



Imagining Reconstruction Monuments

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Grade 4, Social Studies

6 class periods

Introduction:

In this Project-Based Learning (PBL) lesson, students design a monument for a historical figure or event relating to the period of Reconstruction. Prior to this lesson, students should have an understanding of the components of Reconstruction including, major figures, concepts, and events, in accordance with their state and local curriculum.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify and describe the major events and figures of the Reconstruction era in the United States. (i.e. Jim Crow laws, and segregation)
- Students will be able to describe how “Jim Crow” laws and segregation affected people (American Indians, whites, and African Americans) during the Reconstruction era in the United States.
- Students will understand how monuments can help memorialize and explain important events during Reconstruction.

Guiding Questions:

- Who were the major figures of the period of Reconstruction, and what impact did they have?
- What are “Jim Crow” Laws and segregation? How did they impact people at the time (American Indians, whites, and African Americans)?
- How do towns, states and the country memorialize (remember) important people and major events?
- **PBL Driving Question:** What do you want people to remember about Reconstruction from your monument? How should people feel when they visit?

Common Core Standards of Learning:

D2.His.5.3-5: Explain connections among historical contexts and people’s perspectives at the time.

D2.His.12.3-5: Generate questions about multiple historical sources and their relationships to particular historical events and developments.

D2.His.11.3-5: Infer the intended audience and purpose of a historical source from information within the source itself.

Imagining Reconstruction Monuments

<https://www.fords.org/for-teachers/teaching-lincolns-assassination-legacy/imagining-reconstruction-monuments/>

Materials:

Electronic tool to share pictures of monuments, chart paper, sticky notes, markers, Monument Design Brainstorm sheet, Design Draft sheet, rubric, large construction paper (at least 18”x24”), various paper types/textures, scissors, glue, pencils, and black outlining pens.

Procedures:

Prior to introducing the lesson, students should have a grade-appropriate understanding of the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the state of the country at the end of the war. Students should be aware of the tensions felt around the country and that race is a major area of contention all over the country.

- **Lesson Activity One: Introduction**
 - Students will learn that the National Park Service is looking for monument designs for some of the figures and events that were important during Reconstruction.
- **Lesson Activity Two: Monument Design Day 1**
 - Students will work together to decide on a Reconstruction concept to design their monument over and begin brainstorming.
- **Lesson Activity Three: Monument Design Day 2**
 - Students will participate in an inner/outer circle activity to help finalize their design ideas.
- **Lesson Activity Four: Monument Design Day 3**
 - Students will spend the day designing their monument with their group.
- **Lesson Activity Five: Presentation to the Park Service**
 - Students will present their design to a National Park Service ranger or other expert.

Lesson Activity 1: Introduction

In this lesson, students will learn that the National Park Service is looking for monument designs for some of the figures and events that were important during Reconstruction. The teacher will tell students that they are responsible for designing a monument and that the final designs will be sent to the National Park Service for feedback.

- Next, the teacher will show the class pictures of local, national, and worldwide monuments. As students view the monuments, the teacher will direct the discussion toward what makes a memorable monument using the categories included on the Brainstorming sheet. Students should be filling out the explanation section of their Brainstorming sheet during the discussion. The explanations are definitions or examples of each category. The second column will be utilized in the next activity.
- With each monument shown, the teacher should be writing down student thoughts on what makes a memorable monument, putting each idea on a sentence strip or sticky note on an anchor chart.
 - **Anchor chart explanation:** On a large sheet of paper (or drawn on the white board) outline the categories; as students suggest a theme or element they see in the

monuments, write that on a sticky note and put it in the corresponding category. This is something students can then use as reference for the remainder of the lesson activities.

- At the end of the group discussion, the teacher will explain that over the next few days, students will be engaged in researching a major concept of Reconstruction and design a monument for the National Park Service.

Lesson Activity 2: Monument Design, Day 1

Remember, students should have already discussed Reconstruction with their teacher prior to beginning this lesson.

The teacher will take out the Monument anchor chart with the sorted Post-It notes/sentence strips and remind students of the categories they used as a class.

- The teacher will explain some of the parameters of the monument design project. Students may work in groups of 2-3 and are to design a monument that fits all of the categories discussed that makes a memorable monument. (NOTE: Because of the importance of student choice in PBL, it is suggested that the teacher provide a list of people and events students could use for the monuments. However, students can use concepts outside of the list.
- The teacher should break students up in to groups of 2-3 and hand out the [Monument Rubric](#) so students can self-assess throughout the design and construction process. The teacher should then go over the hand out to ensure students understand the goals of their monument design.
- Once students have their groups and have chosen a concept, students should get out their Brainstorming Sheets from the previous day. The teacher will model the process of how to brainstorm ideas in this graphic organizer as a class. Then, students should brainstorm in their groups. Each group should be able to brainstorm 2-3 ideas per category. The teacher should move around the room and assist where necessary.
- Bring the class back together at the end of the lesson to discuss their group's progress, time permitting.

Lesson Activity 3: Monument Design, Day 2

Tell the class that today, they'll be narrowing down their brainstormed ideas to decide what their monument will look like.

- Students will get feedback using an Inner/Outer Circle activity. The whole class will make a circle and the teacher will have every other group step into the circle; those who are inside of the circle have formed the "inner" circle. The inner circle will turn around to face the group directly in front of them and then share each of their ideas. The outer circle group will listen and then give feedback about which idea from each category they

think is the best representation of the concept. Afterward, the outer circle group will share and receive feedback.

- Once both the inner and outer groups have shared and received feedback, the inner circle will travel one group clockwise and repeat the whole activity. The teacher can repeat this as many times as they see fit for their students.
- Once the teacher feels the activity has provided adequate feedback, students should go back to their groups. Using their feedback skills and the Design Draft worksheet, students will then discuss the feedback from their classmates and narrow down their design ideas.

Lesson Activity 4: Monument Design, Day 3

Students will finalize brainstorm ideas and begin monument design process.

- Using their completed [Design Draft worksheets](#), students will begin drafting their structure. (i.e. sketch with a pencil, erase & redraw when needed)
- The majority of today should be left for students to design and finalize as a group. The teacher should be roaming and assisting as needed.
- Large construction paper should be given to groups once their design is approved by the teacher.
- Depending on the level of the students, an additional day for designing and drawing may be necessary. This can be determined by the classroom teacher.

Lesson Activity 5: Presentation to NPS

Once all students have completed their final designs, the final presentation will be to a National Park Service ranger/employee, who will give students feedback with an in-person visit or through a video call.

- If a ranger/employee is not available to help, the teacher may consider asking a friend or co-worker to play the part of the ranger, to make the culminating event as authentic as possible. Students will present on each of the categories of their monument design and should be able to explain why they picked certain aspects.

Assessment:

The teacher may choose to assess students along the way by checking their interactive notebooks, worksheets, etc., and/or assess students' overall performance with the Monument Design Rubric [link:] during presentations. Students should receive a copy of the rubric at the beginning of the project, so they are able to assess their own progress as they work.

- **Optional writing assessment:** With the lined section provided, students should answer the PBL questions according to their routine classroom writing standards.



Brainstorm Sheet

Person/Event	Explanation	Individual Ideas
Main Point or Visitor Takeaway (What is the message?)		1. 2. 3.
Feelings the monument should give visitors	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
People / objects to represent takeaway	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Words or symbols to extend understanding	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.
Location	1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.



Design Draft

Group Members: _____	
Person/Event/Concept: _____	
Monument Name: _____	
Main Point/Visitor Takeaway	Location
Feelings the monument should give visitors	Words/Symbols to extend understanding
People/Objects to Represent Takeaway	
Monument Sketch:	
Monument Text:	



Monument Rubric

	1	2	3	4	
Brainstorming	My group and I brainstormed one idea for each category and gave a factual reason for each.	My group and I brainstormed two ideas for each category and gave a factual reason for each.	My group and I brainstormed two ideas for some categories and three for others. We gave a factual reason for each idea.	My group and I brainstormed three ideas for each category and gave a factual reason for each.	
Making Decisions	My group sat and listened to others about which of our ideas they liked the most, but did not use any feedback/discussion to help us make a decision.	My group sat and listened to others about which of our ideas they liked the most. We made our decision based on what we preferred.	My group sat and listened to others about which of our ideas they liked the most. We made our decision based on feedback from the other groups and our own opinions.	My group participated in discussions with others about which of our ideas they liked the most. We made our decision based on feedback from the other groups and our own opinions.	
Final Project	My group created a final project that includes three or fewer categories we decided on. The final is not neat (straight lines, sketched in pencil/outlined in black pen, glued down properly).	My group created a final project that includes at least four categories we decided on. The final is somewhat neat (straight lines, sketched in pencil/outlined in black pen, glued down properly).	My group created a final project that includes at least five categories we decided on. The final is mostly neat (straight lines, sketched in pencil/outlined in black pen, glued down properly).	My group created a final project that includes all six categories we decided on. The final is neat (straight lines, sketched in pencil/outlined in black pen, glued down properly).	
Presentation	I spoke in a clear voice some of the time during the presentation. I did not try to answer questions or was impolite.	I spoke in a loud, clear voice some of the time during the presentation. I tried to answer questions and responded politely.	I spoke in a loud, clear voice most of the time during the presentation. I answered questions and responded politely.	I spoke in a loud, clear voice the whole time during the presentation. I answered questions and responded politely.	
Working Together/ Effort (Groups of 2-3)	We did not work as a team very often. If conflicts came up, we had to have an adult help us solve them. I put my best effort into the project a very small amount of the time.	We worked as a team the entire time. If conflicts came up, we used "I" statements and calm voices to solve them some of the time. I put my best effort into the project some of the time.	We worked as a team the entire time. If conflicts came up, we used "I" statements and calm voices to solve them most of the time. I put my best effort into the project most of the time.	We worked as a team the entire time. If conflicts came up, we used "I" statements and calm voices to solve them. I put my best effort into the project the whole time.	
Effort (Groups of 1)	I put my best effort into the project a very small amount of the time.	I put my best effort into the project some of the time.	I put my best effort into the project most of the time.	I put my best effort into the project the whole time.	