

Lesson 3 - Monuments as Reparations

Lesson Summary

Students will engage with the issue of reparations sparked by the personal experiences and views in the documentary “The Cost of Inheritance.” Students will focus on the history of reparations in the United States through a case study of monuments. They will connect that monuments serve as a form of Reparations and will examine examples to evaluate what purpose monuments serve, whose voice they uplift, to eventually form their own opinion on current monuments and create a plan for a monument they propose.

Objective

Students will be able to evaluate the merit of existing monuments and identify the message they are sending to the community as well as create their own monument and argue for its validity.

Standards

8.3.12.B. Evaluate the impact of historical documents, artifacts, and places in U.S. history which are critical to world history.
8.3.U.A. Compare the role groups and individuals played in the social, political, cultural, and economic development of the U.S.
8.3.12.D. Evaluate how conflict and cooperation among groups and organizations in the U.S. have influenced the growth and development of the world. • Ethnicity and race • Working conditions • Immigration • Military conflict • Economic stability

Vocabulary

Monument: a lasting evidence, reminder, or example of someone or something notable or great memorial stone or a building erected in remembrance of a person or event

AAPI: Asian American and Pacific Islander

Chinatown: The Chinese quarter of a city

Indigenous: of or relating to the earliest known inhabitants of a place and especially of a place that was colonized by a now-dominant group

Definitions sourced from Merriam Webster

Episode Information

The Cost of Inheritance: Video Extras <https://www.wqed.org/the-cost-of-inheritance/>

- a. Ties To The Land – features Patt Gunn, Sarah Eisner and Randy Quarterman.
- b. Working to Pass HR 40: Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee

Materials

1. Reparations through monument removal (NPR Weekend Ed. Oct. 29 detailing Charlottesville's removal and melting down of Robert E. Lee statue)
www.npr.org/2023/10/29/1209316169/confederate-monument-melted-down-to-create-new-more-inclusive-public-art
 2. S.J. Res 14, a congressional apology and resolution to the native peoples of the United States. This apology, signed by President Obama in 2009.
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/111th-congress/senate-joint-resolution/14/text#:~:text=14%20%2D%20A%20joint%20resolution%20to,behalf%20of%20the%20United%20States.>
 3. Crash Course Philosophy #40: What is Justice? This episode asks you to consider all the ways people talk about justice and what we really mean when we use that word. The episode explains various theories of justice, just distribution, and different approaches to punishment.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0CTHVCKm90
- PowerPoint Slides: "A Brief Modern History of Reparations"
 - Monument Tour Guided Notes Worksheet

Lesson Activity

Teacher Prep

- Preview The Cost of Inheritance, and video excerpts.
- View and read listed sources. Recall that Patt Gunn, a Gullah Geechee storyteller, believes it is important that there be some sort of marker in Savannah about the history of slavery.
- Seek out a local monuments or a virtual tour website that addresses your town or city. An option: Virtual Tour of America's Greatest Landmarks <https://www.rd.com/list/virtual-tours-of-americas-greatest-landmarks/>

Lesson Tips

- Present PowerPoint slides: "A Brief Modern History of Reparations" to offer historical context for reparations.

Background Information

Teacher may want to review the historical context of Japanese Internment and any local relevant historical information to the area the school is located in.

Introduction

1. Share that today you will learn about the history of reparations in the United States
2. Review the definition of **key vocabulary words, monument, Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, Indigenous communities, enclave**
3. Introduce the **Storytellers, Policy videos**. Show the clip of **Storytellers**. Ask:
 - How else would reparations be achieved? Is monument addition or removal a form of reparations?

Instructions

1. Review PowerPoint slides: "A Brief Modern History of Reparations" to offer historical context for reparations

2. Play Crash Course video: What is Justice? (or assign video as homework the previous night)
3. Activate background knowledge by asking them to recall what monuments they have seen in their own communities – Ask them to dig deep and consider what message that monument sends about the values their community holds, what voice it is amplifying, and how they feel about it
4. Play NPR podcast. As students listen have them take notes: 3 Big Ideas, 1 Surprise, 1 Question. Have open discussion after listening to share ideas and questions
5. Review **S.J. Res 14, a congressional apology and resolution to the native peoples of the United States. This apology, signed by President Obama in 2009**
6. Monument Tour. If possible, go on a field trip to monuments around your school. Have students take notes on each monument they encounter. OR have students go on a virtual tour of monuments around their city/town. Have students fill out notes for each monument they virtually view. Students can also be assigned to visit one monument as homework, and view other monuments virtually, which would allow them to explore monuments erected in other areas.
 - a. Virtual Tour of America’s Greatest Landmarks <https://www.rd.com/list/virtual-tours-of-americas-greatest-landmarks/>
7. After the monument tour, students will choose one monument to research deeper and explore its origins, motivation, and impact. Students may turn in a report, or create a presentation to share with the whole class.
8. Lastly, students will propose their own monument. Students should research an event or historical figure they feel should be recognized in their community and create a proposal to their local city council on why they should erect their monument. This can be a letter, email or presentation to local government officials such as city or county council explaining why the monument should be erected.
9. Extension activity: students can draw their monument.

Guiding Student Inquiry

- During discussions, use these questions to guide the conversation:
- What function could a marker or monument serve?
- How are monuments deployed to support a particular historical narrative?
- Could monument removal be a form of reparations?
- What other ethnic groups are eligible for reparations in the United States?

Check for Understanding

Poll of whether students believe monument addition or removal would be a significant form of reparations and why.

Extension Activity Ideas

Have students visually draw their monument.

Suggested Reading

How the Word is Passed, by Clint Smith. New York, Back Bay Books, 2021

Lesson plan created by Erin Breault and Jules Jacques

Monument Tour Guided Notes:

Monument Title, Description, Location, Year created	Notes (Whose voice is featured? Who is missing from the monument? What message does it send?)