

G.A.R. Memorial – virtual tour lesson plan

Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Memorial at the Chicago Cultural Center

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INTRODUCTION

What is a Memorial? A memorial is a structure, sculpture, or other object that helps us remember a person, a group of people, or an important event in history. Memorials are often in the form of statues, fountains or even entire parks! War memorials are a common type of memorial. They commemorate those who have fought in wars. The **Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Memorial at the Chicago Cultural Center** was created for the soldiers of the Union Army who fought for the north in the American Civil War. It was a way to thank them for their service and to remember them always.

BACKGROUND

- This part of the building was created as a memorial to the soldiers who fought for the Union Army in the Civil War, to remember the sacrifices they made and to thank them for their service.
- G.A.R. stands for Grand Army of the Republic. It was a national organization for union army veterans.
- The GAR side of the building has a very militaristic feel to it, with large imposing doors, darker colors, and military-inspired decor, such as shields, helmets, swords, and military mottos on the ceiling ("Don't tread on me").
- The dome was fashioned in a Renaissance design by the Healy and Millet Studios of Chicago. It is currently enclosed in copper but will soon be undergoing a much-needed restoration.

Illinois Arts Learning Standards #2, #7, #11 (see details at end of lesson)

Anchor Standard 2: (Creating) Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 7: (Responding) Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 11: (Connecting) Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- learn how veterans from the Civil War are honored through art and architecture at the Chicago Cultural Center.
- learn how art and architecture can provide an enduring memorial that transcends history and culture.
- consider how a variety of artistic expressions can serve as a memorial in our daily life from simple to complex.
- create a plan for a contemporary memorial.

Materials

GAR Video

[CCC Video Tours](#)

computer, phone or other device for online viewing

Writing instruments

Drawing materials - paper, pencil, markers etc.

PRE - DISCUSSION

Pose opening question for discussion or written reflection prior to viewing. Revisit the same questions afterwards.

How does the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) memorialize and honor soldiers?

How did the library and GAR resolve the challenge of both being given the same property?

View video – Chicago Cultural Center, GAR Hall and Rotunda (approx 7 min)

GAR Hall and Rotunda are only one kind of memorial. Here are a few forms of creating a memorial. How many more can you name?

- Celebration, commemoration or parade, such as a Memorial Day or Bud Billiken Parade
- Social media – likes, posts, etc.
- Graffiti – tagging or creating a mural for someone.
- Pop up street memorials – flowers, ghost bikes, etc.
- Spoken words, rap, song, or poem
- Public artworks

ACTIVITY Design your own memorial for your community or school!

Now imagine you had the chance to design a memorial that would be located in your neighborhood. Think about the history of your community. Can you think of people, groups or events that helped shape your school or neighborhood? What important accomplishment did this person or group have for which you want to honor them? Where will your memorial be located? What form will your memorial take?

RESOURCES–

[CCC Video Tours](#)

CCC Teacher's Guide pages 24 - 27

Example of people who have been memorialized. (rappers, Holocaust Museum, etc)

<https://chicagomonuments.org/>

STANDARDS <http://illinoisartslearning.org/>

Anchor Standard 2: (Creating) Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Enduring Understanding: People create and interact with objects, places, and design that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives. Essential Questions: (a) How do objects, places, and design shape lives and communities? (b) How do artists and designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems? (c) How do artists and designers create works of art or design that communicate effectively?

Anchor Standard 7: (Responding) Perceive and analyze artistic work. Enduring Understanding: Individual aesthetic and empathic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, the natural world, and constructed environments. Essential Questions: (a) How do life experiences influence the way you relate to art? (b) How does learning about art impact how we perceive the world? (c) What can we learn from our responses to art?

Anchor Standard 11: (Connecting) Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding. Enduring Understanding: People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art. Essential Questions: (a) How does art help us understand the lives of people in different times, places, and cultures? (b) How is art used to impact the views of a society? (c) How does art preserve aspects of life?