3.6 COLLECTIVE MEMORY: MEMORIALS AND MONUMENTS

How do memorials and monuments reflect a society's values and history?

C3 Framework Indicator	**D1.5.9-12.** Determine kinds of sources. **D2.His.7.9-12.** Explain how the perspectives of people in the present shape interpretations of the past. **D2.His.11.9-12.** Critique the usefulness of historical sources for a specific historical inquiry based on their maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose. **D3.1.9-12.** Gather relevant information from multiple sources **D4.1.9-12.** Construct arguments.
Staging the Compelling Question	Students will learn the ways in which memorials and monuments reflect a society's values and history.

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
How do the memorials in our capital show which parts of history we value?	How do the memorials and monuments in Berlin reflect ways that people in Germany acknowledge and remember their country's past?	How does a memorial reflect the memorial designer's own time and place or *zeitgeist*?
Formative Performance Task	**Formative Performance Task**	**Formative Performance Task**
Each student will select one memorials or monuments and research specific listed elements.	Ask student pairs to choose a memorial and to research the event or subject it commemorates focusing on the listed questions.	Distribute the Call for Submissions. Students will design their own German Reunification Memorial.
Featured Sources	**Featured Sources**	**Featured Sources**
Source A: *WorldWeb.com* **Source B:** *Veterans Affairs Canada* **Source C:** *Destination DC* **Source D:** *NPS.gov*	**Source A:** Berlin Memorials and Monuments PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 3.6.1**)	**Source A:** Call for Submissions: German Reunification Monument Project (**Handout 3.6.2**)

Summative Performance Task	**Argument:** Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical or contemporary sources while acknowledging competing views.
	Extension: Students will create a chart listing the pros and cons of removing Confederate Memorials and placing them in 'Memory Parks."
Taking Informed Action	**Understand:** Memorials and monuments are a great way to commemorate our past.
	Assess: Investigate the memorials and monuments that exist in your community or state.
	Act: Write to your local legislators to share your ideas with them.

COMPELLING QUESTION

- **How do memorials and monuments reflect a society's values and history?**

INQUIRY OVERVIEW

This inquiry examines the ways in which memorials and monuments reflect a society's values and history. Students will select an existing memorial or monument and research the event or subject it commemorates and its design. After researching the history of German Reunification, students will have an opportunity to design their own memorial to commemorate one aspect of this event.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

One way people remember the past is by building memorials or monuments that act as bridges to the past, reflecting a society's collective memory—a memory or memories shared or recollected by a group, as a community or culture. We must understand that cultures are not stagnant, and that they are constantly reevaluating and remaking themselves and the stories told about their pasts. Monuments are intentional and purposeful creations designed to provide a bridge to the past, to lives, and to events.

Throughout Germany there are many memorials and monuments that reflect the collective memory of people in Germany. Some are buildings, such as Sans Souci, the Palace of Frederick the Great, located in Potsdam (near Berlin). Others are as simple as the rose-colored *Litfaß* column (advertising column) on *Rosenstraße* dedicated to the demonstration of German women protesting the arrest of their Jewish husbands, or the bust of Sophie Scholl in the classroom building at the University of Munich, where a white rose is placed in a vase each day as a memorial to the White Rose Resistance Movement during World War II.

A memorial prompts people to contemplate the significance of an event or person. The creation of a memorial often stimulates public debate because individuals and groups have different views of the events, people, or ideas to be memorialized. Memorials may take the form of concrete monuments, historic buildings, and even locations. Memorial design reflects the point of view, values and perspectives of the artist, as well as a society's collective memory.

Traditional monuments focus on courage in war or battle or on an individual who made a difference in society. Since memorials reflect the memorial designer's own time and place, or *zeitgeist*, they have become more abstract over the past few decades. If the purpose of a monument or memorial is to keep memories alive, does the type of public art used, realistic vs. abstract, matter?

***Note:** *Throughout this inquiry the terms memorial and monument are used more or less interchangeably.*

TIME: 4–5 45 minute class periods

CONCEPTS LIST

- Monument
- Memorial
- Collective memory
- *Zeitgeist*

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

- Berlin Memorials and Monuments PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 3.6.1**)
- Call for Submissions: German Reunification Project (**Handout 3.6.2**)
- Balko, Radley. "We should treat Confederate monuments the way Moscow and Budapest have treated communist statues." *The Washington Post*, 26 June 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-watch/wp/2017/06/26/we-should-treat-confederate-monuments-the-way-moscow-and-budapest-have-treated-communist-statutes/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d027abd3bcc1.
- "Memorials in Canada." *Veterans Affairs Canada*, 14 February 2019, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canada/.
- "Monuments and Memorials." *Destination DC*, 2019, http://Washington.org/find-dc-listings/monuments-memorials/.
- "National Mall and Memorial Parks." *NPS.gov*, http://www.nps.gov/nama/index.htm/.
- "Ottawa Memorials and Monuments." *WorldWeb.com*, 2017, http://www.ottawa.worldweb.com/SightsAttractions/MemorialsMonuments/.

All handouts can be found at **www.goethe.de/germanyinfocus**

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

What is a memorial or monument? Develop a working definition as a class. Then create a list of memorials and monuments in your country's capital.

SUPPORTING QUESTION #1

How do the memorials in our capital show which parts of history we value?

➤ Formative Performance Task

- Ask each student to select one of the memorials or monuments listed in the Introductory Activity and research: who designed it, when it was built (and the relevant historical context), why it was built, and who the target audience was. They should consider how that memorial has shaped people's understanding of the past and write one paragraph describing how that memorial reflects or shapes our collective memory about that particular topic.
- Next, divide the class into triads. Each student will exchange information about his/her research and results with triad members. The triad should discuss what the memorials researched might indicate about the parts of your country's history that is valued.

➤ Resources

Canada:

- "Ottawa Memorials and Monuments." *WorldWeb.com*, 2017, http://www.ottawa.worldweb.com/SightsAttractions/MemorialsMonuments/.
- "Memorials in Canada." *Veterans Affairs Canada*, 14 February 2019, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/memorials/canada/.

United States:

- "Monuments and Memorials." *Destination DC*, 2019, http://Washington.org/find-dc-listings/monuments-memorials/.
- "National Mall and Memorial Parks." *NPS.gov*, http://www.nps.gov/nama/index.htm/.

SUPPORTING QUESTION #2

How do the memorials and monuments in Berlin reflect ways that people in Germany acknowledge and remember their country's past?

➤ Formative Performance Task

Show the "Berlin Memorials and Monuments" **PowerPoint 3.6.1**. Ask student triads to choose a memorial and to research the event or subject it commemorates focusing on the following:

- What event or subject is memorialized, and what is its history?
- What is the memorial's design? Is it realistic or abstract? Describe it.
- When was the memorial built and was there any controversy surrounding it?
- Where is the memorial located, and what is the relationship of the site to the event or subject?
- What is the purpose of the memorial?
- What feeling(s) might the memorial evoke in visitors?
- How effective is the memorial in conveying the memory of the event or people memorialized? Explain why you feel this way.

Using what they have learned students will design a presentation to share with your class. (PowerPoint, exhibit board etc.)

➤ Resources

- Berlin Memorials and Monuments PowerPoint (**PowerPoint 3.6.1**)
- Access to the Internet.

SUPPORTING QUESTION #3

How does a memorial reflect the memorial designer's own time and place or zeitgeist*?*

➤ Formative Performance Task

Distribute the Call for Submissions: (**Handout 3.6.2**) German Reunification Memorial. Ask students to stay in triads. Each group should complete the assignment and create their own German Reunification Memorial. Once groups have finished they will present their models to the class. As classmates listen to a presentation they should consider the following questions:

- What are your feelings when you view the memorial?
- How effective is the memorial in conveying German reunification?
- How does the memorial reflect the *zeitgeist* of its designers?

As a class discuss how each triad's perception of the memorialized event is similar and how they are different.

➤ Resources

- Call for Submissions: German Reunification Monument Project (**Handout 3.6.2**)
- Access to the Internet.

☑ SUMMATIVE PERFORMANCE TASK

How do memorials and monuments reflect a society's values and history?

Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from historical or contemporary sources while acknowledging competing views.

EXTENSION (OPTIONAL) TASK

After reading *The Washington Post* article "We should treat Confederate monuments the way Moscow and Budapest have treated communist statues," students will create a chart listing the pros and cons of removing Confederate Memorials and placing them in "Memory Parks."

➤ Resources

- Balko, Radley. "We should treat Confederate monuments the way Moscow and Budapest have treated communist statues." *The Washington Post*, 26 June 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-watch/wp/2017/06/26/we-should-treat-confederate-monuments-the-way-moscow-and-budapest-have-treated-communist-statutes/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.d027abd3bcc1.

TAKING INFORMED ACTION

UNDERSTAND Memorials and monuments are a great way to commemorate our past. However, not all groups remember the past or associate the present in the same way.

ASSESS Investigate the memorials and monuments that exist in your community or state. What do they say about your society's collective memory? Are these memorials still relevant today? Are there any figures in your community who should be commemorated but are not?

ACT Write to your local legislators to share your ideas with them.

This lesson was adapted from the work of 2008 TOP Fellow Jacqueline Littlefield.