

## Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

# Military to Lift Ban on Women in Combat Roles

01/24/2013

[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/jan-june12/combat\\_01-24.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/jan-june12/combat_01-24.html)

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension

PROCEDURE

### 1. WARM UP

Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

### 2. MAIN ACTIVITY

Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

### 3. DISCUSSION

Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.]

INITIATING QUESTIONS

1. **Are women allowed to fight on the frontlines of wars?**
2. **What does the term "direct ground combat" refer to?**
3. **What does the term "equal rights" mean?**

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

#### 1. **What plans did the United States military announce this week?**

The United States military announced plans this week to allow women to fight on the frontlines and hold combat roles previously reserved for men.

#### 2. **What will the new policy allow?**

The new policy will allow women to command troops on the ground and open more opportunities for promotion and career advancement.

#### 3. **What is the Joint Chiefs of Staff?**

The Joint Chiefs of Staff is a body of senior military leaders who advise the president and Defense Department.

#### 4. **When will the armed services open most positions to women?**

The armed services plan to open most positions to women by May 15.

#### 5. **What is the Direct Ground Combat Definitions and Assignment Rule?**

It is a 1994 policy called that banned women from small combat units and gave branches of the military (Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard) the power to restrict women from certain positions.

#### 6. **According to the story, women make up what percent of active military personnel?**

14 percent

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

**1. Should all jobs in the military be open to women? Why or why not?**

**2. Why do you think some military leaders were concerned about women and men serving together in combat zones? Which, if any, of these concerns are valid?**

**3. Do you think the no-combat rule violated women's rights under the Fifth Amendment? Discuss.**

**4. Young women are currently not required to register with the selective service as young men are. Should they be eligible for a draft? Why or why not?**

**Extension Activity**

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra ([extra@newshour.org](mailto:extra@newshour.org)). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.



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