

Journey into Time – Art of the Ancient Mediterranean

Title: Monuments through Time

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Suggested Grade Level(s): 4-5-6

Suggested Length of Class Time: 4 x 60 minute classes

Subject Areas: Social Studies, Language Arts, Visual Art, Mathematics

Rationale:

Monuments have been built over time by civilizations all over the world. Some of the best known that exist in the northern hemisphere are those built thousands of years ago by the Egyptians and Greeks. This lesson will provide an opportunity to learn about monuments the world over, with special focus on those of ancient Egypt and Greece. In groups, students will design a monument for their own community and write a proposal that explains why it should be constructed.

Logistics:

Classroom setup - Access to computers will help students to research resources.

Materials

- Individual pieces of paper and pencils
- rulers
- coloured markers

Suggested resources/images:

- www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/pyramid
- www.ancientegypt.co.uk/menu.html
- www.guardians.net/egypt/sphinx/
- members.aol.com/Sokamoto31/obelisk.htm#alllist
- www.culture.gr/2/21/toc/monums.html

Suggested Outcomes:

Students will be expected to:

- Use a combination of visual elements and principles of design in art-making
- Compare art across time
- Investigate the past of their own community
- Design a monument for the local community

- Demonstrate spatial sense and apply geometric concepts, properties, and relationships

Introduction:

The ancient Egyptians and Greeks built monuments such as temples, pyramids, and obelisks that still exist today. Other civilizations across time have built monuments such as the pyramids in Mexico and, more recently, the Statue of Liberty. Closer to home, Canada's National War Memorial and local monuments to those lost in disasters at sea or underground are important landmarks in our communities. This lesson will provide the fun of finding out about monuments throughout history. Students will consider, in groups, the design of a monument for their own community. They will take into consideration various factors as they develop the design and a project proposal.

Suggestions for Teaching and Learning:

Introduce the lesson by having a class discussion about monuments that exist in their own community/province/country as well as those that they can identify in other parts of the world. After the group has created a list, develop with them a definition for the term "monument" and consider what characteristics a structure must have in order to be called a monument.

Invite students, in groups of 2 or 3, to research one of the monuments of ancient Egypt or Greece (e.g., pyramids, sphinxes, temples, obelisks). You may wish to make a list of 10-12 and have each group choose a different one. Have them find answers to questions such as:

- Where is it located?
- How big is it?
- What is it made of?
- What does it commemorate?
- What is its basic shape and why was that shape chosen?
- Describe any exterior decoration.
- Where appropriate, describe the interior of the monument.

Once students have completed their research, invite each group to report their findings to the class. Invite students to develop, individually or in small groups, a chart that shows the relative height of the monuments that were researched, using the diagram of a one-story house as the reference point for comparison. Depending on the reference source that was used, students may need to convert measurements to the metric system in order to complete this activity. Some students may wish to develop a chart that shows relative area (in square meters) of the monuments.

As a second stage in this learning experience, talk together about what people or events in the local community it might be appropriate to honour by building a monument. Are there women, children, members of visible minorities in the list of names that was developed? If not, why not? Encourage students to conduct individual research in the school library, local library, or by speaking with family and community members.

When a list of potential people and events has been developed, have students, in groups of five or six, decide on the person(s) or event for which they would like to design a monument. Working in groups, students can

- Consider basic shapes for their monument and choose one
- Make decisions about construction materials, size, location, exterior or interior decoration (considering such things as environmental factors, availability of materials, durability of materials, available space)
- Draw a diagram to scale of the proposed work
- Decide on the wording that will appear on the plaque that will be displayed on or beside their monument

In a subsequent class, invite the students, working in their groups, to write a project proposal that outlines both the rationale for building the monument and the details of its design, construction, and proposed location. These proposals might be presented to the class. They might also be displayed in the school lobby or in the offices of the municipal council.

Extension of ideas:

- Students might build scale models of the monuments. One or more of these might be installed in the school library, along with its accompanying plaque.
- Project proposals might be presented to the municipal councilor or to the mayor.
- Students might create a miniature monument to a friend or family member.
- Using a world map, students might locate well-known monuments in, for example, countries in the southern hemisphere.

Suggestions for Assessment:

- Students might write in their journals about some surprising and amazing things that they learned about monuments from ancient Egypt and Greece. Their entries could also include sketches.
- Students could write about what they had learned about their local community heroes/heroines/important events
- Student diagrams of the various monuments researched might be checked for understanding of relative size.
- Project proposals could be assessed in light of required components and effective presentation.