

9/11 MEMORIAL

UNIT: Mourning, Memorializing, and Meaning-Making of 9/11

GRADE LEVEL/S: 11-12

TIME NEEDED: 2-3 sessions

TEACHER: Arlene Shenkus

LESSON TITLE: 9/11 MEMORIAL DESIGN

Common Core Standards

R 7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

SL 1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Key Questions/ Issues Addressed

How do you create a meaningful and appropriate memorial to commemorate 9/11?

How do other memorials convey meaning through their design?

Lesson Goals/ Objectives

Students will be able to analyze the design and compare/contrast memorials.

Students will be able to understand the often difficult choices behind the selection and design of a public commemorative memorial.

Key Terms

Architect, Memorial, Parapets

Materials

9/11 Memorial website: www.911memorial.org/memorial

Michael Arad webcast: www.911memorial.org/building-memorial-museum-0

9/11 Memorial webcam: www.911memorial.org/explore-memorial

The Avenue of the Righteous among Nations:
www1.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/commemoration.asp

Vietnam War Memorial: <http://thewall-usa.com>

Question sheet. See [Appendix A](#).

“Waterfalls cascade in first moving tribute to WTC victims” by Tom Topousis:
www.nypost.com/p/news/local/manhattan/memorial_fountains_flow_UBDbmfsTZnQXglL8bnU68I

Background for lesson

Creating a memorial to commemorate those lost in a tragic event is a difficult task. Such a memorial inevitably has many audiences and constituencies to consider, and thus, the design and construction requires much thought, discussion, and planning.

For background on the 9/11 Memorial design competition, see:
www.wtcsitememorial.org/.

**Instructional
Activity/
Procedures****9/11 Memorial Design**

1. Ask students why a community would create a memorial commemorating a tragic event. Have them discuss their different responses.
2. Ask them to brainstorm ideas for a 9/11 memorial located at the World Trade Center. *What would be the memorial's purpose? What elements would be included? Would it be abstract? Figurative? Would it tell a story? How would it honor the victims?*
3. Compile a list capturing these elements and ideas, along with reasons why they would be important/effective.
4. Research the 9/11 Memorial website for information about the 9/11 Memorial, its design, the architects, the design competition and the arrangement of the names. Listen to a webcast in which Michael Arad discusses his intent, design, and process: www.911memorial.org/building-memorial-museum-0
5. Divide the class into five groups. Assign each group one section in the “Memorial Design” section of the question sheet in [Appendix A](#).
6. Each group should provide written answers to the questions after discussing them, and prepare an oral presentation articulating their research and discussions.
7. Students will then synthesize the class’s work and compose an overview of the Memorial’s design, selection, and intent, along with the role of the process.

Components of the 9/11 Memorial design

8. Divide the class into three groups. Each group will focus on one of the three sections in part of the Question Sheet and present their findings to the class.
 - For trees, the group will go to the Yad Vashem website and write a brief report on the use of trees for the Avenue of the Righteous among Nations.
 - For water, the group will read the New York Post article and address the complexities and effects of the cascading waterfalls at the 9/11 Memorial.
 - For names, the group will visit the Vietnam War Memorial website and view the information and the names pages.
9. Lead a discussion of the similarities and differences between the designs, processes, and intents behind each memorial. In addition, consider: *What was the process for designing each? Were they contested? Why? How are each perceived now?*

**Evidence of
Understanding****Formative:**

Students will be evaluated throughout their group work and for their oral presentation.

Summative:

Students will be evaluated for their written work and for their contributions to the class

**Extension
Activities**

View and explore the 9/11 Memorial webcam on the Museum website and write a summary of the experience.

Select a memorial that wasn't discussed and write a report on its creation, design, purpose, and meaning. Share their findings with the class.

**Instructional
Activity/
Procedures**

APPENDIX A

PART I: QUESTIONS ON THE 9/11 MEMORIAL

Memorial

What is the 9/11 Memorial a tribute to?

Where is it located? How large is it?

What are the Memorial's key elements? Explain the rationale behind the Memorial design.

When did it open? Who oversaw its construction and manages its operation?

Design

What is the purpose and symbolism of the pools?

What is the role of the trees in the Memorial design? Consider both the specific tree used and the symbolism of trees more broadly.

What is a "sustainable design?" Why is this important?

"Reflecting Absence" is the name of the design. Explain how this title relates to the design of the Memorial.

Names Arrangement

Explain the placement and design of the arrangement of victims' names.

Research and articulate how the names were arranged.

Architects

Who is Michael Arad and what is his background?

Who is Peter Walker of Peter Walker & Partners and what is his background?

Design Competition

How was the design competition organized? Who ran it? Who took part? How were the submissions narrowed down?

Explain Arad's purpose and the process behind his design.

Why did the Memorial jury select this design?

PART II: KEY ELEMENTS AMONGST MEMORIALS

The Avenue of the Righteous among Nations, Yad Vashem, Israel

Write a report explaining the reasons for including the trees and the significance and meaning of the design of this memorial.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington, DC

What was Maya Lin's concept for the memorial?

How were the names obtained?

How are the names arranged on the wall?

Explain the "name criteria."

Visit the "Names on the Wall" page on the VVM website. What information is presented? What role does the page serve on the website? How does it affect you?

Waterfalls at the 9/11 Memorial

Explain the role of these waterfalls in lower Manhattan, a busy section of New York City. What were some of the challenges in building them?

What is the intended purpose of the cascading waterfalls?

What was the effect of these waterfalls once they were operational?

How do they contribute to the overall design of the Memorial?