

**Transcript and suggested discussion questions for the Tapes of USMC Lance Corporal Michael Baronowski.**

Rare is the opportunity to listen in on the thoughts and reactions of a soldier in the field of battle. American RadioWorks produced a segment from NPR's Lost and Found sound that featured the tapes of USMC Lance Corporal Michael Baronowski with commentary from his friend USMC Corporal Tim Duffie. Lance Corporal Baronowski's recordings, along with Corporal Duffie's commentary, present war as the combatants experienced it – the sacrifice, the bravery, and the instant that separates life and death.

The recording stands by itself but outlined here are some suggestions to help you and your students discuss the recordings. The attached transcript contains discussion questions and hyperlinked time codes to allow you to quickly select segments of the 18-minute feature to fit your class's needs and interests

**Estimated Time:**

25 – 40 minutes plus 10 – 30 minutes of prep, depending on how much of the recording you choose to use.

**Materials:**

- Computer with Internet connection and classroom speakers.
- [Real Audio Player 8.0](#) or higher

<b>Objectives for Middle and High School Students:</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will discuss the effects war has on a veteran and his or her family.</li> <li>• Students will discuss and understand the special relationship that can develop between soldiers.</li> </ul> <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will formulate their own questions about the content and techniques used in the tape and participate in a small group class discussion.</li> </ul>					
<b>Correlations with the Minnesota Graduation Standards</b>					
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Strand</b>	<b>Sub-Strand</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>
4–8	Social Studies	Historical Skills	Historical Resources	The student will begin to use historical resources.	1. Students will identify, describe, and extract information from various types of historical sources, both primary and secondary.
6–8	Language Arts	Speaking, Listening, and Viewing	Media Literacy	The student will critically analyze information found in electronic and print media, and will use a variety of these sources to learn about a topic and represent ideas.	3. Critically analyze the messages and points of view employed in different media, including advertising, news programs, web sites and documentaries.  5. Evaluate the content and effect of persuasive techniques used in print and broadcast media.
9–12	Social Studies	U.S. History	Post-War U.S., 1945 – 1972	The student will understand the Cold War, its causes, consequences and its military conflicts.	2. Students will analyze America's involvement in the Vietnam War
9–12	Language Arts	Speaking, Listening, and Viewing	Media Literacy	The student will critically analyze information found in electronic and print media, and will use a variety of these sources to learn about a topic and represent ideas.	5. Evaluate the content and effect of persuasive techniques used in print and broadcast media.  7. Critically analyze the messages and points of view employed in ... documentaries.

Sample Lesson:

**PREP:** Estimated time: 10 – 30 minutes

- 1) Access the webpage for Sound Learning’s November 2005 feature - *Revisiting Vietnam* from American RadioWorks - <http://www.soundlearning.org/features/2005/11/>
- 2) Click the link for “The Vietnam Tapes of Michael A. Baronowski” to access the full transcript and link to the audio clip.
- 3) Either...
  - a. Click on the “[Listen](#)” link near the top of the page to launch and load the RealAudio Player with the entire audio clip.
  - b. Practice clicking on the links in the transcript below to access specific sections of the clip.
- 4) Preview the audio clip, practicing advancing and “rewinding” the clip to the segments you want to use. Check that your speaker volume is high enough to reach all corners of your classroom.

**INSTRUCTION:** Estimated time: 35 – 50 minutes, dependent on how long the class continues its discussion.

- 1) Brainstorm as a class what it would be like to be not much older than they are right now, be sent to a distant country they know very little about, and be prepared to fight a determined enemy. What would fighting in a such a war be like?
- 2) After gathering impressions from the brainstorm, explain to the class that they’ll be listening to a collection of recordings made almost 40 years ago by a young, 19 year old marine with added commentary by his friend and fellow marine, Tim Duffie.
- 3) Play the entire RealAudio clip (or selected segments – see transcript below for links to specific segments).
- 4) After the clip plays, gather your students’ initial reactions. Compare them to the results of the brainstorm.
- 5) Refer to their initial thoughts about what fighting in a war would be like. Did the recording change their impressions?
- 6) Ask your students to think about what was, for them, the most compelling part of the tapes.
- 7) Use the links in the transcript below to load specific sections you’d like to discuss with your class.

ALTERNATIVE:

- 7) Model and then have your students develop a discussion question about the audio clip they just heard:
  - Identify an idea you want to discuss.
  - Form a question about the idea that starts with the words “why” or “how”; those words allow for more open-ended conversation.
- 8) Break your class in to smaller groups and have students pose their questions. After an appropriate amount of time, ask each group to summarize what they talked about and share their summaries with the rest of the class.

NOTE: The first time you click on a segment, a short fundraising message will play. This will happen only once. When you click on another link, the player will go directly to the selected segment.

Timecode	Segment	Transcript	Material for Discussion
<a href="#">0:00 - 0:35</a>	Introduction from American RadioWorks,	MICHAEL BARONOWSKI WAS A 19-YEAR-OLD MARINE when he landed in Vietnam in 1966. He brought with him a reel-to-reel tape recorder and used it to record audio letters for his family back in Norristown, Pennsylvania. He was killed in action in 1967. Baronowski's tapes were discovered in 1997. Baronowski's friend and fellow platoon-member Tim Duffie discovered the tapes and sent them to Lost & Found Sound and NPR.	Pay attention to the use of music and sounds. Try to keep these in mind as you listen to the tapes and think about how they're affecting your emotions.
<a href="#">0:35 - 0:50</a>	Introduction from Tim Duffie,	<b>Tim Duffie in Woods Hole, Massachusetts in March, 2000:</b> Every death is a tragedy and I don't buy into any given death was more tragic than the others. OK? But in, in this, of all the 58,000 tragedies, this was one that's very close to me.	
<a href="#">0:50 - 1:58</a>	The view is magnificent - Michael Baronowski sending an audio letter home to his parents, describing the terrain.	<p><b>Mike:</b> I don't know where to begin. There's so much to tell you about. We've been real lucky with the rain so far. It's rained only about four of the days we've been here. And the rest of the time, we've been busy every hour, every minute, with setting in and digging in, preparing fields of fire, clearing fields of fire, patrolling, ambushing, standing 50 percent, security at night. Stringing up barbed wire, trip flares and other goodies.</p> <p>The terrain is majestic. It's like something out of "Heidi." The view is magnificent. And just as sinister as it is magnificent. Sinister because this is the perfect terrain, the perfect country for mortar attacks and the VC have made use of it.</p>	<p>Listen to the tone of Lance Corporal Baronowski's voice. How would you describe it and his mood? Do his words match his tone?</p> <p>Why would the amount of rain they've had be so important?</p> <p>What words does he use to describe the terrain in which he is stationed? Why is he using such descriptive words?</p> <p>For pictures of the area in which Lance Corporal Baronowski was stationed, see:  <a href="http://capmarine.com/capvet/capvet/theview.htm">http://capmarine.com/capvet/capvet/theview.htm</a></p>

Timecode	Segment	Transcript	Material for Discussion
<a href="#">1:59 - 2:50</a>	More introduction from Tim Duffie.	<p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> My name is Tim Duffie. At the time I was in Vietnam, I was Corporal, Corporal Tim Duffie, United States Marine Corps, 2199108. Mike at the time, ah, was a Lance Corporal, when we were together in October and November of 1966.</p> <p><b>Mike in Vietnam 66:</b> Here's another man you'll get to know through the tapes here, if I'm able to hang on to the recorder: Mr. Tim Duffie.</p> <p><b>Tim in Vietnam 66:</b> I got to know Mike back in Okinawa. He introduced himself one night.</p> <p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> We met in Okinawa in September of 1966. Then we took the USS Iwo Jima from Okinawa down to Vietnam. Then we moved up to what was called Payable Hill, which was located between the rockpile and the razorback, approximately 4 - 5,000 yards of the demilitarized zone in Quongtri Province.</p>	
<a href="#">2:50 - 3:12</a>	EVERYTHING! This is something else!	<p><b>Mike:</b> I have the recorder here, and I'm going to try to keep it elevated off the ground and away from everything here. I'm going to try to keep it up in the air because everything I touch here eats through my skin or bites me, or rots, something. This is, this is something else. The grass will cut you. The mud will rot your skin. This is something else.</p>	Lance Corporal Baronowski goes into some detail about his natural surroundings. Why would these be so important or figure so prominently in the day-to-day life of a marine in Vietnam?
<a href="#">3:12 - 3:30</a>	Tim Duffie explains how they'd tape during his hole watch.	<p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> We were in my bunker. And what we would do was during the day, you had some free time if you were not on patrol or on operation, or whatever. So if Mike happened to have his free time while I'm on hole watch, he would come down with his tape recorder and we would tape while I'm on, you know, on hole watch.</p>	

Timecode	Segment	Transcript	Material for Discussion
<a href="#">3:30 - 5:02</a>	Comedy	<p><b>Mike:</b> This is the 35-watt voice of Station MOXE, broadcasting to you from the swamps, jungles, boondocks, and infected salad of Fort McCourt, home of the fighting first platoon of Hungry I Company.</p> <p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> I remember that, taping that comedy session. And we did it in my fighting hole. And I can see him sitting there, doing that, that tape.</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> This portion of our programming is brought to you by Twenty-Round-Burst, the candy bar voted best tax waste of the war.</p> <p>(Harmonica – Marine Corps Hymn)</p> <p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> Mike had made me go out and buy a harmonica. And he taught — he gave me one lesson, on how to hold my tongue and play one note at a time. But he knew he wanted background music for all this crazy crap, so he made me learn how to "play" the harmonica. And that's me in the background with the Marine Corps Hymn.</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> (harmonica continues) Don't be one of those unfortunates who suffer tragically from that malady sometimes referred to Viet Cong yellow striped fever. Stupe, stupe, stupefy your friends and maim your enemies, exercise your God-given right to kill or maim at a distance. It's a great feeling to know that you can wipe out your entire neighborhood. Yes, be the first kid on your block to rule the world. See your Marine Corps recruiter today.</p> <p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> I really think Mike and I were just such kindred spirits. Ironically, I don't ever remember us sitting around talking about the potential that one of us would die. You know, we just weren't sitting there waiting to die.</p>	<p>Why did Lance Corporal Baronowski make up comedy sketches to pass the time?</p> <p>How did Lance Corporal Baronowski's comedy routine reflect the stress of living in a combat zone?</p>

Timecode	Segment	Transcript	Material for Discussion
<a href="#">5:03 - 7:11</a>	Lance Corporal Baronowski to his family, his family to Lance Corporal Baronowski.	<p><b>Mike:</b> I just don't know what to say. I'm at a total loss for words here. I'm looking out of our window now, a hole in the sandbag wall in the back of the hooch. I'm looking out toward the east, out toward home. A long way from home. Actually, I guess home is closer straight down. It will be great to hear your voices again. I can't wait to get a tape. Make sure that, that when you send a tape... (fade under)</p> <p><b>Dad:</b> Just sitting here listening to your tapes while we had breakfast. Terry, Mom, Cookie and myself came up from Scranton. Sandy was working.</p> <p><b>Mom:</b> Hi Mike, trying to straighten up and get ready for Thanksgiving. I'm starting to get Daddy's lunch or dinner ready, he eats at 12 o'clock.</p> <p><b>Terry:</b> Yesterday Mom took me to see Mary Poppins and that was a really good movie and I enjoyed it very much. Take care of yourself and don't do anything I wouldn't do as everyone in school says. Bye. Terry.</p> <p><b>Cookie:</b> Hi Mike, it's Cookie. I came in to say a few words. Hello. To brighten your day. So, I'll see you Mike.</p> <p><b>Sandy:</b> I appreciate you sending the money, Mike, but it doesn't seem right for me to spend your money so I opened an account to put the money in for you when you get home. I wish you could be home for Christmas. That would be the greatest thing in the world.</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> Everybody's anxious to get home and get back to their families and their girls. But while we're over here we're not wasting away thinking about it. We're glad and proud. This where I belong, I think, more, more so than anyplace else.</p>	<p>"Hooch" is military slang for shelter, often referring to military dwellings as well as local structures.</p> <p>How would you feel if you were Lance Corporal Baronowski? You're fulfilling a mission you've trained for but you're also missing your family and your home. Are there other situations that have the same circumstances?</p> <p>What does it mean when someone speaks of a veteran's "sacrifice"?</p> <p>The tape recorder made it easier for both Lance Corporal Baronowski and his family to convey their emotions and "capture the moment". How would using today's media (email, instant messaging, etc.) make communication with your family easier or harder?</p>

Timecode	Segment	Transcript	Material for Discussion
<a href="#">7:12 - 7:48</a>	These tapes!	<p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> These tapes, I assumed these tapes were long gone. I had never even considered the possibility they'd still be around. But then I met Cookie in '97. And I couldn't believe that she had those tapes. I personally think that what he did with the tape recorder was practice. I think it would have been his portfolio when he came home. he was going in radio when he came home. And he was just going to take that around and play it, and say, see, this is what I can do.</p>	
<a href="#">7:49 - 11:38</a>	Attack	<p>[Explosion]</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> The rest of the tape here on this side are sounds as I recorded them when they called 100-percent alert, which is pretty rare.</p> <p>[More explosions]</p> <p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> The attack was officially, I guess, referred to as a probe. So what the NVA were doing is they were looking for a weakness. And that whole battle was taking place 30 yards from Mike and I.</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> [whispering] Now the word's been passed to fix bayonets. The Sarge just came running by, saying let me go get my bayonets. I can get him on this. This started to be a fun tape. I don't - it's getting too much like a 12-cent combat comic book now.</p> <p>[Artillery in background]</p> <p><b>Man:</b> Hey Carter? How many of you over there? Three of you? Three of you in that hole? OK. [explosions]</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> There's all kinds of garbage going on. We don't know whether it's outgoing or incoming. No word's passed down like that. The illumination is being kept up. Every once in a while a 60 millimeter mortar mission is called out to our left front, holding on out there. Some of this looks like a nine acre Christmas tree fire. Low peter, high explosive. You can hear the illumination being kept up there. [Boom] Those were heat rounds, high explosives. It's dark now. We're waiting for the illumination to go off. There goes the illumination. [laughs] That's the heaviest thing, a heavy feeling, sitting here in the dark with all that stuff going on. Sounds of the Enchanted Forest. [boom, boom, etc.] [machine gun fire]</p>	

Timecode	Segment	Transcript	Material for Discussion
<a href="#">7:49 - 11:38</a>	Attack (cont.)	<p>There they go. Jesus! Whoa, that was too close [boom] Air strike [boom, boom, boom] They wiped napalm all over that place. Look at that. [big boom] [singing] You're in the Pepsi generation.</p> <p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> I don't see any, any indication of fear in his voice. But we didn't know but what we were going to have to grab our rifles and M-14s or hand grenades and have at it. Because if they'd have broken through that point, then we were going to be in an all out hand-to-hand combat. And that very potential; there was no way I could have stood there and did what he did.</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> Now it's dark and quiet. Everything's been quiet for about 15 minutes now. I was just crouching down in the hole there talking to a hand grenade. I thought it was the microphone, and I realized what I was doing. And the rain is just on time. Now it will rain the rest of the night.</p> <p>[rain sound fades]</p>	(cont)  Think of the adrenaline that must have been coursing through Lance Corporal Baronowski's body. What effect did the rain have on his mood? Did he welcome the rain or dread it?
<a href="#">11:39 - 13:50</a>	How Mike dies.	<p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> My memories of how Mike died are: he was walking point, and I was in, in a squad, I was carrying a radio and I was probably five or six people back. And we were moving alongside of a Vietnamese village. And the village was deserted. I heard one shot which we knew was not an M-14. We knew it wasn't one of ours. And then two more shots, and basically that was the end of it, and somebody shouted, Mike was down. And I ran up through the fence row and I saw Mike laying off to the side on the ground. I moved up beside him and in my memory he was looking at me, and then I had run off and we dealt with the fire-fight. Then they had to set up perimeter security to bring in the medivac helicopters. And so, thinking that Mike has been wounded, I'm sitting under the tree, and I'm kind of smiling to myself. He's going home now. He's got the million-dollar wound. And I began to, kind of, in my imagination, I could see myself driving across Interstate 70, driving into Norristown. I pictured a house like I think he would live in. And I pictured myself walking up the sidewalk, and Mike sees me and he comes running out the door, and a big hug, and welcome home, and let's go to New York City. That was Our Dream.</p> <p>Then, the helicopters land and I look up, and I see four people, one on each ankle and wrist. Literally, they've, they've lifted him up like a sack of potatoes, and they're running across the field, his head was hanging back, bouncing across the, the dirt. And I started to stand up and say, that's no way to treat a wounded man, and boom, and I knew he wasn't wounded. I knew he was dead.</p> <p>[Helicopter Sound - Young girl singing in Vietnamese]</p>	"Walking point refers" to the first soldier of a 3 - 4 soldier squad or platoon who would walk ahead to perform reconnaissance, search and secure the area for the remaining members of the combat unit.  Describe the range of emotions that were probably going through Corporal Duffie's mind during this experience?



Timecode	Segment	Transcript	Material for Discussion
<a href="#">13:51 - 14:39</a>	Tim Duffie reflects on the special friendship.	<p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> If you were to take me back to the beginning of it and say, OK, now here's how it's going to end, are you sure you want to do this, if I knew, I think I'd still have to say, yeah, I want to do it again. It's not the war, it's not the cause, it's not Vietnam, it's just the, the kind of love that you get in such a short intense period of time.</p> <p>[song ends]</p> <p><b>Tim in 2000:</b> And I think I can go to his grave now. I've never done it, and take a copy of the tape and just kind of dig a little hole there and maybe we'll put one of the, a copy of the broadcast there for him. I don't know. But I think it's - I'm going to have to go tell him that it, that it worked. That he's been on the radio. He made it.</p>	<p>Corporal Duffie knew Lance Corporal Baronowski for just a few months</p> <p>Why would the friendship between soldiers, formed over just a few months, be so strong?</p>
<a href="#">14:40 - 18:00</a>	Maybe rain?	<p><b>Mike:</b> (Walking in the darkness) Well, that's my hooch, but what I usually do is to stumble and if I can find my way through the darkness, I come down here and talk to one of the men that's standing on watch here on the hill. [footsteps] This is one of my ARVN friends down here. His name is Nyen. He's sitting here with his eyes half closed. The poor guy's been on watch. How are you doing, Nyen?</p> <p><b>Nyen:</b> Fine.</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> Yeah, fine. You look like you're about to fall over. He's just sitting here on the sand bags. Right up on top. He doesn't care who's out there. Too tired to care about anything. [Vietnamese]</p> <p><b>Nyen:</b> No.</p> <p><b>Mike:</b> [Vietnamese] means "maybe rain"? And he doesn't think so. I don't think so either. There are a billion stars visible tonight. Beautiful. No smog or city smoke to cloud up the atmosphere. Almost every night it's clear, and now more and more nights aren't clear because the monsoon is fast coming. But those nights that are clear, almost every star that's visible with the human eye, I guess, is visible. It's a beautiful sight. The Milky Way and all the constellations. Of course they're a little bit different because we're on the other side of the planet looking at them from some weird cockeyed angle, I don't know. Hey, I've got some news for you. I made Meritorious Lance Corporal today. How about that? Proud of me? Wow. Did you see that shooting star, Nyen? Did you see that? Whoosh. There was a big shooting star just now. And [boom]. That was mortars. This is so much easier than writing. I can do it in the dark, of course, which is nice, except that this damn red blinker here is liable to get me zapped. So I've got my hand over it. I'm not quite as awake as I should be when I try to tape. But I just wanted to get this one off to you, while I can, so that you'll have it, and know that I'm thinking about you. I think about all of you and miss you so much. Every day. You just don't have any idea, Mom and Dad, Cookie, Sandy and Terry, how good it was to hear your voices again. It was really wonderful. That's all I can say. What else can I say? It was really great to hear you all again.</p> <p>[click]</p>	<p>ARVN - "arvin" - refers to the Army of the Republic of Viet Nam.</p> <p>From his description, how might Lance Corporal Baronowski feel about the area he is serving in?</p> <p>Did veterans from other wars have similar experience that Lance Corporal Baronowski had?</p> <p>Do you think having a tape recorder and hearing your families voices would have made it easier or harder to be there?</p> <p>Think back to how music and helicopter sounds were used.. Why did the documentary's producers emphasize them? What effects did the music and sounds have on your reaction and understanding?</p>