



9/11: A Nation Remembers Classroom Activity

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About this Lesson

The events of September 11, 2001, changed our nation forever. Student in grades 7-12 are old enough to remember the events of this historic day. The National Constitution Center's new temporary exhibit, **9/11: A Nation Remembers** is an opportunity for students to examine how Americans have chosen to memorialize and remember these historic events. This guide is designed to help students consider the idea of memory in connection to the events of September 11. The activities included are presented in three parts: a pre-visit activity, introducing students to the ideas presented in the exhibit; a visit activity, designed to provide the students with the tools to be critical viewers of the exhibit; and a post-visit activity, where students connect the information collected in the previous two sections, creating new knowledge.

The activity begins with students considering the images they remember of the day, and then work collaboratively as a group to define the ideas of memorials and symbols. The final section of the pre-visit activity helps students prepare for a visit to the exhibit. The second part of this guide provides students with an interactive approach to the exhibit, collecting information about what they experience and connecting it to information gained in the pre-visit activity. Finally, students are asked in the post-visit activity to create new knowledge, by pulling all the pieces together. This guide also provides the means for students to take part in the exhibit, by contributing an originally created memorial that can be displayed in the exhibit, or kept as a personal connection and artifact.

Grade(s) Level

7-12

Classroom Time

Prior to Visit

30 minutes

After Visit

30 minutes

Time in Exhibit

20-30 minutes

Handouts

- Practice Exhibit Photo, "7th Avenue Tile Memorial Detail"
- Student Analysis Worksheet: Pre-Visit Activity
- Student Analysis Worksheet: Exhibit Analysis
- Template for Submitting to the Exhibit (Optional)

Exhibit Background

To commemorate the fifth anniversary of 9/11, the National Constitution Center presents an exhibition of original photographs by Jonathan Hyman, documenting how the American people responded to and remember the events of September 11th. Few events in American history have elicited the outpouring of public displays of emotion provoked by the September 11th attacks. Over the past five years, photographer Jonathan Hyman has traveled the country photographing the roadside displays, murals, and personal memorials created by Americans in response to September 11th. Hyman's photographs of this new American folk-art pay tribute to those who died and movingly depict a country coming to grips with a national tragedy.

A NOTE TO TEACHERS

The Center's Education staff believes that the exhibition is appropriate for students from grades 7 and up. The exhibition focuses not on the attacks themselves (there are no photographs of Ground Zero) but on the public memorials created across the American landscape in the days, months, and years after the attacks.

Objectives

Students will:

- Identify prior knowledge and images associated with September 11th.
- Define memorial and the use of symbols in the creation of memorials.
- Analyze photographs in the museum exhibit.
- Construct new knowledge, by creating a personal memorial using information collected.

Pre-Visit Activity

15-30 minutes in classroom

This Classroom Activity is based on the two-sided **Student Analysis Worksheet**. Each student should have his or her own copy of the sheet; it is recommended that the sheet be photocopied on two-sides, allowing students to have access to all the information.

- Using the first section of the Pre-Visit Activity side of the sheet, ask students to list the first three images that come to mind when they think of September 11th. After students have prepared their lists, encourage them to write a few sentences explaining why those images are meaningful to them.
- Move to the second section of the Pre-Visit Activity. Use a guided discussion, to create student authored definitions of the words listed.
- The final section of the Pre-Visit Activity, introduces students to the analysis of photographs they will see in the exhibit, **9/11: A Nation Remembers**. Using the photograph “7th Avenue Tile Memorial Detail” as an example. Display the photo in the front of the classroom, or photocopy for students to carefully examine. Working independently students should complete the missing sections. Upon completion, encourage students to share their observations with the class.

Visiting the National Constitution Center

A visit to the National Constitution Center is a unique learning opportunity for students and educators. The Center tells the story of the Constitution's past and explains the principles of its present to help visitors like you and your group see that you will write the story of its future - and to inspire you to do just that. Your visit begins with “Freedom Rising,” a state-of-the-art multimedia theater experience designed to connect visitors-in a direct, engaging, and unforgettable way-with the story of the U.S. Constitution.

For complete information visit:

<http://www.constitutioncenter.org/education>

or Call: 215-409-6800

Exhibit Activity

20-30 minutes in the exhibit space

- Students should bring their copy of **Student Analysis Worksheet** to the Center. In the exhibit space students will use the second side, Exhibit Analysis. Using the sheet as a guide, students will individually choose four photographs to analyze. Encourage students to choose four different types of photographs.

Post-Visit Activity

20-30 minutes in the classroom

- Students should review both sides of their complete worksheet. Encourage students to share their findings with one another. Once students have had an opportunity to share their work, instruct them to use the information gained to create a new memorial. You can use the following options as a means of assessment and concluding activity:
 - Ask students to design a memorial for September 11th using symbols they collected both before the exhibit and at the exhibit. Students can construct their memorial using the guidelines in the “Add to our Exhibit” box below. Once the memorials are designed, encourage students to use the photograph analysis model to examine one another’s designs.
 - Ask students to write a reflection essay examining how the images they associate with September 11th have changed as a result of visiting the exhibit. Encourage students to use details collected from the exhibit.
 - Working as a whole class, create a group memorial representing the views of all the students in the classroom. Once completed ask student to use the photograph analysis model to examine what they created.

Add to our Exhibit: The Memorial Fence

Some of the tiles on the fence have been hanging at the *Tiles for America* memorial on 7th Avenue and 11th Street in New York since September 12, 2001. Use your creativity; whether it is a ribbon, a tile, or a drawing. Make something and send it to be added to the Center’s Memorial Fence. Any tiles that are received by the National Constitution Center will be donated to *Tiles for America*. For more information about sending something to add to the fence, call 215-409-6631 or send an email to exhibits@constitutioncenter.org.

7th Avenue Tile Memorial Detail
Manhattan, New York



Student Analysis Worksheet

Pre-Visit Activity



Name: _____

First Impressions

1.

2.

3.



Definitions

Memorial-

Symbol-

Photograph Analysis

Name of Photograph: 7th Avenue Tile Memorial Detail

Date: 2004 Location: Manhattan, New York

Describe the Image: _____

List Symbols in the Image:



Student Analysis Worksheet

Exhibit Analysis



Name: _____

Photograph Analysis #1

Name of Photograph: _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

Describe the Image: _____

List Symbols in the Image:

Photograph Analysis #2

Name of Photograph: _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

Describe the Image: _____

List Symbols in the Image:

Photograph Analysis #3

Name of Photograph: _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

Describe the Image: _____

List Symbols in the Image:

Photograph Analysis #4

Name of Photograph: _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

Describe the Image: _____

List Symbols in the Image:

