

# Assessment

## Poem: Just A Common Soldier

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Using correct sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and spelling, write in the spaces provided, your interpretation of what the poet is saying:

He was getting old and paunchy and his hair was falling fast,  
And he sat around the Legion telling stories of his past.  
Of a war that he had fought in and the deeds that he had done,  
In his exploits with his buddies -- they were heroes, every one.

And tho' sometimes to his neighbors, his tales became a joke,  
All this Legion buddies listened, for they knew whereof he spoke  
But we'll hear his tales no longer, for old Bill has passed away,  
And the world's a little poorer, for the soldier died today.

He won't be mourned by many, just his children and his wife,  
For he lived an ordinary, quick and uneventful life.  
Held a job and raised a family, quietly going his own way  
And the world won't note his passing, tho' a soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state,  
While thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were great.  
Papers tell their life stories from the time that they were young,  
But the passing of a soldier goes unnoticed and unsung.

In the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land  
One guy breaks his promises and cons his fellow man.  
But the ordinary fellow, who in time of war and strife,  
Goes off to serve his country and offers up his life.

A politician's stipend and the style in which he lives  
Are sometimes disproportionate to the service that he gives.  
While the ordinary soldier who offered up his all,  
Is paid off with a medal and perhaps a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them, for it was so long ago  
That the old Bills of our country went to battle, but we know  
It was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys  
Who won for us the freedom that our country now enjoys.

A politician's stipend and the style in which he lives  
Are sometimes disproportionate to the service that he gives.  
While the ordinary soldier who offered up his all,  
Is paid off with a medal and perhaps a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them, for it was so long ago  
That the old Bills of our country went to battle, but we know  
It was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys  
Who won for us the freedom that our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger with your enemies at hand,  
Would you want a politician with his ever-shifting stand?  
Or would you prefer a soldier who has sworn to defend  
His home, his kin and country and would fight right to the end?

He was just a common soldier and his ranks are growing thin,  
But his presence should remind us we may need his likes again.  
For when countries are in conflict then we find the soldier's part  
Is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor while he's here to hear the praise,  
Then at least let's give him homage at the ending of his days.  
Perhaps just a simple headline in a paper that would say,  
"Our Country is in Mourning, For a Soldier Died Today!"



**In the space below write your personal thoughts about the poem:**

