



How does your community recognize the legacy of veterans and other leaders?

The famed American author William Faulkner once remarked, “The past is never dead. In fact, it is not even past.” It’s important to reflect on past events in our history, the contributions of leaders, and how we commemorate their legacies today.

In Washington, D.C., there are numerous war memorials and monuments. You can take a virtual tour of some of the most well-known of these, like the World War II Memorial and Vietnam Veterans Memorial, here: bit.ly/2yfDs9C

But did you know there are many more memorials that commemorate the sacrifices of men and women who served in America’s other wars? Learn more about D.C.’s lesser-known war memorials, like the Women In Military Service For America Memorial and the African American Civil War Museum and Memorial, here: dc.curbed.com/maps/military-monuments-museums-memorials

Create Your Own Memorial

Is there a historical event or a historical figure from your community whose legacy you think deserves to be memorialized? The event you memorialize does not have to be a war—it can be anything that has had an impact on your community. Likewise, a person you choose to memorialize does not have to be a household name. One of the purposes of a memorial is to recognize a leader’s contributions which otherwise may go unnoticed or forgotten by most people.

Consider the following questions:

- What is the purpose of monuments and memorials? How do they honor people or events?
- How do monuments and memorials affect our understanding of history?
- Who decides who and what is memorialized? What is left out of the historical record?

Discover

Do some research on the history of your community. If you can, talk to people in your community, whether that is in person or via email or video chat. Good resources include any local historical societies, universities, veterans’ groups, and of course, your teachers and family members.

Your community may already have monuments and memorials. What is their history? Are there events or people who have had an impact on your community that are not being memorialized?

Keep in mind that memorials do not have to be statues. Think of other ways that someone’s legacy can be memorialized and recognized by future generations. An example from our nation’s capital is that of Pierre Charles L’Enfant, who designed the urban layout of Washington, D.C. Although he does not have a formal memorial, his legacy is directly felt by all who live in and visit the city.



"Almanac: The designer of Washington, D.C."
WATCH: youtu.be/L1Wy_2wr2hl



SCAN ME



"A Brief History of Pierre L'Enfant and Washington, D.C."
WEBSITE: smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/a-brief-history-of-pierre-lenfant-and-washington-dc-39487784/



SCAN ME

A Brief History of Pierre L'Enfant and Washington, D.C.

How one Frenchman's vision became our capital city



Another remarkable example is Muir Woods National Monument (nps.gov/muwo/index.htm), located in the Bay Area, near San Francisco. The redwood forest is a stunning and fitting "memorial" to the famed naturalist John Muir, who spent his life protecting natural areas and advocating for the creation of national parks.

Once you have chosen a person or event to memorialize, consider what form your memorial will take.

First: Create a physical or digital depiction of your creation (drawing, photograph of a model, etc.).

Second: Write a short description of your memorial. Consider the following questions:

- Who or what is being memorialized?
- Why did you choose this person or event?
- Why did you choose the design elements that you did?
- What about the person you chose to honor is represented in your design?
- Discuss the form, size, location, symbols, color, shape, inscriptions, etc.

Third: Share your memorial. Post images of designs on social media or record a video describing your choice of subject and your memorial.

Students! Answering our questions? Using our strategies? Share them with us at discovery@worldstrides.com.