

Memories of War

Lesson Plan

Overview – This lesson invites students to think critically about the way in which we memorialize war. Starting with the concept of a war memorial, students analyze a series of war memorials drawn from diverse historical contexts, and interpret some of the fundamental messages encoded within monuments. Students also conduct independent research into Canadian war memorials and their messages, ultimately crafting their own war memorial based on their choice of a significant Canadian person, place or event related to World War I, II, or the Korean War.

Learning expectations/competencies/outcomes for the lesson plan –

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Define concepts in a logical manner.
- Interpret text and subtext in the art of monuments.
- Develop a hypothesis concerning the way in which different societies throughout history have regarded wars and veterans.
- Investigate the ways in which Canadians have sought to remember Canada's role in the world wars and the Korean War, and the veterans involved in these wars.
- Design a war memorial that seeks to communicate a specific set of meanings about a Canadian person, place or event significant to these wars.

Duration of the lesson – Class time: 300 minutes + research time

Required Materials/Preparation –

1. Parks Canada lesson plan
2. OHP, data projector, or photocopied handouts:
 - a. 6 Rules of Definition (1 page)
 - b. Sample Definitions (*War and Memorial*) (2 pages)
 - c. War Memorial Exhibits (printable .pdf and PowerPoint)
 - d. Reading Symbols: Surface and Deeper Meanings (1 page)
 - e. War Memorial Summaries (7 pages)
 - f. Selected Resources (3 pages)
 - g. War Memorial Design Worksheet (1 page)
3. Internet access for student research (see “Selected Resources”)

Teacher Background –

This lesson is self-contained, and does not require any significant prior knowledge on the part of students. The activation of some general historical knowledge is to be expected, however, particularly when the students review the war memorial exhibits. Teachers should prepare by reviewing all of the materials, and may wish to do a little additional reading concerning the historical contexts of the war memorial exhibits. Reviewing the information links provided for student research is also advised.

Procedure -

I. PRIMER:

Have the students listen to the voices of Canadian Veterans from WWI, WWII, and the Korean War, either as a whole class or at individual workstations.

Questions for discussion:

- How do these veterans characterize their experiences of war? Heroic? Chaotic? Interesting? Frightening?
- How do they refer to their comrades? The enemy?
- What significance do veterans' stories have for Canadians who have grown up without experiencing war directly?

Resources:

Veterans Recollect

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/sub.cfm?source=feature/week2003/youth2003/recollect03>

II. DEFINING A CONCEPT

1. Begin by asking students individually to write a definition of the concept *war* and then elicit responses. Many students experience difficulty defining concepts, particularly abstract concepts, and most probably have never been shown the characteristics of a good definition. The following **6 Rules of Definition** are taken from David Kelley's The Art of Reasoning with Symbolic Logic (1990). Share these rules with the students and have them evaluate and re-write their definitions in small groups, so that each group provides a single definition. Elicit the results and evaluate as a class, attempting to reach a consensus.

- i. A definition should include a *genus* and a *differentia*.

Good: A dog is an *animal with four legs that barks*.

Bad: A dog is when...

A dog is like...

ii. A definition should not be too broad or too narrow.

Broad: A dog is an animal with four legs.

Narrow: A dog is a furry animal with four legs that barks and is named Rex.

iii. A definition should state the concept's essential attributes.

Non-essential: A dog is an animal that is a companion.

iv. A definition should not be circular.

A dog is a canine.

Folly is an act that is foolish.

v. A definition should not use negative terms unnecessarily.

A dog is not a cat.

vi. A definition should not use vague, obscure, or metaphorical language.

Maturity is the state of psychological development in which a person becomes well-adjusted.

Death is the cessation of one's participation in finitude.

Life is a cabaret.

2. Once the groups have presented their definitions of war, it might be worthwhile comparing other commonly used definitions:

(a) War is "an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will."

Carl von Clausewitz, On War, Michael Howard and Peter Paret, trans, & ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 75.

- (b) “War [is] an *actual, intentional* and *widespread* armed conflict between political communities.”
Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
(<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/war/>)
- (c) “War ... is an armed conflict with at least 1,000 military battle deaths, where at least one of the parties is the government of a state.”
The Nobel Foundation
(<http://nobelprize.org/peace/educational/conflictmap/about.html>)
- (d) War is “Hostile contention by means of armed forces, carried on between nations, states, or rulers, or between parties in the same nation or state; the employment of armed forces against a foreign power, or against an opposing party in the state.”
Oxford English Dictionary vol. XII (1933), p. 79.
- (e) “An armed conflict¹ [is] a political conflict in which armed combat involves the armed forces of at least one state (or one or more armed factions seeking to gain control of all or part of the state), and in which at least 1,000 people have been killed by the fighting during the course of the conflict.”
Project Ploughshares, The Ploughshares Monitor Summer 2004, volume 25, no. 2. The 2004 Armed Conflicts Report
(<http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/monitor/monj04c.htm>).
- (f) “A ‘major armed conflict’ is defined as the use of armed force between the military forces of two or more governments, or of one government and at least one organized armed group, resulting in the battle-related deaths of at least 1000 people in any single calendar year and in which the incompatibility concerns control of government and/or territory.”
Patterns of Major Armed Conflicts, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
(http://www.sipri.org/contents/conflict/MAC_patterns.html)

Note: The term ‘war’ has Germanic roots (*werra* = confusion, strife).

3. Have students define the term *war memorial*. Again, their definitions should follow the **6 Rules**, and to be complete should identify the main purpose or function of a war memorial. Follow up by sharing and evaluating definitions. This time, the class must reach a consensus on how to define this term. **Critically, encourage students to explore the question of *why* we memorialize war.** Ensure that everyone records the

¹ Many scholars and organizations use this term in an effort to create a more concrete definition than one could for war, which has a broader range of meanings (e.g. a card game, a ‘price war’, the ‘war on drugs’).

resulting definition, as it will form the basis of the evaluation scheme later in the lesson.

Some other definitions of memorial include:

- (a) “Something, such as a monument or holiday, intended to celebrate or honor the memory of a person or an event.”
The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 4th Edition (2000) Houghton Mifflin Company.
- (b) “Preserving the memory of a person or thing; often applied to an object set up, [or] a festival (or the like) instituted, to commemorate an event or a person.”
Oxford English Dictionary vol. VI (1933), p. 330.
- (c) “A structure erected to commemorate persons or events.”
WordNet 2.1 Princeton University
(<http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn>)

Note: The term ‘memorial’ has Latin roots (*memoria* = memory).

III. WAR MEMORIALS THROUGHOUT HISTORY

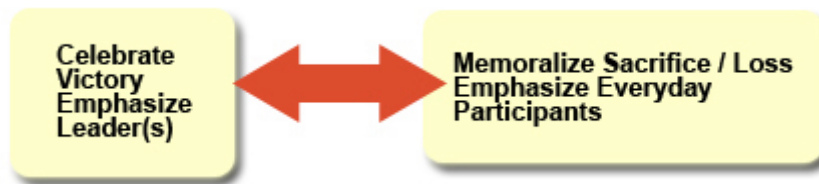
1. Distribute the numbered **War Memorial Exhibits** (PDF). This handout contains 12 examples of war memorials throughout history, one per page. The memorials are numbered in chronological order by date of construction, but are untitled. Students may work in small groups or individually with the worksheet, **Reading Symbols: Surface and Deeper Meanings**. As the exhibits circulate, have students generate hypotheses to answer the following questions for each exhibit:
 - On the Surface
 - What is it?
 - Where is it, who built it, and why? (Can you identify its specific historical context?)
 - Deeper Meanings
 - In one sentence, how would you interpret this monument’s core message?
2. After the students have seen all of the exhibits, review them one by one using the **War Memorial Exhibits** Powerpoint presentation, answering the surface questions and probing for the deeper meanings. Through discussion, elicit students’ interpretations of each monument’s core message, reinforcing the connection between the ideas being communicated and the symbols employed to carry those ideas. Either

student groups or the teacher may facilitate. If students are facilitating, the **War Memorial Summaries** may be cut along dotted lines and given to student groups. Each summary also includes a short list of 'Additional Facts' to stimulate interest and aid memory.²

3. Provide student groups with the complete **War Memorial Summaries** handout (7 p.), which contain a description and a small image of each monument. Invite the groups to:
 - i. Classify the memorials according to similarities and differences. What patterns exist and why?
 - ii. Evaluate the memorials in terms of their 'effectiveness'. Which do they like the best, which best match the class definition of a war memorial, and why?
4. Facilitate a class discussion around these two questions, using the class-generated definition of a war memorial as a tool for evaluating the exhibits.

Points to consider:

- There are many ways of classifying these exhibits. Encourage students to move beyond superficial classification schemes (e.g. schemes based solely on date of construction, location, or size) and concentrate on the deeper meanings.
- Arguably, these monuments articulate two distinctly different sets of ideas:



Examples:

1. Tutmosis
3. Arch of Titus
4. Arc de Triomphe
5. Nelson's Column

Unknown Warrior

Memorial

Memorial

Examples:

2. Mourning Athena
6. Tomb of
7. Canadian Nat. War
8. Hiroshima Peace

² Teachers may choose to use these facts in the review process. For instance, encourage the groups reporting on a specific memorial to invent 'false facts' in addition to these, and have the other students try to distinguish truth from fiction.

11. Hands of Victory

10. Hill of Glory

12. Nanjing

9. US Marine Corps
(contains elements
of both)

- Encourage students to contemplate the reasons behind these (and other) patterns. What kinds of societies produced these monuments? What kind of wars? What kind of governments? What kinds of values?
- If different societies memorialize war differently, how and why should Canadians memorialize war?

IV. CANADIAN WAR MEMORIALS

Canadians, like other peoples through history, have known war all too well. Canadians have also struggled with the meaning of war while attempting to remember the hardships and sacrifices of all those whose lives have been scarred by war. War memorials in their myriad forms abound from our smallest towns to our largest cities. In this part of the lesson, students are encouraged to conduct an independent investigation into a war memorial of their choice.

Students should examine these Canadian memorials in the same way they examined the exhibits above, and report to the class with the following information:

- (a) Historical context (What was the war? When, why, where and by whom was it fought?)
- (b) Core meanings and symbolic representations (What is the message and how is it communicated?)
- (c) Evaluation (Does the memorial 'work'? Why or why not?)

As much as possible, encourage students to find and investigate the memorials themselves. These memorials may be just down the street, and accessible on foot, or far away and accessible only through the Internet. A **Selected Resources** list is provided.³

Points to consider:

- Exactly what constitutes a war memorial for the purposes of this investigation is largely at the teacher's discretion. It will also depend to some degree on the class-generated definition of a

³ Link to "Commemorating Canada's History" on the **Selected Resources** list may be of particular use in demonstrating the range of people, places, and events that the Canadian government has commemorated.

war memorial. Students need not limit their studies to statues and plaques. Museum exhibits, art, archival materials, and even people's stories and writings might fit the definition of a war memorial.

- In evaluating their war memorials, students should be made aware that Canadians' values have evolved and are continuing to evolve. Some earlier memorials – for example, those constructed during or immediately after the First World War – may emphasize ideas that no longer resonate among Canadians (e.g. “Gallant Service to King, Country, and Empire”). These differences may generate some worthy discussion.
- Not only the memorials themselves, but also the times at which they were dedicated may be of some interest. For example, the ‘Nanjing Memorial Hall’ was established in the 1980s, well after the massacre it commemorates, in response to statements made by government officials and academics in Japan. Sometimes, therefore, the dedication of memorials tells a larger political story, and students should be encouraged to explore this dimension of the topic as well.

V. EVALUATION: DESIGNING A CANADIAN WAR MEMORIAL

1. The concluding activity requires students to consolidate their learning by designing a war memorial to communicate a core message. Their memorials should be based on a nationally or local significant person, place or event related to World War I, II or the Korean War. To provide structure to this activity, have students complete the **Designing a War Memorial** worksheet as a first step. This worksheet helps students identify their memorial's desired outcome(s), intended audience, core message(s), and methods of communication.⁴ Briefly reviewing these in advance of project work will provide useful feedback and guidance.
2. Considerable latitude should be given to student creativity, the ground rules being only that:
 - i. the core message must accord with the purpose of a war memorial as stated in the class' definition; and
 - ii. the memorial must employ materials of some description (i.e. it can't just be an empty space where people sit and think).

⁴ These elements are based on actual guidelines used by Parks Canada as a thinking framework for interpretive activities or media.

Students need not actually build a memorial, but should sketch plans and/or write a detailed description. Encourage models. A number of students may have sufficient computer expertise to create 3-D graphic models.

3. To heighten realism, consider having students present their designs to a panel of reviewers (local historical society members, politicians, veterans). If external reviewers aren't available, consider dramatizing the presentation and review process.

Evaluation –

Students design and present their own ideal war memorials. Designs are evaluated according to how well they match a class-generated definition of a war memorial, as well as how well the student follows the process of identifying outcomes, targeting an audience, formulating a message, and creating effective methods of communicating that message through the memorial.

Additional assessment possible through:

- Formulating logical definitions (Part II)
- Worksheet: **Reading Symbols: Surface and Deeper Meanings** (Part III)
- Independent investigations of Canadian war memorials (Part IV)

Extension(s) to the Lesson –

A). Grades 10-12:

1. For additional Parks Canada lesson plans related to World War I and II, please see:

- The Conscription Crisis: http://www.pc.gc.ca/apprendre-learn/prof/itm2-crp-trc/crp-trc5_e.asp?ID=449
- HMCS Haida: (Coming soon)
- Beaumont Hamel and Vimy Ridge: (Coming soon)

2. Use the three documents provided to fuel a debate on the proposed memorial in Nelson, BC. Notice how the debate is embedded – perhaps unconsciously – within the language used (e.g. identifying people as ‘draft dodgers’ versus ‘war resisters’ significantly alters the listener’s perception).

DOCUMENT 1: Draft-dodger memorial to be built in B.C.

NELSON, B.C. - B.C. activists plan to erect a bronze sculpture honouring draft dodgers, four decades after Americans opposed to the Vietnam War sought refuge in Canada.

The memorial, created by artists in Nelson, B.C., ties into a two-day celebration planned for July 2006 that pays tribute to as many as 125,000 Americans who fled to Canada between 1964 and 1977.

"This will mark the courageous legacy of Vietnam War resisters and the Canadians who helped them resettle in this country during that tumultuous era," Isaac Romano, the director of the Our Way Home festival told a news conference in Nelson Tuesday.

The event will honour people who came to Canada and resisted war efforts, from burning their draft cards during the Vietnam War to leaving the army to protest the war in Iraq, Romano said.

Musicians – many of who participated in the anti-war movement – will play at the festival, scheduled for July 8-9, 2006. Historians and critics of U.S. foreign policy will speak and a documentary about American war resisters by director Michelle Mason will be screened.

Estimates of the number of Americans who came to Canada because they opposed the Vietnam War range from 50,000 to 125,000.

They sought refuge in Canada between 1964 and 1977 in one of the biggest political exoduses in U.S. history.

The first wave of Vietnam era immigrants, called "draft dodgers," was largely middle class and educated.

Deserters from the army came later, mostly with little education or money.

Many of the war resisters settled in British Columbia, especially in the Gulf Islands, the Sunshine Coast and the West Kootenay, the B.C. Interior region where Nelson is located.

Thousands returned south after President Jimmy Carter granted them amnesty in 1977, but the 1986 census indicated that half stayed in Canada.

SOURCE: CBC News, 8 Sept. 2004

DOCUMENT 2: VFW Furious About Draft-Dodger Memorial

Recent news coverage about a proposed memorial being built in Canada to honor Vietnam draft-dodgers has drawn the fury of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.

"We urge the President and Congress to do whatever is necessary to communicate to the Canadian government that this exercise of free expression is an absolute slap in the face to every man and woman who ever served in uniform ... both in our military and theirs," said John Furgess, the national commander of the largest organization of combat veterans in the U.S.

"Everything America holds dear and every freedom we cherish today came from the blood, sweat and sacrifice of more than 42 million Americans who have answered the call to duty since the Revolutionary War," said Furgess. "More than one million of them died helping to create

our country, to save our Union, and to defend the world from tyranny. To create a memorial to those who chose to flee instead of doing their duty must not be allowed to take place."

According to news reports, an estimated 125,000 Americans fled to Canada to avoid the Vietnam draft. Half returned to the U.S. when then-President Jimmy Carter granted them amnesty in 1977. The dedication of the bronze stature honoring draft-dodgers is planned for July 2006 in Nelson, British Columbia, about 140 miles north of Spokane, Wash.

The VFW fully supports freedom of expression and the arts, said Furgess, a Vietnam veteran from Nashville who retired at the rank of colonel from the Tennessee Army National Guard.

"But to honor draft-dodgers, deserters, people who brought grief to the families they left behind and anguish to those American men who took their place, is an abomination," he said. "You can say what you want about the war—we all did and some still do—but do not dishonor the warrior by memorializing cowards."

Founded in 1899, the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary has more than 2.4 million members.

SOURCE: Washington, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, 22 Sept. 2004 <http://www.vfw.org/index.cfm?fa=news.newsDtl&did=2179>

DOCUMENT 3: Nelson Cancels Draft Dodger Memorial

A memorial honouring the courage of American Vietnam war draft dodgers planned for the town of Nelson, B.C., has been cancelled after a chorus of complaint caused the city of Nelson to reconsider.

The bronze statue was to feature two naked American draft dodgers being greeted and welcomed to Canada by a similarly naked Canadian. In the artist's concept of the statue, the Americans appear to be weak and lost while the Canadian bravely holds out his hand to show them the way.

The group of American expatriates behind the statue had initially proposed to unveil it in Nelson during a reunion of draft dodgers and their supporters. The 2006 reunion was meant to honour the "courageous legacy" of the draft dodgers with a concert, a play and a series of lectures.

Shortly after the reunion and memorial were announced however, a storm of negative media descended upon the little B.C. mountain town.

Leading the charge against the memorial was the U.S. Veterans of Foreign Wars. These ex-soldiers, partly comprised of Vietnam veterans, said the memorial was an “abomination.”

Media across the United States joined in, proclaiming the memorial was a bad idea and suggesting that the tribute would dis-honour the men who served in Vietnam.

It didn’t take long for Nelson city officials to realize the memorial and the criticism attending it wouldn’t be good for the community. Claiming that the project was “highly divisive in nature” and that it lacked “widespread community support” the city officially denied the memorial funding and the use of city land.

The group planning the memorial has decided to look for other venues.

SOURCE: Ottawa, The Royal Canadian Legion, [Legion Magazine](http://www.legionmagazine.com/frontline/journal/05-01.asp), Jan/Feb. 2005, <http://www.legionmagazine.com/frontline/journal/05-01.asp>

B.) Grades 7-8:

- i. Facilitate a class conversation about war. What are wars? Why do we fight wars? Why should we remember wars?
- ii. Have the students design their own Canadian War Memorial to remember WWI, WWII, or the Korean War. Students can use the **Selected Resources** and the **Designing a War Memorial** handout to assist. Memorials can be designed in a variety of media, including text-based descriptions, physical or computer models, or drawings.
- iii. After students have presented their memorials, compare student war memorials with actual Canadian war memorials (see **Selected Resources**), and possibly some of the international war memorials described in the **War Memorial Exhibits** and **War Memorial Summaries** handouts. How are they similar and how do they differ? Why?

Acknowledgements –

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