

Interwar and Holocaust Group

The Power of Memorials

Group Members-

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Lesson is adaptable by teacher for grades 6-12

This lesson is for units on the Holocaust or other conflicts

This lesson will take at least 4-5 periods to do - there are many additional suggested activities and also the teacher can select the level or complexity of the work and that will add to the length of the lesson.

This lesson came out of our experience in Budapest looking at a variety of Memorials and hearing about the controversy involved in their creation and ongoing discussions. We thought it would be a great way to discuss this to have the students watch a Centropa film and create a memorial for a person in that film. We chose "Love on an Airplane" and "The Mayor Who Worked in Hell" as the two films teachers may use. Teachers are also encouraged to use the Centropa photo data base as a resource for other memorial photos. Search with "memorials". At the end teachers are encouraged to share out their students' work on the Border Jumping site and look at, with their class, the work of other students.

Enduring Understanding -

Memorials are both personal and political, and reflect the point of view of those who make them.

Essential/Guiding Questions -

How do different populations commemorate victims of the Holocaust?

How is history/memory manipulated through memorialization?

Goals

- Students will understand that the way in which a community memorializes the victims of the Holocaust from their area is a reflection of both personal feelings and political doctrine. (Used for propaganda)

- students will design a memorial and compare and contrast theirs with their classmates designs for the same person.

- students will think critically about the events in a person's life and death and how to respectfully memorialize that person.

Suggestion for older kids- a point of view assigned by the teacher to complicate their thinking - (family, government, Jewish Community)

Centropa Resources used - Kinski story or Domonokos story - film and additional biographic materials, photo database for memorial photos

Steps -

Tuning in -

Materials - note taking materials for students - slide show of memorials and information about each of them. slide show should contain at least on example of multiple monuments from the same country/community that present a different point of view about the Holocaust/victims.

Show students slides of a variety of Holocaust memorials - ask them to write down their thoughts about what is being memorialized and how/what the memorial makes them think and/or feel.

After going through all the slides, go back to the beginning and discuss their impressions for each picture. Ask which ones they liked/didn't like and why. Discuss different styles - more formal versus artistic.

Either after each picture has been discussed, or after all of them have been discussed, go through them and tell the students about each memorial. Where is it, what does it show, why, is there controversy about it

Discuss what this has shown about monuments.

Finding out -

Show the students the Enduring Understanding and Essential questions. (You can do this before the tuning in if you feel that would be easier for your students)

Provide some context about the debate/controversy connected to some memorials. Discuss the process of designing a monument and perhaps why the ones they saw are all so different even though they are all about the Holocaust.

Explain that they are going to learn about someone who was a victim of the Holocaust and be asked to create a memorial for that person.

Show the film "Love on a Paper Airplane" or "The Mayor who Worked in Hell" - students should watch the film once without taking notes and then watch a second time to take notes - you could discuss the story between viewings and answer questions.

Ask students to take notes on the story with the designing of a memorial for Imre or Mikas

Going Further

Tell the students that they are now going to work in small groups to design a memorial for Imre/Mikos. They will do this work in small groups. They will be required to submit a design

and a written explanation of why they chose this design and how it represents Imre/Mikos. (Requirements for writing/design/model can be determined by age of students/length of unit - students could also have to build a model based on the design of their monument if there is time for this.)

Students should be shown where the information about the Kinski family/Mikos is on centropa.org and encouraged to use this if they need more information to make their design. (If that student film we saw is available we could show it as well)

Divide students into small groups and have them get to work. Group size should be 2-4 for most efficient working.

Students should take their notes about the film with them to their group and these should provide the basis for their initial discussion and brain storming of ideas. Using what they learned from the film and the website, they should then decide on a design and the reasons that they made that choice. Work can then be divided into design and writing.

Students will share out to the class their final design rendering and their reasoning for this design. Written work and design would be submitted for assessment.

Final Reflection

- have students reflect - either in writing or in a class discussion - about what they have learned from seeing their classmates designs compared to their own. What do they think accounts for the differences? How were they the same? Were any of them particularly different or creative? How did they make their choices? What was most important to include? Did any groups have the same reasons but a very different outcome in design?

Extras for older kids or if you have more time -

- vote on the best/favorite design and build it as a class.
- have students research monuments in original PowerPoint (Tuning in) rather than giving them the information. They would then present their findings.
- Discuss how what they have learned might explain the lack of memorials in some communities or for certain events. (During tour of Belgrade the guide mentioned several times that there were no plaques for various important places)
- Discuss/research expected behavior at different monuments. Who gets to decide? The Berlin Monument to the Murdered Jews is a great example - you can find resources on the debate between expectations of the Jewish community and the opinion of the artist.

Teachers are encouraged to exchange their students designs with other schools via the Border Jumping site so that we can look at how other countries think about memorials and what is different or the same.