

NAME: _____

DUE DATE: _____

Viewing Guide for:
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN

Introduction: *Saving Private Ryan* is a fictional story set during World War II. The time period covered in the film is only a few days in early June 1944. (The film begins and ends with scenes set in a military cemetery in modern day France.) The premise of the film is that a squad of US soldiers (8 men) is sent on a very dangerous mission to find Private James Ryan. Private Ryan is an American soldier whose three other brothers have all been killed in combat and he is to be sent home.








Your Task: Journal Assignment—As you watch the film, you will reflect on the following prompts.

- (1) **LIBERALISM:** How do we see the liberal values of American culture (individualism, liberty, equality, democracy & capitalism) affecting the way the war is fought? (Hint: Think about how the soldiers interact and relate to their superior officers.)
- (2) **MORALITY:** How does war affect morality? How does morality affect war?

After each class day of watching, you will write a reflection* that addresses the prompts in the context of what you saw of the film that day in class. In your reflections you should make specific references to parts of the film that affected your thinking about the prompts but should not retell or summarize what happened. I have seen this film countless times and know it very well. You do not need to remind me what happened. Your reflections should show deep and complex thinking on the prompts. I want to see how your thinking on the prompts evolves as you watch the film. You will add to your journal each date in reverse chronological order (newer entries at top, older entries at bottom). Date your reflections.

Characters:

- Captain John Miller (Tom Hanks)—Commanding officer w/ mysterious past
- Sergeant Mike Horvath (Tom Sizemore)—Gritty battle-hardened wise sergeant
- Corporal Upham (Jeremy Davies)—Translator; young, inexperienced, naïve, outsider
- Specialist Wade (Giovanni Ribisi)—medic; compassionate; nurturing
- Private Reiben (Edward Burns)—tough Brooklynite, battle-hardened BAR man, cynical
- Private Jackson (Barry Pepper)—sniper; rural, religious
- Private Mellish (Adam Goldberg)—Jewish, battle-hardened rifleman
- Private Caparzo (Vin Diesel)—battle hardened rifleman but with soft side

United States Army Ranks during World War 2 (abridged)		Insignia
General	Commissioned Officers	★ TO ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★
Colonel		
Major		
Captain		
Lieutenant		
Sergeant	Non-Commissioned Officers (noncoms)	
Corporal		
Private		

* Half page single spaced in a Google doc in new Google folder.