

Name:

Day One

Soldier Moms

Part 1: Silent read

➔ Should mothers who fight in wartime lose their children? Read silently.

In 2010, women soldiers spoke out on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. They had just returned from Iraq. War was hard, they reported. However, their problems really started once they came home. They had lost custody of their children!

When soldiers go to war, they can't take their children. One mother, Eva, was sent to Iraq. She left her daughter, Sara, with her ex-husband. But when Eva came home, her ex-husband went to court. He would not let Sara move back with her mother.

Eva pleaded to get her daughter back. But the judge said her daughter had to stay with Eva's ex-husband. Eva paid for lawyers to appeal the case. After two years, she got her daughter back. "She was 9 when I left. She was 12 when I got her back," Eva reported.

Another soldier, Margaret, was serving in Iraq when she received a message from her husband. He said, "You've abandoned your family. You know, I'm done." He wanted a divorce. He also wanted custody of their three children. Margaret told Oprah that she felt helpless.

Eva is trying to change the laws. She wants to protect other soldiers like her. She points out that soldiers in wartime get their jobs back when they return. They even get phone contracts back. This mom argues that soldiers should get their children back, too.

Fear about losing their children puts a big strain on women soldiers. Can we reward their service overseas by promising they can keep their children?

Source: "Female Soldiers' Custody Battles," *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, October 13, 2010.



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// one minute

Part 2: First timed read

WPM _____

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Part 3: Comprehension and discussion

What problem do mothers face when they fight overseas?

When soldiers return from war, what do they get back?

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Part 4: Phrase-cued reading

- Read the passage **out loud** in phrases to your partner.
- Pause at each / mark for a phrase.
- Also pause at each // mark that shows the end of a sentence.

In 2010, / women soldiers spoke out on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. // They had just returned from Iraq. // War was hard, / they reported. // However, / their problems really started / once they came home. // They had lost custody of their children! //

When soldiers go to war, / they can't take their children. // One mother, / Eva, / was sent to Iraq. // She left her daughter, / Sara, / with her ex-husband. // But when Eva came home, / her ex-husband went to court. // He would not let Sara move back with her mother. //

Eva pleaded to get her daughter back. // But the judge said / her daughter had to stay with Eva's ex-husband. // Eva paid for lawyers to appeal the case. // After two years, / she got her daughter back. // "She was 9 when I left. // She was 12 when I got her back," / Eva reported. //

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Fear about losing their children / puts a big strain on women soldiers. // Can we reward their service overseas / by promising they can keep their children? //

I read the passage in phrases out loud to my partner.