



HOW TO USE CELEBRATED UNITS

Middle and High School (6-12)

OVERVIEW:

ANC's Celebrated Units series provides materials teachers can use to increase student understanding of particularly famous or noteworthy military units. Focusing on these units and their individual members helps students understand both the wide variety of contributions Americans have made during wartime and the personal price paid by many varied individuals.

Some units faced discrimination and unequal treatment. Some units had particularly distinguished records. All units highlighted in this series served their country admirably and made a lasting impact on the U.S.

Estimated time: 15-20 minutes per unit

STANDARDS & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

These are found in individual unit lesson plans.

IDEAS FOR USING MATERIALS:

Whole Class Use:

- PowerPoint Lecture: Each Celebrated Unit includes a recommended lesson plan with instructions for presenting the material in a whole class lecture format. Students are provided an accompanying worksheet to fill out during the mini lesson.
- Celebrated Units Journal: Generic journal pages can be printed and used for each Celebrated Unit. These can be cut out and glued into students' interactive journals or multiple units could be compiled as student mini books.

Small Group or Individual Use:

Celebrated units can be grouped in different ways: Segregated Units, Units that Served in World War II, etc. Using multiple units with a common theme introduces students to a larger number of units than they might otherwise be exposed to.

If using multiple units, it's recommended that you print the slides with notes. Students will focus on individual units either independently or in small groups. For these activities, it's recommended that you print at least one copy per group. You may also choose to print the accompanying worksheet for individuals or small groups to fill out or have them fill put notes in a Celebrated Units Journal Page.

- Stations: Printed slides are organized at stations around the room. Students move from station to station (working independently or in groups) to fill in notes, unit worksheets, or unit journal pages.



- Jigsaw: Working individually or as a group, students review the information in their assigned PowerPoint and complete the unit worksheet, fill out the journal page, or take notes. After time to discuss their answers or notes with those in their group, students are sorted into a second group. This second group has at least one person who studied each unit. Students then share with each other the information they found out about each unit, filling in their own notes or journal pages as applicable. This activity allows students to complete a larger quantity of notes more quickly as a group than they could individually.
- Extension Activities: Materials can also be used by students who finish work quickly and would benefit from additional content to explore. Students could also use the PowerPoints as a jumping off point for conducting their own research about one of the Celebrated Units or notable members of the unit.



LESSON PLAN:

369th Infantry Regiment

Middle School (6-8) or High School (9-12)

OVERVIEW:

Students learn about the 369th Infantry Regiment and make connections to their prior knowledge in order to explore the significance of this military unit in historical and cultural context.

The 369th Infantry Regiment, nicknamed the Harlem Rattlers, had one of the most distinguished records of any unit in the history of the United States Army. It saw extensive combat in both World War I and World War II. Most of the men in the regiment were African American, although it also included Puerto Ricans.

Resources include a PowerPoint slide deck and handout. Students use the handout to answer questions before, during, and after the PowerPoint presentation.

Estimated time: 1 class period, 15-20 minutes total

STANDARDS:

National Council for the Social Studies Standards

- NCSS.D2.His.1.9-12: Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- NCSS.D2.His.3.9-12: Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.
- NCSS.D2.His.1.6-8: Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- NCSS.D2.His.3.9-12: Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Students will describe challenges faced by the 369th Infantry Regiment and their legacy.
- Students will explain connections between the story of the 369th Infantry Regiment and other topics discussed in class.



RESOURCES NEEDED:

- 369th Infantry Regiment PowerPoint presentation
- Copies of “369th Infantry Regiment” student handout (one per student)

LESSON BACKGROUND:

This information will provide students with a general background on the history of segregation within U.S. society and the U.S. military. Share this information as needed to fill gaps in student understanding of these concepts and prepare them for the lesson content.

Segregation in America

The American Civil War (1861-1865) began as a war to preserve the Union of the United States of America. By its end, enslaved African Americans were freed and the practice of slavery in this nation was abolished. Following the Civil War, there was promise of racial equality. The United States ratified three constitutional amendments—the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments—that guaranteed African Americans’ legal status as United States citizens, and Congress passed civil rights legislation intended to provide them with educational and economic opportunities. However, state and local governments, largely but not entirely in the South, passed laws that restricted these newly granted freedoms. These laws included the racial segregation of public facilities (so-called “Jim Crow” laws), as well as poll taxes and literacy requirements that limited African Americans’ ability to vote.

In 1896, the U.S. Supreme Court made racial segregation legal, ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that the principle of “**separate but equal**” did not violate the 14th Amendment. After this ruling, America embraced segregation. Blacks and whites were kept separate in schools, restaurants, public transportation and even bathrooms; however, they were not equal.

Almost 60 years later, on May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court unanimously reversed the Plessy ruling, deciding in *Brown v. Board of Education* that separate schools were not equal and therefore the segregation of public schools was unlawful. This was a major victory for African Americans and civil rights activists; however, desegregation was neither immediate nor easy. Some white Americans opposed and even violently protested the integration of schools, restaurants and other public facilities.

After *Brown v. Board*, which only applied to public schools, it took African American activists and their allies another 10 years to secure passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which barred racial discrimination in the workplace and public spaces. Additional civil rights legislation included the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which gave the federal government oversight in state and local elections to protect African Americans’ right to vote, and the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which provided equal housing opportunities regardless of race, creed, or national origin and made it a federal crime to injure or intimidate anyone because of their race, color, religion, or national origin.



Segregation in the U.S. Military

The history of segregation within the U.S. military is similar to that of segregation in U.S. society at large: a slow march toward progress with many steps backward along the way. Approximately 5,000 African Americans served alongside whites in Continental Army regiments during the Revolutionary War, and some served with American forces during the War of 1812. After 1815, state and federal laws and regulations gradually restricted or prohibited African Americans serving in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or state militias.

In July 1862, in the midst of the Civil War, Congress authorized the recruitment of Black soldiers, and after the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863 the Army established the Bureau of Colored Troops to supervise the units of the United States Colored Troops (USCT). Through World War II (1941-1945), most African Americans who wished to serve in the U.S. armed forces were assigned to segregated, all-Black units, often overseen by white officers. Although these segregated units served with valor and distinction, they received less support than white units and regularly had to deal with discrimination, unequal benefits and assignment to difficult duties such as building fortifications and occupying southern states during the years after the war.

On July 26, 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981, mandating equality of treatment and opportunity in the U.S. military, to include burial at national cemeteries such as Arlington, regardless of race. Over the next few years, each of the military service branches (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard) implemented the executive order in different ways until the U.S. military was fully racially integrated by late 1954.

For more information on this topic, please see “African Americans in the Army” by the U.S. Army Center on Military History, found at <https://history.army.mil/html/faq/diversity.html>

Segregation at Arlington National Cemetery

Following the segregation practices of the U.S. military, for many decades Arlington National Cemetery required African American service members to be interred in segregated sections. Prior to World War II, African American service members were buried in Section 27 (from the Civil War through 1899), Section 23 (from 1900 through the 1920s), Section 19 (repatriations from World War I (1917-1918)), and Section 25 (from the late 1920s until 1948). It is important to consider how segregation affected not only the location of gravesites, but also the experience of African American mourners who may have experienced racism when attending funerals or visiting graves in segregated sections.

Desegregation for new burials began immediately following President Truman’s Executive Order in 1948, and Arlington National Cemetery has been fully integrated ever since.



LESSON ACTIVITIES

- Introduction/Anticipatory Set: 2 mins

- Display PowerPoint Slide 1
- Instruct students to make a guess and write an answer for first question on their worksheet “What was the 369th Infantry Regiment, also known as the Harlem Rattlers?” Encourage students to write anything they can think of – do they recognize any words on the screen? Does the American flag picture make them think of anything?
It is likely most students will only be able to guess the 369th is related to the American military, but some may recognize Harlem as a historically African American neighborhood or know more specifics about military divisions. Encourage students to write what they can, based on the limited information on the screen at this time.

- PowerPoint Presentation: 10-15 mins

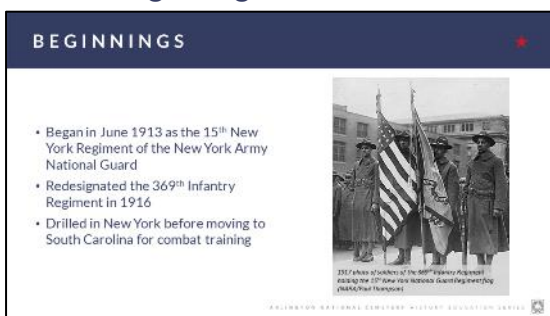
Students should answer the questions on their worksheet while the teacher presents the information in the PowerPoint.

Slide:	Notes for Presentation
Slide 1: 369th Infantry Regiment 	Make a guess: What was the 369th Infantry Regiment? Who were the Harlem Rattlers?
Slide 2: Background  • One of the most distinguished records of any unit in the United States Army • Fought in World War I and World War II • Most men in regiment were African American, though some Puerto Ricans joined unit during World War I	The 369th Infantry Regiment, nicknamed the Harlem Rattlers, had one of the most distinguished records of any unit in the history of the United States Army. It saw extensive combat in both World War I and World War II. Most of the men in the regiment were African American, although when the unit mobilized for war in 1917 approximately a dozen Puerto Ricans were drafted or enlisted into the regiment.
Slide 3: What's in a Name?	To define a few terms in the unit's name: • Infantry describes soldiers who are trained in ground combat • A regiment is an organizational division of the Army, made up of about 2,000-5,000 soldiers



- Many members of the 369th Regiment were from the Harlem neighborhood of New York. Harlem became famous as a center of African American culture during the 1920s – a period called the Harlem Renaissance.
- Each Army unit has a distinctive unit insignia worn by soldiers of that unit. The 369th Infantry Regiment's distinctive unit insignia featured a silver rattlesnake.

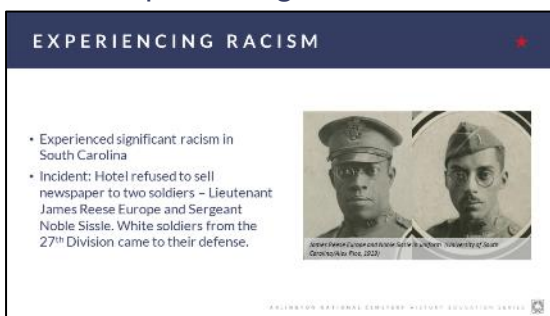
Slide 4: Beginnings



The regiment came into being in June 1913 in the New York Army National Guard as the 15th New York Regiment. The National Guard is a reserve component of the United States military with designated units for all fifty states, Washington, D.C., and the territories of Guam and the Virgin Islands. State governors and the president can mobilize the National Guard for domestic or international conflicts.

In 1916, the Army re-organized the 15th New York National Guard into the 369th Infantry Regiment. Called into federal service upon the outbreak of World War I, the regiment drilled in New York prior to moving to South Carolina, where it undertook combat training.

Slide 5: Experiencing Racism



The unit bore the brunt of significant racism while in South Carolina: in one famous case a hotel refused to sell a newspaper to two soldiers in the regiment, Lieutenant James Reese Europe and Sergeant Noble Sissle. Several white soldiers from the 27th Infantry Division came to the defense of their comrades from the 369th, averting trouble.

Slide 6: Experiencing Racism

Arriving in France in early 1918, the 369th found itself relegated to unloading ships and other menial labor instead of further combat training. At the time, many African American military units were given non-combat assignments due to racism and prejudice about their abilities on the battlefield.



EXPERIENCING RACISM

- Arrived in France 1918 and were assigned to labor roles instead of combat
- White American units refused to fight alongside them, so they were assigned to the French Army



2022 photo of members of the 369th Infantry Regiment in France, 1918

Anxious to prove themselves in combat, the 369th soon found itself in a quandary: white officers refused to brigade the regiment with white soldiers. In April of 1918 the Army assigned the 369th to the French Army.

Slide 7: Combat Experience

COMBAT EXPERIENCE

- Distinguished themselves in combat, especially during Second Battle of the Marne
- French nicknamed them the "Men of Bronze," Germans who they fought nicknamed them the "Hellfighters"
- Several soldiers recognized for valor – Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, and French Croix de Guerre



1918 photo of soldiers of the 369th Infantry Regiment in France, 1918

2022 photo of members of the 369th Infantry Regiment in France, 1918

Fighting alongside the French, the unit participated in the Champagne-Marne Defensive in July of 1918, the Second Battle of the Marne during the Aisne-Marne Offensive in July and August of 1918, and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive from September to November of 1918. The French nicknamed them the "Men of Bronze." The Germans, bearing the brunt of their ferocity, named them "Hellfighters."

The French government awarded the Croix de Guerre medal, an award recognizing valor, to 171 men in the unit and a Croix de Guerre citation to the entire unit.

Slide 8: 369th Infantry Regimental Band

369th INFANTRY REGIMENTAL BAND

Regiment's marching band led by James Reese Europe introduced European audiences to jazz



2022 photo of 369th Infantry Regimental Band marching in France, 1918

2022 photo of 369th Infantry Regimental Band marching in France, 1918

During World War I, the 369th Infantry Regimental Band was led by James Reese Europe, a talented bandleader who had already distinguished himself in the New York music and theater scene. Europe put together the best band he could, even traveling to Puerto Rico to recruit members. The band toured across France in February and March of 1918 and proved instrumental in introducing early jazz to awestruck European audiences.

Slide 9: Later Years

LATER YEARS

- After World War I, remained in service as 369th Coast Artillery Battalion and was converted to an anti-aircraft unit
- Deployed in New York, West Coast, and Hawaii
- Served in New Guinea and Philippines during World War II as anti-aircraft battalion
- Lives on as 369th Sustainment Brigade in New York Army National Guard



2022 photo of members of the 369th Sustainment Brigade in New York, 2022

2022 photo of members of the 369th Sustainment Brigade in New York, 2022

After the unit returned home, it remained in New York state service as the 369th Coast Artillery Battalion. The Army later converted them—as well as other Coast Artillery battalions—into an anti-aircraft unit. It was stationed in New York and deployed to the West Coast and Hawaii.



	During World War II, the unit also served, this time in the Pacific Theater of Operations. It continued its service as an anti-aircraft battalion. Attached to the 93rd Infantry Regiment, the 369th saw action in New Guinea and the Philippines against the Japanese. The regiment survives today as the 369th Sustainment Brigade, providing logistical support for the military in areas such as transportation, supplies, and maintenance.
Slide 10: Notable Members 	James Reese Europe – also known as Jim Europe Jim Europe was the bandleader of the 369th Regimental Band, which traveled around France performing for French, British, and American audiences. The band played traditional military marches as well as early jazz and sparked the popularity of jazz in Europe. Europe is interred at Arlington National Cemetery. Noble Sissle Noble Sissle was the lead vocalist of Jim Europe’s band in France. After the war, he and his friend Eubie Blake wrote the musical “Shuffle Along,” which was the first hit Broadway musical written by and about African Americans. Rafael Hernández Marín On July 23, 1917 Rafael Hernández Marín and his brother, Jesús Hernández Marín, enlisted in the 369th Infantry Regiment and joined the regimental band. In his lifetime, Rafael Hernandez Marín wrote hundreds of songs, and his music became an important part of Puerto Rican culture. Spottswood Poles Spottswood, or “Spot,” Poles was a professional baseball player in the Negro League. He was known for his speed, and was nicknamed the “Black Ty



	Cobb,” after one of the best Major League Baseball players. Poles fought with the 369th during World War I and was awarded a Purple Heart and five battle stars. Poles is interred at Arlington National Cemetery.
Slide 11: Notable Members 	Henry Johnson On May 15, 1918, Henry Johnson and a fellow soldier fought off a German raiding party in the Argonne Forest of France. Johnson engaged in hand-to-hand combat to rescue his fellow soldier from being taken prisoner and was awarded the French Croix de Guerre for his valor. Due to racism at the time, he was not awarded the Medal of Honor until 2015, long after his death. Johnson is interred at Arlington National Cemetery. Benjamin O. Davis Sr. Benjamin O. Davis Sr. took command of the 369th Regiment, New York National Guard in 1938. In 1940, he was promoted to brigadier general, becoming the first African American general in the U.S. military. Davis is interred at Arlington National Cemetery. Stephanie Dawson Stephanie Dawson took command of the 369th Sustainment Brigade in 2008, becoming the first woman to command a brigade in the New York Army National Guard. Her military service also included managing response logistics to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York and deployment to Iraq.
Slide 12: Legacy	When the 369th came home from the trenches in 1919, they returned to a society that was still deeply prejudiced against African Americans. However, stories of their bravery and valor had won them fame in Europe and the United States. As the first of New York’s National Guardsmen to return from France, the New York City Mayor’s Committee of



LEGACY - All of New York celebrated their return - Jazz became very popular in Europe and opened doors for black musicians and artists    	Welcome to the Homecoming Troops organized a parade solely for the 369th Infantry Regiment. The popularity of jazz continued to grow in Europe, opening doors for Black musicians and artists and inspiring admiration and imitation of other African American musical traditions.
Slide 13: Connections CONNECTIONS Does the story of the 369th Infantry Regiment remind you of anything else you have learned? What connections can you make to your prior knowledge?   	Now that you've been introduced to the 369th Infantry Regiment, what connections can you make to other things you have learned in class?

- Conclusion: 3 mins
 - Display PowerPoint Slide 13
 - Instruct students to complete their worksheet by writing a few sentences about connections they can make between the story of the 369th Infantry Regiment and other topics you have covered in class. Encourage students to share as time allows.

LESSON EXTENSIONS:

- Explore the music of James Reese Europe at the Library of Congress: <https://www.loc.gov/audio/?fa=contributor%3AJames+reese+europe>
- Explore newspaper articles about the parade organized for the return of the 369th: <https://blogs.loc.gov/headlinesandheroes/2019/02/harlem-hell-fighters-african-american-troops/>
https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/data/batches/az_campfiregoneout_ver03/data/sn96060881/00414216912/1919021501/0117.pdf
- Explore newspaper articles about the actions of the 369th while in France: <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1918-06-09/ed-1/seq-38/#date1=1916&index=0&rows=20&words=369+th&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=&date2=1919&proxtext=%22369th%22&y=0&x=0&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>
https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/data/batches/cohi_abbeyville_ver01/data/sn84025887/00279550778/1918062101/0113.pdf



Planning a Visit to Arlington National Cemetery?



Arlington National Cemetery uniquely represents our nation's history, with graves of service members from every major conflict. If you are interested in more information and discussion questions to use with your class during a visit to the cemetery, detailed walking tours are available on ANC's website.

SOURCES

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IMAGES

Slide 2: *Colored Troops – New York's Colored Regiment Returns Home on Stockholm*. Photograph. International Film Service, February 12, 1919. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/26431282>



Slide 3: Abbott, S.C. *111-SC-11914*. Photograph. May 4, 1918. National Archives.

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Slide 3: Thompson, Paul. *Parade of returned fighters of the famous 369th [African American] Infantry at the Flatiron Building, New York City [at] the start of the parade*. Photograph. February 17, 1919.

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Slide 3: *Aerial survey, Manhattan Island, New York City*. Photograph. August 4, 1921. New York City, New York: Fairchild Aerial Camera Corporation. Library of Congress.

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Slide 3: *369th Support Battalion Distinctive Unit Insignia*. Illustration. U.S. Army, The Institute of Heraldry.

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Slide 4: Thompson, Paul. *[African American] color bearers of 15th Regiment Infantry, New York National Guard, New York City. (369th, new designation)* Photograph. 1917. National Archives.

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Slide 5: Rice, Alex. *Mirandy: that gal o'mine*. Photograph and illustration. New York City, New York: Jos. W. Stern & Co. 1919. University of South Carolina.

<https://digital.tcl.sc.edu/digital/collection/jbgrtwrsm/id/5656>

Slide 6: *Negro Troops in France. Picture shows part of the 15th Regiment Infantry New York National Guard*. Photograph. International Film Service, 1919. National Archives.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/533488>

Slide 7: *Pellison, P.A. Maj. Gen. Eli A. Helmick decorating men with D.S.C. Medals for exceptional bravery. Brest, Finistere, France*. Photograph. January 27, 1919. National Archives.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/86709991>

Slide 8: *[African American] Jazz Band and Leader Back with [African American] 15th New York*.

Photograph. February 12, 1919. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/533506>

Slide 9: Getman, Mark. *Soldiers of the 369th Sustainment Brigade March in Veterans Day Parade [Image 11 of 28]*. Photograph. November 11, 2018. New York National Guard. DVIDS.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/image/4897432/soldiers-369th-sustainment-brigade-march-veterans-day-parade>



Slide 9: Onyeagwa, Nnaemeka. *369th Sustainment Brigade Soldiers conduct field training* [Image 25 of 33]. Photograph. August 16, 2018. New York National Guard. DVIDS.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/image/4671789/369th-sustainment-brigade-soldiers-conduct-field-training>

Slide 10: Rice, Alex. *Mirandy: that gal o'mine*. Photograph and illustration. New York City, New York: Jos. W. Stern & Co. 1919. University of South Carolina.

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Slide 10: *Noble Sissle; Musician*. Photograph. 1923. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division, The New York Public Library.

<http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-75b3-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>

Slide 10: *Rafael Hernández*. Photograph. ca. 1960. Enciclopedia de Puerto Rico.

<https://enciclopediapr.org/en/encyclopedia/rafael-hernandez/>

Slide 10: *Lincoln Giants Team Photograph, 1911*. Photograph. 1911. National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. <https://collection.baseballhall.org/PASTIME/lincoln-giants-team-photograph-1911-2>

Slide 11: *Sergeant Henry Johnson*. Photograph. 1919. U.S. Army.

<https://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/johnson/>

Slide 11: *Brigadier General Benjamin O. Davis watches a Signal Corps crew erecting poles, somewhere in France*. Photograph. August 8, 1944. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/531202>

Slide 11: *NY National Guard Commemorates 90th Anniversary of NYC Veterans' Salute* [Image 2 of 2]. Photograph. November 11, 2009. New York National Guard. DVIDS.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/image/222513/ny-national-guard-commemorates-90th-anniversary-nyc-veterans-salute>

Slide 12: *Colonel Hayward's "Hell Fighters" in parade*. Photograph. February 18, 1919. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/533518>

Slide 12: *Colored Troops - Colored Children gathered along line of march to extend royal welcome to their daddies of the 369th (old 15th NY) regiment, as the famous fighters pass up 5th Avenue in welcome home parade*. Photograph. February 21, 1919. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/26431314>

Slide 12: *Genuine jazz for the yankee wounded In the courtyard of a Paris hospital for the American wounded, an American negro military band, led by Lt. James R. Europe, entertains the patients with real American jazz*. Photograph. 1918. Army Signal Corps. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2016651602/>



Slide 13: Abbott, S.C. *111-SC-11907*. Photograph. June 6, 1918. National Archives.

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/55183939>

Slide 13: Thompson, Paul. *The Famous 369th Arrive in New York City*. Photograph. 1919. National Archives. <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/533496>

Slide 13: *111-SC-6319 - St. Nazaire, France, 15th New York Infantry, now the 369th Infantry, a Colored Regiment engage in a basketball game*. Photograph. February 13, 1918. National Archives.

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