



American Monuments | Lesson Plan

Why are American monuments important in helping the American people remember our nation's past?

Students will learn the history and significance of American monuments to develop an understanding of how these structures serve as pivotal reminders of the nation's history.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the historical context and significance of major American monuments.
- Analyze the role of monuments in memorializing individuals and events that are crucial to the American story.
- Investigate how monuments contribute to national identity and the transmission of values across generations.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Monument:** A permanent structure explicitly created to commemorate a person, event, or idea, often symbolizing collective national pride and historical significance.
- **Memorial:** A site or object that focuses on the memory of something, typically a deceased person or event, highlighting the aspects of honor and reflection.
- **Washington Monument:** Honors George Washington, symbolizing respect for the nation's first president.
- **Lincoln Memorial:** Honors Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, renowned for preserving the Union during the Civil War, symbolizing freedom and unity.
- **Mount Rushmore:** Celebrates four presidents who represent the first 150 years of American history, symbolizing representative democracy and leadership.
- **National September 11 Memorial & Museum:** Commemorates the victims and heroes of the September 11 attacks, highlighting themes of resilience and remembrance.

Educational Standards: CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.L.5, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.R.4, CCRA.R.6

Academic Subject Areas: Civics, U.S. History, Western Civilization

What You'll Need

- Video: *Street Smarts: American Monuments* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Street Smarts: American Monuments* (Click [Here](#))
- Index cards or sticky notes

Lesson Plan (45 minutes)

Warm Up: (15 minutes)



Scan to watch episode:

1. Start by asking students what they know about American monuments. What monuments have they heard of?
2. Present a series of thought-provoking questions to the class, such as:
 - What do you think is the purpose of a monument?
 - Can you name a monument dedicated to a person or event in American history? Why do you think it was created?
 - How do monuments reflect the values of a society?
3. Conclude with a summary of the discussion, highlighting the role monuments play in preserving history, honoring important figures/events, and reflecting societal values.
4. Give each student a copy of the “Street Smarts: American Monuments Worksheet” and display it on a screen.

Watch and Complete: (20 minutes)

1. Watch the video as a class, answering the blanks on the worksheet as each question is addressed in the video.
2. Pause the video after each key question and concept is presented. Encourage students to share their answers to check for accuracy.

Wrap-Up: (10 minutes)

1. After the video, allow students to ask questions or express their opinions about what they learned about American monuments.
2. Collect the completed worksheet as a formative assessment or participation credit.

Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15 minutes)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.