American history

Movie review worksheet

100 points

**Saving Private Ryan (1998)**

**Directed by:** Steven Spielberg **Run Time:** 2 hrs. 49 min.

**Plot:** Opening with the Allied invasion of Normandy on 6 June 1944, members of the 2nd Ranger Battalion under Cpt. Miller fight ashore to secure a beachhead. Amidst the fighting, two brothers are killed in action. Earlier in New Guinea, a third brother is KIA. Their mother, Mrs. Ryan, is to receive all three of the grave telegrams on the same day. The United States Army Chief of Staff, George C. Marshall, is given an opportunity to alleviate some of her grief when he learns of a fourth brother, Private James Ryan, and decides to send out 8 men (Cpt. Miller and select members from 2nd Rangers) to find him and bring him back home to his mother.

**Cast:**

Tom Hanks – Capt. John Miller

Tom Sizemore – Sgt. Mike Horvath

Edward Burns – Pvt. Richard Reiben

Barry Pepper – Pvt. Daniel Jackson

Adam Goldberg – Pvt. Stanley Mellish

Vin Diesel – Pvt. Adrian Caparzo

Giovanni Ribisi – Medic Irwin Wade

Jeremy Davies – Cpl. Timothy Upham

Matt Damon – Pvt. James Francis Ryan

**Useless Trivia:**

• In 1994, [Robert Rodat](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0734441/) was visiting a monument in Putney Corners, New Hampshire, dedicated to 8 brothers who had all been killed during the American Civil War. Inspired by the story, Rodat did some research and decided to set the story during World War II.

• The Department of Veterans Affairs set up a special 800 number to help the hundreds of former soldiers who were traumatized after seeing the film.

• In the German-dubbed version of the movie, one of the actors, himself a German

veteran of the Normandy invasion, couldn't deal with emotional realism of the film

and dropped out and had to be replaced.

• All the principal actors underwent several days of grueling army training - except

for Matt Damon, who was spared so that the other actors would resent him, and

would convey that resentment in their performances.

• The Omaha Beach scene cost $11 million to shoot and involved up to 1000 extras,

some of whom were members of the Irish Army Reserve. Of those extras, 20-30 of

them were amputees issued with prosthetic limbs to simulate soldiers having their

limbs blown off.

• 40 barrels of fake blood were utilized in the opening battle scene.

• For the initial fighting scenes in the sea, spare ammunition carried by the actors

was made from wood, as metal was too heavy.

• Total Body Count: 206

**QUESTIONAIRE (five points each)**

1. When and where are the troops landing?
2. Once the landing boats dropped the runway, what dangers did the soldiers face?
3. Once the invasion is successful, what is Captain Miller’s next mission?
4. Where were Sgt. Horvath’s cans of dirt from? (3)
5. Who’s old letter does General Marshall quote?
6. Why does Captain Miller need Cpl. Upham to come along?
7. What are the circumstances when Caparzo gets hit by the sniper?
8. What is the big surprise for the troops when the wall crumbles and falls?
9. Where is the first “Pvt. Ryan” from?
10. When Sgt. Miller finally find’s someone who knows Pvt. Ryan, why

does he have such a hard time communicating with him?

1. Why are Pvt. Ryan and others going to Ramelle?
2. When finally found and told of the situation, why won’t Pvt. Ryan leave with Sgt. Miller and his men?
3. What are sticky bombs?
4. What is the nickname given to the spot where they will make their last stand and blow the bridge?
5. Who is Alice Jardine?
6. Name the two types of German tanks at Ramelle.
7. What familiar face does Upham see at Ramelle?
8. Who are the “angels on their shoulders”?
9. What does Miller whisper to Ryan on the bridge?
10. Who is the old man at the cemetery?