

9/11 MEMORIAL

UNIT: Memorialization

GRADE LEVEL/S: 6-8

TIME NEEDED: 1-2 sessions

TEACHER: Milena Sherry

LESSON TITLE:

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Common Core Standards

RH 3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

RH 4 Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

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

W 1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W 2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

W 5 Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

W 10 Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences

Key Questions/ Issues Addressed

- What is the function and role of memorials?
- Do memorials last forever?
- In what ways do memorials 'bear witness' to the past?

Lesson Goals/ Objectives

- Students will examine different memorials (both domestic and foreign) to understand the purposes memorials serve.
- Students will select facts to create their own remembrance of 9/11.

Key Terms

Artifact, Honor, Memento, Memory, Point of view, Symbolism, Victim, Witness

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Materials

- Laptop
- Projector
- Internet access
- Blue paper
- Pens/markers
- Optional: Recording devices

Background for lesson
(if necessary)

Depending on the teacher's classroom needs, the students may either use class time to locate an individual or group from the 9/11 museum website or bring their facts/adjectives/descriptive words to class to complete one of the chosen activities.

Instructional Activity/Procedures

1. Provide students the following description (or a similar one of your choosing) for the students to reflect upon:
Memorials serve as a focus for a memory of something, like a person or an event.
2. With this quote as a frame, ask students: *How do we decide what/who is memorialized? What is the relationship between memorials and memories? Can we keep memories 'alive' through memorials?*
3. Highlight three memorials, leading the class in a guided analysis of their design and symbolism, along with the purpose each memorial serves: *What elements of a memorial help impart its meaning and purpose?*

Examples of memorials and questions include:

- Lincoln Memorial: What did our country want to remember and honor about President Lincoln? Was this accomplished in his memorial?
 - Taj Mahal: What did the builder want remembered? Can memorials evoke emotions in different types of people even if they don't have a direct connection to the person or event being memorialized?
 - Fallen Astronaut (on the moon): What does our country choose to honor? What does that show about our values/beliefs?
 - See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_memorials for a list of memorials.
4. Explain to students that they will research individuals directly affected by 9/11. They will then create tributes (see below for options) to these individuals incorporating symbolism to help convey meaning. Explain this will be their way to honor one of the many people affected by the events of 9/11.

Activity Choice 1: Poems

On the morning of the attack, everyone's attention was turned toward the sky. Many first-person accounts of that day mention the color and clarity of the sky. Choose a person or group you would like to honor (e.g. rescue workers; rescue dogs; victims; survivors; New Yorkers; Americans; flight attendants, etc.) Using the 9/11 Memorial website, research your person or group's experience from that day. Compile a list of 20-50 words from these resources that describe their experience(s).

Instructional Activity/ Procedures (continued)

Create either:

Poem incorporating the words and experience of your group/person.

Or

Shape poem using the outline of the New York City skyline (before/after 9/11).

Or

Acrostic poem using the name of your honored group/person .

Complete the poems using vocabulary words from your research that describe/explain/ highlight their role on 9/11 and what you would like people to remember about that day. Incorporate symbolic colors and images in and around the work.

Activity Choice 2: Walk In Someone's Shoes

Many people were affected by the events of 9/11. In order to understand their ordeal, 'walk in someone's shoes' from that day. There are numerous images of shoes left behind that morning by those escaping the collapsing towers. Use the 9/11 Memorial website to find a picture of abandoned shoes from that day. Next, create a list of 15-20 adjectives/ descriptive words located from primary source newspaper articles or first-person accounts from that morning.

Personify the pair of shoes you choose and describe their 'first-person' account of what occurred that morning. *Who do you think the shoes belonged to? What did the shoes 'witness' that morning? What would the shoes like people to remember about that day?* Illustrate your story with a picture of the shoes.

As a culminating activity, students work in pairs or groups and consider: *Is '9/11' a good descriptive title for the events of that day? Does referring to this event as '9/11' help people understand what happened? If you could rename this event to honor what occurred that day, what would you call it?* Explain how this new title reflects what you would like to be remembered about this event.

Evidence of Understanding

The activities and initial discussion will highlight students' understanding of the different roles, functions, and designs of memorials.

Extension Activities

- History often draws on the stories of those who lived through it. Become an oral historian and interview an adult about their recollections of 9/11. Capture their story using either a recording device or handwritten Q&A format. Make sure to capture 'direct quotes'. Prepare at least 10-15 questions prior to the interview. Begin with the question: *"How did you hear about the attack that morning?"*

Some questions to consider:

- What do they believe changed after 9/11?*
- What would they want people to remember from that day?*
- Do you believe their story is important?*
- Do you believe everyone's story is important to record? Why or why not?*