

Monuments and Memorials: Who Is Remembered?

by Elizabeth Freeman-Shaw

Suggested grade level: Intermediate/Senior

Suggested time: 2 class periods

Brief Description of the Task

In this activity students will reflect on who and what has been memorialized about the War of 1812, and are challenged to create a memorial that aligns with the criteria for historical significance.

Historical Thinking Concepts

- Use of Evidence
- Historical Significance
- Historical Perspective-Taking

Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

- participate in an activity that allows them to understand the concept of historical significance and historical perspective-taking
- evaluate the contribution of historical figures/events to the War of 1812 in relation to historical significance.
- use evidence to make conclusions

Materials

Each student will need copies of the Worksheets (in the Appendices file).

Teacher should have an LCD projector and screen available for using the PPT slide shows.

Prior Knowledge

It would be an asset for students to be familiar with:

1. General events of the War of 1812 (this lesson is best placed toward the end of the study of the war)
2. Some familiarity with key participants of the War of 1812
3. Familiarity with the historical thinking concepts of Historical Significance, Historical Perspective-Taking, and Use of Evidence (see The Historical Thinking Project website at www.historicalthinking.ca)

Assessment

Students may be evaluated based on:

- Teacher feedback on student discussion
- Worksheet 1 – Historical Perspectives: National Monuments
- Worksheet 2 – I See, I Think, Therefore
- Culminating Performance Task – Monument Display (teacher will generate rubric depending on type of task selected)

Detailed Lesson Plan

Focus Question: Do historical monuments adequately reflect all historical perspectives? What historically significant events of the War of 1812 are commemorated? What events should be commemorated?

Part A: Minds On – Activating Learning

Teacher Note:

This section of the lesson may be replaced with an adaptation of Part B - National Monuments if students have sufficient basis in working with significance or if time does not permit doing both.

1. In small groups, the teacher instructs the students to discuss memorials/monuments that they are familiar with in their town/city.

A Powerpoint slide show has been created to support this activity. (See Lesson 14, Who Is Remembered PPTX file.) The teacher could insert visuals of local monuments to promote discussion.

Some questions to stimulate discussion might include:

- What are memorial monuments?
- Why are they created? When are they created?
- What events do they commemorate or celebrate in our community?
- Who is remembered?
- Who is responsible for creating the monuments or determining who is commemorated?

2. Review or introduce the components of **Historical Significance**, making connections to the local monuments discussed.

- A person/event is historically significant if something they did/it resulted in change (they had deep consequences, for many people, over a long period of time).
- A person/event is historically significant if something they did is revealing (their life or accomplishments sheds light on something important today).

4. Ask the class whether the local monuments represent **historically significant** events? Who is acknowledged? What types of events are acknowledged? Who has decided that these are historically significant? Are they equally important to everyone? What *perspective* is represented?

5. Use discussion surrounding this to review or re-introduce the concept of **historical perspective-taking**. (See The Historical Thinking Project website at <http://historicalthinking.ca/concept/historical-perspectives>.)

6. Ask students to think again about the questions that were just raised.

- In your community, can you think of people or events that are NOT memorialized but you think should be? Why do you think they have not been created? Who makes the decisions? How does this relate to the earlier discussion of Historical Perspective?
- As an example of a monument that took a long time to be erected, you could look at the memorial to Harriet Tubman at the British Episcopal Methodist Church (Salem Chapel) in St.

Catharines, Ontario. Students should be familiar with this topic from earlier studies.

- Why is it that the statue and garden project of such a significant figure in the Underground Railway had not been memorialized sooner?
- Is it right that a private group was responsible for the project?
- What controversy surrounded the erection of a National Memorial Plaque?
- Why was this only done in 2010 & 2011?
- What attitudes changed over time?

References:

<http://www.stcatharinesstandard.ca/2011/03/06/plaque-honouring-harriet-tubman-going-up-a-little-late>

<http://www.brockpress.com/news/harriet-tubman-monument-unveiled-1.2309045#.UDPcsd1IRFs>

Part B: Action - National Monuments: Working with Significance and Historical Perspective-Taking

Teacher Note:

This section may be adapted to be used instead of the local section, or omitted if students have sufficient basis in working with Historical Significance, or if time does not permit.

1. The teacher will transition the class to monuments that have been created to commemorate events of national significance. For example: Vimy Ridge, the Peacekeeping Memorial in Ottawa, and the War in Afghanistan memorial in Petawawa. (These are all represented in the slide show.)
2. Have students read a summary of each of the monuments and the event that each commemorates.

References:

Vimy Ridge:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/vimy-ridge>

Vimy Monument:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/macleans/vimy-a-stunning-memorial-and-live-minefield>

Canadians in Afghanistan:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/international-campaign-against-terrorism-in-afghanistan>

Afghanistan Memorial

http://www.army.forces.gc.ca/cfb_petawawa/memorial/index-eng.asp

Peacekeeping:

<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/articles/peacekeeping>

Peacekeeping Monument: <http://www.canadacapital.gc.ca/places-to-visit/public-art/reconciliation-peacekeeping-monument>

<http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/feature/peacekeeper/remembrance/reconciliation>

3. Have the students consider:

- Historical Significance – Do the monuments represent historically significant events? How are they similar or different to local monuments?
- Historical Perspective – Whose perspective do these monuments reflect? How is this similar or different from the local monuments discussed? Have all perspectives been addressed? (**Worksheet 1: Historical Perspectives-National Monuments** may be used. Worksheet 1 in the Lesson 14 Appendices file.)

Part C: Action - Application to 1812

1. The teacher will now transition to historical monuments for the War of 1812.

Teacher Note:

It is assumed that this activity would be used towards the end of the unit of study on 1812. If the major events of the War of 1812 have not been studied, then a variation would be to assign topics to research

and have the groups make a case for the most worthy event to be commemorated.

1. Ask students: “What is wrong with this picture?” Then use monuments/plaques/memorials for Brock, Laura Secord, The Coloured Corp/Richard Pierpont and First Nations have students analyze the state of current War of 1812 monuments to explore who is remembered? How they are remembered? What do these memorials tell us about Historical Perspective?

For example, show students visuals of a variety of memorials/monuments and ask them to discuss why such a commemoration was made.

A good example to begin with is Brock’s Monument. Primary sources on Brock’s Monument may be used to investigate the story behind the monument if time permits. Refer to the Ontario Archives at <http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/english/on-line-exhibits/1812/saga.aspx>

Discussion should include that the decision was made very early to establish a permanent monument at Queenston (March 14, 1814, by an Act of the Assembly of Upper Canada). As well, explore the cost of such a monument and who supported its construction.

Discussion might even include how in recent years it had fallen into disrepair and how local groups like the Friends of Fort George have struggled to get funding to have it repaired. The monument itself had been closed for a number of years because of restoration issues.

2. Show students the visuals of other monuments/plaques. (See Lesson 14 Powerpoint for slides of the the Laura Secord, Coloured Corps/Richard Pierpoint, and First Nations Memorials.)

Ask students for reflections/responses to the monuments/plaques.

- What do they notice? **Worksheet 2: I See, I Think, Therefore** might be used for this. (In the Lesson 14 Appendices file.)

- Are these memorials reflective of their significance/importance to the War of 1812?
- For each of these monuments discuss why they are so different from Brocks. (It is clear that Brock was a Major General and an important figure at the time - why were other's not commemorated at the time? Should other individuals now be appropriately remembered?)
- Whose perspective is reflected in memorials/monuments to 1812?
- How might that be different if monuments were created today?

Extension: As a supplemental activity, the teacher can provide material or have students conduct research into the recognition of Laura Secord, The Coloured Corps & Richard Pierpont, Tecumseh and First Nations. Students may present the results of their research, making conclusions about why greater acknowledgment was not made at the time, and observations on the eventual recognition.

Part D: Culminating Task – Balancing Historical Significance and Historical Perspective

1. In honour of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 the Government of Canada has commissioned you to address the imbalance in recognition of all parties' contributions to the War of 1812. You are commissioned (individually, in small groups, or as a class) to create a Memorial Monument that reflects historically significant events and individuals in a fair and balanced perspective for 2012.

Suggested strategy:

- a) The teacher will instruct the class to develop a '*fair and balanced*'* list of the most deserving events/individuals from the War of 1812 to be commemorated nationally for their significant contribution to the war. In making their selection students utilize the *criteria for historical significance*. They should be able to justify their selections by making a case for the events/individuals most worthy of commemoration.
- b) Based on this list of most significant individuals/events the students are to design a suitable National Monument that incorporates all

perspectives. This may be done as a class project and displayed as a Bulletin Board mural, or completed individually. It might also take the form of a display in the library or gym where the public might be invited for viewing. Representatives from local groups (Black History, First Nations, Armed Forces, Historical Recreation groups) may be invited to speak or present.

*fair and balanced as criteria will need to be modelled and fleshed out – eg. inclusive of gender, race, civilian, military-regular, militia

Worksheet 1 – Continuity and Change

Name: _____ Date: _____

Topic: _____

List the characteristics you are comparing in the left column. Title the other two columns with whatever it is you are investigating. This may be two time periods, two documents, two items, two events, etc. Record information that helps you to identify what has changed and what has remained the same.

Characteristic	#1. Canadian Soldiers in Afghanistan	#2. Soldiers 1812

To what degree was there continuity and to what degree was there change between #1 and #2?

Worksheet 2 – Historical Perspective-Taking

Name: _____ Date: _____

What are the event(s) and time period you are investigating?

List the various groups and people involved, and circle the one that you are recording on this page (use additional pages to record information on others).

Describe their position/role in society.

Evidence?

How is their position/role different from a similar person or group today?

Evidence?

Compared to what we face today, what relevant circumstances were different for them in the past? (Some examples might include technology, media, economy, religion, family life, communication, recreation, etc.)

How do you think the above factors influenced their thoughts and/or actions?