

Choosing to Participate: Moving from Reflection To Action

Time: One or more 50-minute class periods

Audience: 6-12th grade

Student Outcomes

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to...

- analyze several examples of Holocaust and genocide memorials to see how the communities and individuals that designed them sought to shape future generations' understanding of this history.
- explain ways communities remember their past and how memorials help us think about how we remember history.
- design their own memorials, becoming familiar with the many choices artists and communities make in their commemorations about what aspects of a particular history are worth remembering and what parts are intentionally left out.

Aligned Standards (California Common Core)

- Common Core Standard, 10th grade: CCSS.10.5.5
 - Discuss human rights violations and genocide, including the Ottoman government's actions against Armenian citizens.
- Common Core Standard, 10th grade: CCSS.10.8.5
 - Analyze the Nazi policy of pursuing racial purity, especially against the European Jews; its transformation into the Final Solution; and the Holocaust that resulted in the murder of six million Jewish civilians.

Context:

It is not uncommon for students to wonder "What do I do? Where do I go from here?" after studying the history of the Holocaust and genocides. Educators will explore teaching activities and approaches that support students in envisioning the ways that a study of history can shape the choices we make today in the process of creating a more humane, just and compassionate world. Students will understand that progress toward a more just, equitable, and inclusive society has never been inevitable; rather, it is the result of the choices large and small by both individuals and groups. This workshop based on a Facing History & Ourselves lesson continues with the stage of the Facing History & Ourselves scope and sequence, Choosing to Participate, by helping students think deeply about the impact of memory and history on the present day.

Materials:

- Lesson: [How Should We Remember?](#)
- [How Should We Remember | Google Docs \(Public\)](#)

Glossary:

- Memorial
- Monument
- Commemoration

Add these words to your [Word Wall](#), if you are using one for this unit, and provide necessary support to help students learn these words as you teach the lesson.

Differentiation (Scaffolding):

- The images in this lesson are taken from the visual essay [Holocaust Memorials and Monuments](#) in Holocaust and Human Behavior. The introduction to the visual essay provides an in-depth discussion of the relationship of memorials to history and public memory, as well as the variety of roles memorials can serve in a community or country. We recommend that you read this introduction in preparation to teach this lesson in order to help you answer questions that may arise and guide students to a deeper level of understanding of the power of memory. You might also decide to share some of this introduction with your students.
- The last activity in this lesson provides students with the opportunity to plan their own Holocaust memorial. This is a task that may warrant more time for reflection than is available in the class period. Consider assigning this activity for homework. You might even give students multiple nights to complete and submit the **Creating a Memorial** handout so that they have time to develop their ideas more thoroughly. Also consider devoting an extra class period to this lesson, if possible. Doing so will give students time to workshop their ideas for memorials with each other, as well as time to sketch or build models of their ideas using clay, construction paper, or other materials you are able to provide.
- The last activity in this lesson requires students to plan their own memorials related to the Holocaust, and many teachers also ask students to build a physical model of the memorial they have conceptualized. In addition to the examples of existing, real-world memorials and monuments students will analyze in this lesson, it may be helpful to provide students with examples of memorials designed and created using the instructions provided in this lesson. In other words, consider sharing with students one or two examples of memorials that students from past years created, or a memorial you created yourself. These examples can help inspire students' creativity and set standards for the quality and depth of thought you are expecting.

Assessment(s):

- [Creating A Memorial](#)
In this summative assessment, Students' work on the [Creating a Memorial](#) handout provides evidence of their understanding of the role and meaning of memorials and monuments. Look at the choices they make in planning their own monument, as well as their explanations of those choices and how well they connect to themes, events, and individuals in the history they studied in this unit.

Lesson/Activity:

- Lesson: [How Should We Remember?](#)

This lesson engages students in the processes of both responding to and creating memorials to the Holocaust and genocides. By doing so, they are forced to grapple with key questions about why history is important and how our memory of history is shaped and influenced. Students will begin by defining the purpose of memorials and monuments. Next, students will use strategies for learning about several

memorials and analyzing the choices that artists and communities made when creating them. Then students will design, plan, and create their own memorial to represent an idea, event, or person they believe is important to remember from the history of the Holocaust and genocide.

References

- [Teaching Holocaust and Human Behavior](#)
- [Collection: Holocaust and Human Behavior](#)
- [From Reflection To Action: A Choosing to Participate Toolkit](#)

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