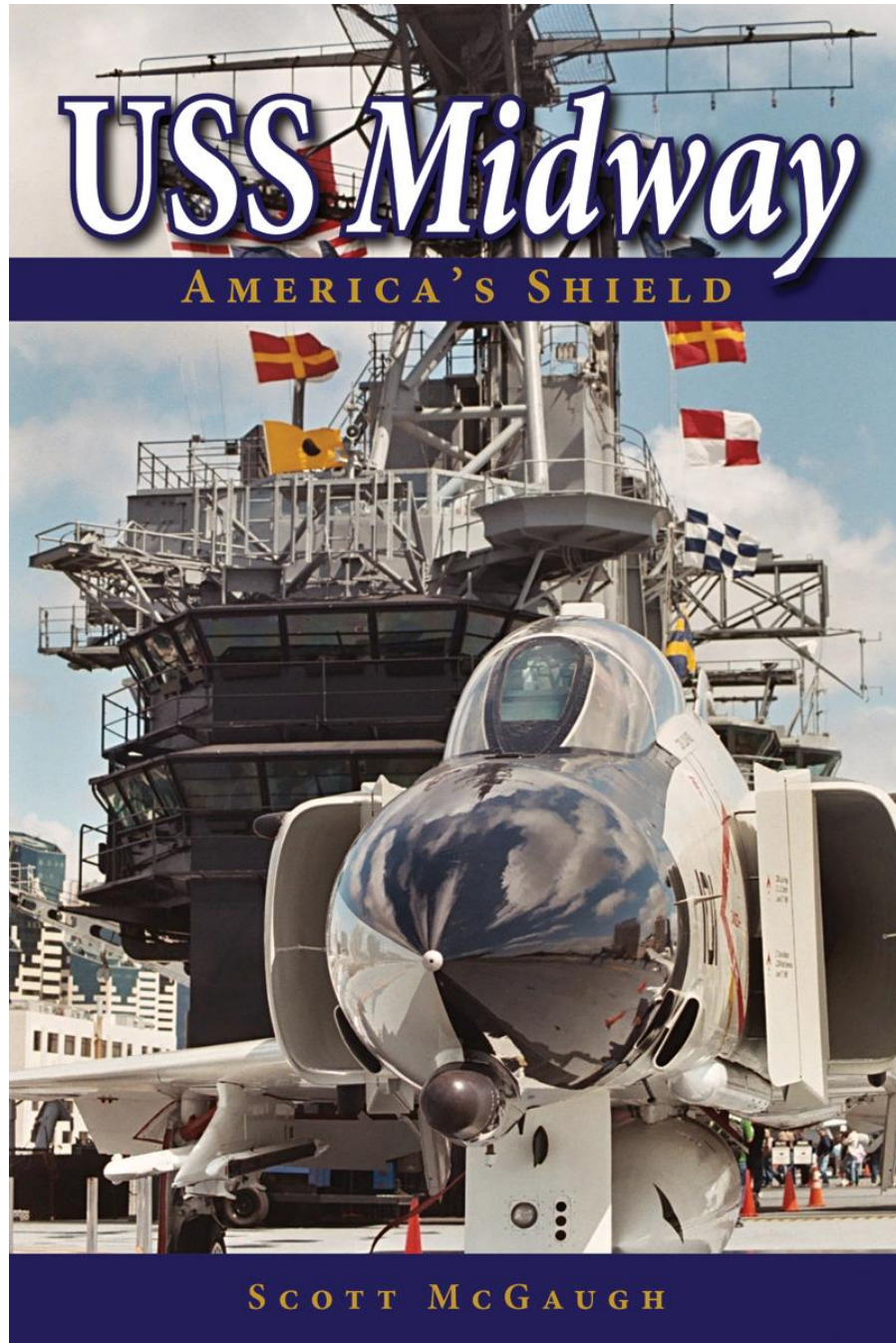


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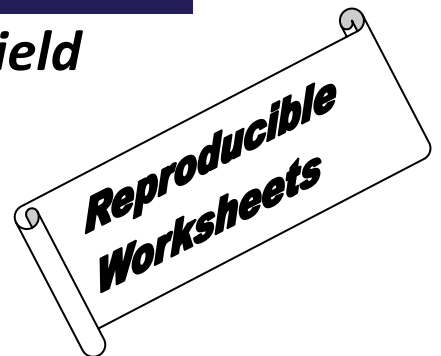
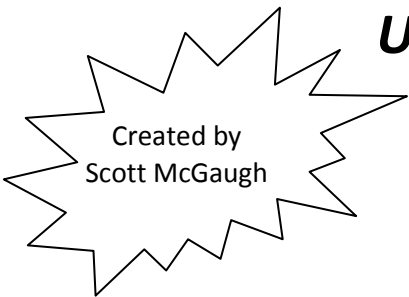
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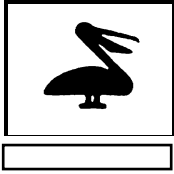


## ***USS Midway: America's Shield***

By Scott McGaugh

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## Teacher's Guide for *USS Midway: America's Shield* Young Americans Who Influenced World History



### Note:

***USS Midway: America's Shield*** chronicles world history in the latter half of the twentieth century, told from the perspective of young sailors aboard a historic aircraft carrier. As a floating city at sea with a crew of 4,500, the *USS Midway* was a microcosm of America and its evolving values, lifestyles, and even technology between 1945 and 1992. That creates an opportunity for students to learn not only history, but elements of the social sciences as well. Primary-source research sources are available as a linked index at [www.scottmccaugh.com/resources.html](http://www.scottmccaugh.com/resources.html).

### Book Themes for Student Discussion/Activities/Writing/Research

Teenager Empowerment  
Away From Home  
Teamwork  
City at Sea  
Life at Sea  
Danger at Sea

Naval Aviation Pioneer  
Crises around the World  
The Cold War  
Vietnam War  
Operation Desert Storm  
A Variety of Missions  
Self Expression at Sea

### Teenager Empowerment

The average age of the crew of the *USS Midway* was 19. Yet with training, teamwork, and purpose, they pioneered naval aviation, led rescue missions, and sailed into harm's way.

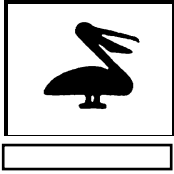
- What conclusions can you draw from the accomplishments of an aircraft carrier's crew whose average age was only 19? How was it possible?
- Why do you think the *USS Midway's* young crew was able to accomplish so much? What made that possible?

### Away from Home

At one time the *USS Midway* was away from home a record 327 days, nearly a whole year! In addition, it was the first U.S. Navy ship homeported abroad: Yokosuka, Japan.

- Interview someone you know who is married about what it would be like to be away from home for months at a time. How hard would it be? How would his/her family take care of things at home?





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- Imagine you are a sailor on the USS *Midway* and receive a letter from home about a sister who was taken to the hospital. It would be weeks before you receive another letter to find out how she is doing. How would you do your job on *Midway*? How would you cope?
- Compare and contrast a few of today's newspaper editions with those published on the USS *Midway* ([www.scottmcgaugh.com/resources.html](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/resources.html) has 7 seven editions, 1946-1991) for its crew. What would a sailor be missing when at sea? Would it matter? Why or why not?

## Teamwork

The USS *Midway*'s 40 captains faced the challenge of inspiring 4,500 men, nearly all of them strangers and mostly teenagers, to work together in impossible circumstances, always prepared for unexpected danger and the nation's call to sail into harm's way.

- Imagine you are a captain of *Midway* and responsible for 4,500 men. What would you worry about? How would you motivate them? What would your priorities be? Why?
- "Crossing the Line" is a long-standing U.S. Navy tradition. Do you think it contributes to a sense of team of the ship? Is it respectful of individuals? Why or why not?

## City at Sea

Imagine a city 1,000 feet long, 258 feet wide, and 18 stories tall. Create 2,000 rooms, make it float, and make it powerful enough that a sailor could have water skied behind it. Everything in a small town was aboard *Midway*, from hospital to TV station, where 97% of the sailors worked to enable the 3% who were pilots to fly when the nation called.

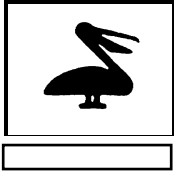
- Students select a job they could have had aboard the USS *Midway* and discuss or write a letter home about what it was like being a baker, doctor, electrician, etc., at sea.
- Visit [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Jobs.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Jobs.pdf) and review photos of actual sailors aboard the USS *Midway*. Select one and note the job he had. Write a letter home as if you were him, describing your life aboard an aircraft carrier.

## Life at Sea

Privacy is a distant memory at sea. Imagine living and learning to work with 4,500 strangers, going weeks without seeing daylight, and learning to trust that those strangers would do their jobs or risk putting everyone in danger.

- Discuss what is like to live with 4,500 strangers, sleep in a room with 200 others, and eat meals only when you are allowed to. Talk about a life with no privacy.
- Visit [www.scottmcgaugh.com/resources.html](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/resources.html) and review the actual newspapers published aboard the USS *Midway*. What do they tell you about life at sea?
- Imagine your first Thanksgiving away from home, in the middle of the ocean. Compare and contrast the USS *Midway* sailors' Thanksgiving meals in 1945 and 1991 (menus available at [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Thanksgiving.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Thanksgiving.pdf)).





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- How hard is it to adjust to a new home? Review the crew information booklet given to new sailors in 1945 ([www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Christening.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Christening.pdf)). How would you feel? What would you enjoy? What would worry you the most?

## Danger at Sea

Flying combat missions was extraordinarily dangerous. Although most pilots spent the vast majority of their careers outside of combat, they knew they could be ordered to fly against an enemy at almost any time.

- Imagine being a pilot on *Midway* and learning that one or more of your friends did not return from a combat mission. Visit [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Lost\\_Pilots.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Lost_Pilots.pdf) and read an actual account from a *Midway* pilot. Write a letter home to your parents and explain how you would feel if you lost friends while at sea.

## Naval Aviation Pioneer

The USS *Midway* taught the Navy how to fly among the icebergs and was the only ship to launch a captured German V-2 rocket, two years after World War II.

- When commissioned in 1945, the USS *Midway* was the largest, most powerful ship in the world. Imagine being a sailor assigned to this engineering marvel, and write a letter home describing your first few days aboard (An article about the new ship and a booklet issued to new sailors is located at [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/CrewBooklet.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/CrewBooklet.pdf)).
- Research the typical late-winter weather in the Greenland area. Discuss what it must have been like on the flight deck during Operation Frostbite. (1946 news coverage, cartoons are located at [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Frostbite.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Frostbite.pdf)).
- Why was it important to test a captured German V-2 rocket on the flight deck of the USS *Midway*? What do you think would have happened if the test had been a failure? (1947 news coverage located at [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Sandy.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Sandy.pdf)).

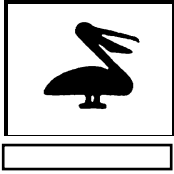


## Crises Around the World

During 47 years of service, the USS *Midway* crew responded to numerous international crises, from postwar Mediterranean turbulence to showdowns with Chairman Mao to the invasion of Kuwait.

- Make a list of the world's regions in which the USS *Midway* was deployed. Plot its course over 47 years on a world map.
- What conclusions can you draw about how the sailors of the USS *Midway* influenced international affairs between 1945 and 1992?





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## The Cold War

The USS *Midway* was the only aircraft carrier to serve the length of the Cold War and beyond.

- What do you think the author would say are the differences between the Cold War and missions that involved combat?
- What do you think *Midway* sailors would have thought about a CIA analysis of the Soviet Union during the Cold War? A 42-page declassified CIA Intelligence Estimate is available at [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/CIA.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/CIA.pdf).

## Vietnam War

Aviators aboard the USS *Midway* were hampered by restrictive “rules of engagement” and some became prisoners of war.

- *Midway* aviators suffered from restrictive “rules of engagement” and limited bombing targets. Discuss or write how you would feel if you were told to fight a war with such restrictions. Would that be fair?
- Sometimes America’s involvement in a war is not popular. How would you feel if you were a sailor on the USS *Midway* in Vietnam at a time when the war was heavily criticized at home? Could you do your job on *Midway*? Why or why not?

## Operation Desert Storm

The oldest carrier in the fleet, the USS *Midway* played a central role in Operation Desert Storm.

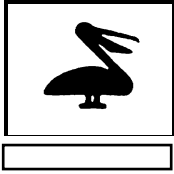
- Compare and contrast how the volunteer sailors in Operation Desert Storm must have felt, compared with the sailors during the Vietnam War who were drafted into the military.
- Compare and contrast how the USS *Midway* fought in Desert Storm (weeks of fighting) versus the Vietnam War (years of fighting).

## A Variety of Missions

The USS *Midway* was famous for some humanitarian missions, most notably Operation Frequent Wind when it rescued more than 3,000 refugees in little more than 24 hours during the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975. Its crew also made several combat deployments.

- Imagine flying combat missions into enemy territory every day for weeks at a time. How would you feel about possibly getting shot down and killed or taken prisoner? Write a diary entry about your feelings after reading how another pilot felt: [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Lost\\_Pilots.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Lost_Pilots.pdf).
- As a *Midway* sailor, write a letter home at the conclusion of Operation Frequent Wind after rescuing thousands of refugees ([www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/OFW.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/OFW.pdf)). How would you feel? Why?





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## Self-Expression & Sea

- If the USS *Midway* was a person, how do think he/she would describe 47 years of service at sea?
- If the USS *Midway* was a person, how would he/she feel in 1945? Compare and contrast that with how he/she would have felt in 1992 when she was retired?
- How would you express your feelings when living aboard a ship for months at a time? Visit [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Poems.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Poems.pdf) to read *Midway* sailors' poems. Write a poem as if you were living aboard *Midway*.
- One way that sailors expressed themselves was through tattoos. Visit [www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Tattoos.pdf](http://www.scottmcgaugh.com/images/Tattoos.pdf) to see actual tattoos of USS *Midway* sailors. What kind of tattoo would you choose if you served on *Midway*? Would you be proud of it 10 years later? Why or why not?
- If you were in charge of a reunion of sailors who served on the USS *Midway*, what would you plan? What do you think their emotions would be at the reunion? Why?
- Visit <http://my.midway.org/Page.aspx?pid=226> and <http://cv41.org> and click on "Midway Forum" where *Midway* sailors post many messages. What conclusions can you draw about how they feel about their experience aboard the USS *Midway*?

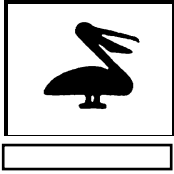
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## **USS MIDWAY** *America's Shield*

**By Scott McGaugh**

“As the captain of the USS *Midway* I was never more proud of the young men, mostly teenagers, under my command. *USS Midway: America's Shield* tells their story, straight from the flight deck. It's real American history everyone should know.”

—Rear Adm. Riley Mixson, U.S. Navy (ret.), former captain, USS *Midway*

“*USS Midway: America's Shield* carries the reader along from one great event of the latter twentieth century to another. An odyssey fueled by remarkable young men from every corner of America. An inspiration to us all!”

—Lou Reda, documentary filmmaker, History Channel

The USS *Midway* first set sail in 1945 with thousands of young men on board. By the time it made its final return to port in 1992, more than 220,000 Americans had served on the carrier. During those years, the crew—whose average age was nineteen—witnessed significant world affairs, such as Cold War espionage missions, confrontations with Mao Tse-Tung, and the liberation of Kuwait.

Beginning with World War II, this collection of memoirs chronicles individual accounts of sailors who served on the *Midway*. All of the stories offer a glimpse into the early days of the sailors' lives and detail the contributions that they made at sea. This collective biography relates their compelling tales of empowerment and optimism, while presenting America's past. More than sixty pictures provide a visual reference.

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Scott McGaugh is the marketing director of the USS *Midway* Museum and a spokesman for Midway University, the museum's education program. A veteran journalist, he has published numerous books on the *Midway* and has discussed the topic on such media outlets as the History Channel and the Discovery Channel. McGaugh is a member of the Public Relations Society of America's Counselors Academy and has received their highest national award, the Silver Anvil. In addition to studying international relations at Uppsala University in Sweden, he earned a B.S. in political science from Arizona State University. McGaugh lives in San Diego, California.

### **USS MIDWAY**

*America's Shield*

**By Scott McGaugh**

**160 pp. 6 x 9 64 b/w photos glossary index**

**HISTORY / Military / Naval**

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