

9/11 MEMORIAL

UNIT: The Aftermath: Humanitarian, Charitable, and Volunteer Support

GRADE LEVEL/S: 6-8

TIME NEEDED: 2 sessions

TEACHER: Vernoy Joret Paolini

LESSON TITLE: THE PEWS AT ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL

Common Core Standards

R 7 Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

SL 6 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W 3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.

Key Questions/ Issues Addressed

Why has St. Paul's Chapel become known as a place of refuge and a "safe haven"?

What influences a society to preserve something that has been damaged rather than simply repairing and/or replacing it?

Why are symbols important and influential to individuals, communities, and nations?

What do symbols reveal about a nation's and/or an individual's values and beliefs?

Lesson Goals/ Objectives

Students will understand the history of the pews at St. Paul's Chapel.

Students will recognize the important role of the pews during 9/11 and its aftermath.

Students will develop their personal opinion regarding the restoration of the pews.

Students will determine the significance of the pews as they relate to the museum.

Key Terms

Artifact, Bucket brigade, Debris, Pew, Respite

Materials

St. Paul's Chapel website: www.trinitywallstreet.org/history

Powerpoint of chapel and pews (See attachment on website)

Alternative: Hard copy pictures

A.B. Curtiss, The Little Chapel that Stood. (OldCastle Publishing, 2003).

Background for lesson

N/A

**Instructional
Activity/
Procedures**

1. Students read and discuss the information regarding the history of the chapel and the pews: www.trinitywallstreet.org/history/
2. Review Key Terms for understanding.
3. Read the book The Little Chapel that Stood for a simple overview of events as they relate to the chapel.
4. Remind students that the chapel was saved by a “bucket brigade” from a city fire that destroyed much of New York in 1776. 225 years later, St. Paul’s was nearly destroyed again on 9/11. Ask: *How do you think the history of St. Paul’s, and particularly these two events, helped people see the church as a place of safety and peace?*
5. Read the following review of the book: “The ties of the chapel from the past to the present demonstrate (to children) that there is a future in America despite that terrible day in history.” (Source: Amazon.com by Kelly O. Donivan, El Cajon, CA). Ask students: *Do you think this quote is an accurate summation of the significance of this chapel? If so, why? If not, how would you change/reword it?*
6. Share images of St. Paul’s with the class. As you look at the pictures of the pews, think about the individuals who wore the heavy equipment that left those marks on the pews. Imagine you were there to witness the events that took place in this chapel. Write a reaction from the viewpoint of a damaged pew, focusing on what you think was going through the hearts and minds of the workers as they rested on “you.”
7. Tell students that St. Paul’s Chapel has decided to remove the pews and replace them with free-standing chairs.
 - *How do you feel about this decision?*
 - *Do you think that these objects should have been preserved? Why/why not?*
 - *What emotional value do the pews have in their damaged state?*
 - *Do you think they should remain in the chapel or should be restricted to display in the museum? Why?*
 - *Why do you think they decided to replace the pews with free-standing chairs?*
8. Expand the conversation to other sites: *What other buildings, churches, parks, etc. symbolize a memorable day or event in American history? Are there any memorials or museums in your local area that represent an historical event? Find out more about that place to share with other students. Why do we create such memorials and museums?*
9. Encourage students to interview adults about the pews, sharing with them the history. Establish discussion questions prior to the interviews. Share those interviews with the class and discuss.

Evidence of Understanding

Oral participation in class discussions.

Written reaction/responses to Question 6.

Evidence of critical thinking in oral and written responses.

Extension Activities

The Little Chapel that Stood is written in rhymes. Write a reaction from the pew's point of view using that same format.

Reflect on the questions posed in Questions 7 and 8. Have a classroom debate, with each side being given time to research facts that support their opinion. Stress respect for others and good listening skills during this process. Include a summary from each side posing the question: *Has your opinion changed from what you have heard from others? Why or why not? How has your opinion changed? Was there one thing that stands out that influenced this change?*

Create a classroom display focusing on local sites that were established as memorials or museums. Be sure to include the history and significance of each site. Invite other classes and adults to view your exhibit. Consider sharing it with the community through a show at a local library.

Read the book Light at Ground Zero by Krystyna Sanderson. Paraphrasing an old saying, "a picture is worth a thousand words," the photos in this book are an excellent illustration of what happened at St. Paul's following the attack on 9/11. It also includes photos of workers and volunteers sleeping and resting in the pews, etc.

Note: The teacher should be aware that the commentary in this book reflects a religious perspective.