

English Lesson Plan

MEMORIAL MAPPING: TRANSNATIONAL 9/11 MEMORIALS

LESSON OVERVIEW

In this lesson students will examine and analyze the many 9/11 memorials outside of the United States-- transnational 9/11 memorials-- using the digital scholarship website memorialmapping.com. Using this online interface, students will be able to explore these memorials on both a broad level using the interactive global memorial mapping tool, but also on a more detailed and specific level using the pages dedicated to each memorial. Through this online tool, students will gain insight into how different rhetorical arguments and rhetorical devices are used to make arguments about historical memory in different societies.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Develop a clear understanding of different viewpoints presented in primary sources
- Understand the rhetorical arguments of logos, pathos, ethos, and kairos as they apply to memorialization in a transnational world.

NUMBER OF CLASS PERIODS

One 45-minute class period

GRADE LEVEL

Grades 8-12

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.3 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.3.a - Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6

Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

On September 11, 2001, a group of nineteen terrorists attacked the United States. In separate yet coordinated incidents, they hijacked four airplanes in mid-flight. They flew two of these planes into the two skyscrapers of New York's World Trade Center in Lower Manhattan, which destroyed the buildings and much of the surrounding neighborhood. They flew another plane into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia. A fourth plane, originally intended to target either the White House or the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., crashed in a remote hillside location near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. In total, 2,996 people were killed in the 9/11 attacks, including 246 people on the four airplanes, 2,606 in the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center, and 125 people at the Pentagon. Overall, people from 92 countries died in the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Accordingly, the global circulation of 9/11 memorials is unusual, as permanent commemorations of the tragedies of particular nations are typically confined to those nations. This pilot project, Memorial Mapping: Transnational 9/11 Memorials explores where and why these memorials were made, and what implications they have on different cultures' priorities, values, and identities.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Most transnational 9/11 memorials feature a combination of text, or words, and images, which generate powerful and persuasive arguments about memory, history, and identity. How is language used in transnational 9/11 memorials? What rhetorical devices and arguments are most common in these memorials?

MATERIALS

- Laptop, tablet, or desktop where students can access <http://www.memorialmapping.com/>
- Projector for teacher to display his or her screen

PROCEDURE

1. Students jot responses to these questions written on the board using digital or paper notes:
 - Do you remember 9/11? What is your first memory of 9/11?
 - How many countries do you think lost one or more citizen on 9/11?
 - i. 92 countries
 - What is the point of making a memorial?
2. Have the students think-pair-share their answers.
3. Discuss historical memory and memorials from an American Studies perspective. Introduce historical memory as a cultural force and literary phenomenon that can shape the past, present, and future.
 - The *International Encyclopedia of Political Science* states, “The concept of ‘historical memory,’ often expressed as ‘collective memory,’ ‘social memory,’ or for political scientists, ‘the politics of memory,’ refers to the ways in which groups, collectivities, and nations construct and identify with particular narratives about historical periods or events. Historical memories are foundational to social and political identities and are also often reshaped in relation to the present historical-political moment.”
 - i. Question to class: What has been the “present historical-political moment” at home and abroad in the time between 9/11 and now-- when these memorials were being constructed?
 - In her book *Memorial Mania*, Erika Doss states, “At the most basic level, memorials are designed to recognize and preserve memories. They are typically understood as acts and gifts that honor particular people and historical events.” She then discusses the widespread use of memorials around the world today. Doss states, “Their omnipresence can be explained by what I call *memorial mania*: an obsession with issues of memory and history and an urgent desire to express and claim those issues in visibly public contexts... Driven by heated struggles over self-definition, national purpose, and the politics of representation, memorial mania is especially shaped by the affective conditions of public life.”

- i. Question to class: What are different ways that different groups of people make arguments about their individual and collective identity and purpose?
- In another book titled *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Memorials*, Erika Doss states, “Understood as collective social ritual, redemptive agent, subaltern expression, and/or mode of identity politics, memory’s montage of meanings dominate contemporary cultural sensibilities.”
 - i. Question to class: What are some of America’s “cultural sensibilities?” What other pieces of cultural work are products of certain time periods’ “cultural sensibilities?”
- 4. Allow students to explore the website for 10-15 minutes. Guide them to the “Map” page and the “Memorials by Country” page. While they do so, put the list of relevant memorials and the guiding questions on the shared screen and have them look for the answers on the site.
 - Pay special attention to these especially relevant memorials and their text:
 - i. São Paulo 9/11 Plaque - São Paulo, Brazil
 - ii. 2011 Calgary Airport 9/11 Memorial Plaque
 - iii. 2003 Calgary Airport 9/11 Memorial Plaque
 - iv. Thanks and Remembrance - Toronto, Ontario, Canada
 - v. Prague Firefighters' Memorial - Prague, Czech Republic
 - vi. Father Mychal Judge 9/11 Memorial - Keshcarrigan, Ireland
 - vii. 9/11 Living Memorial Plaza - Ramot, Jerusalem, Israel
 - viii. Twin Towers Monument - Rome, Italy
 - ix. Gdynia 9/11 Memorial - Gdynia, Poland
 - x. Mtskheta 9/11 Memorial - Mtskheta, Republic of Georgia
 - xi. Staffordshire Twin Towers Memorial - Alrewas, England, United Kingdom
 - xii. Garden of Hope - Portsmouth, Hampshire, England, United Kingdom
 - What sort of language is used in these memorials? Are there recurring words or themes that are used?
 - How does the text detract or add to the physical memorial?
 - Which rhetorical strategies are most relevant to these memorials and which are least relevant?
 - i. Logos- logical appeal, or an appeal to reason
 - ii. Pathos- appeal to an audience’s values and emotions
 - iii. Ethos- appeal to character or identity of a community
 - iv. Kairos- timeless appeal
- 5. After students have had time to explore the website, reassemble as a group. Reflect on what they learned by exploring the website and go over the guiding questions. Discuss these follow-up questions:
 - Who should be responsible for writing the text for these memorials?

- What arguments do these memorials' texts make about different countries' identities and priorities?
- Logos is noticeably absent in these texts. What affect has this had on cultural identity and domestic and international politics?

ASSESSMENT AND SUMMARY

Divide students into groups of 3. Once in groups, students are to write text for a local memorial of their choosing that is no less than 150 words. After they are finished, groups will share their text on the projector and explain which rhetorical arguments and devices they used in their work.

ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT OPTION

Using a specific event other than 9/11 as a case student, write a 500 word essay examining the historical memory surrounding this event. Be sure to include which rhetorical arguments are used, how they are used, and if they were convincing.

CITATIONS AND ADDITIONAL READING MATERIALS

Doss, Erika. *Memorial Mania*. Chicago and London: the University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Doss, Erika. *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008.

Hite, Katherine. "Historical Memory." In *International Encyclopedia of Political Science*, edited by Bertrand BadieDirk Berg-Schlosser and Leonardo Morlino, 1079-1082. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2011.