aid station. When informed that a seriously injured American officer was lying in an exposed position, Sgt. Beikirch ran immediately through the hail of fire. Although he was wounded seriously by fragments from an exploding enemy mortar shell, Sgt. Beikirch carried the officer to a medical aid station.

Ignoring his own serious injuries, Sgt. Beikirch left the relative safety of the medical bunker to search for and evacuate other men who had been injured. He was again wounded as he dragged a critically injured Vietnamese soldier to the medical bunker while simultaneously applying mouth-to-mouth resuscitation to sustain his life.

Sgt. Beikirch again refused treatment and continued his search for other casualties until he collapsed. Only then did he permit himself to be treated. Sgt. Beikirch's complete devotion to the welfare of his comrades, at the risk of his life, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

## Text-Dependent Questions: Gary Beikirch's Medal of Honor Citation

Question	Student Answer / Citing Evidence from the Text
<p>For what audience or audiences was this written? Support your claim with at least one quotation from the text.</p>	
<p>What is the author's purpose? Support your position with at least one quotation from the text.</p>	
<p>The author explains, "Sgt. Beikirch, with complete disregard for his personal safety, moved unhesitatingly through the withering enemy fire to his fallen comrades." What is the meaning of "withering"? Provide evidence to support your response.</p>	
<p>The author states, "Sgt. Beikirch's complete devotion to the welfare of his comrades, at the risk of his life, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service..." Provide evidence that explains how Sgt. Beikirch showed complete devotion to the welfare of his comrades.</p>	