

4. Great artists and war memorials



Background: This lesson forms part of a series of six art lessons looking at the work of great artists who designed war memorials to commemorate the fallen during the wave of memorialisation which followed World War I. It has been created to increase pupils' awareness of different kinds of design and the work of great artists including the architects Baker, Blomfield, Lorimer and Lutyens and the sculptor Toft. Teachers may choose to focus on one of these artists throughout the series of lessons particularly if they designed a war memorial nearby. Equally a selection of work from several of the artists may be used. Pupils will learn to incorporate symbols used by great artists in their own war memorial designs

Suitable for: Key stage 2

Learning objective: Pupils will learn:

- To make a preparatory sketch for a local war memorial

Learning outcomes: Pupils will be able to:

- Create several sketches, using pencil or charcoal, for a war memorial design
- Select appropriate shapes and features to use as part of the sketches

Resources:

- Sketching materials
- Local coat of arms (town, county)
- [‘War Memorials Online links for memorials designed by Baker, Blomfield, Lorimer, Lutyens and Toft’](#) Resources sheet
- Printed images of war memorials designed by the architect(s) and/or sculptor

Introduction:

- Review what was learnt during lesson 3 about symbols which often feature in war memorials designed by the chosen artist(s). It would be useful if the review included the type of symbol and the what it represents
- This could be done in a number of ways:
 - class discussion which feeds into a mind map
 - labelling the symbols in an image(s) in small/table groups
 - images of war memorials shown in the previous lesson with the some of the symbols missing which pupils then have to identify
 - Bingo – pupils select 4-6 of the different symbols. Images of war memorials are displayed and if they feature one of their chosen symbols they can cross it off their bingo card

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Suggested teaching points and activities:

Which artists favoured which symbols in their own designs?

- Focusing on the selected artist(s), discuss which symbols appear most frequently in their designs. It will be probably be helpful to display some images during this discussion
- Pupils should understand by the end of the discussion that:
 - Baker often used a cross encircled by carved stone roses and lilies to represent England and France, a Crusader warship, a reversed sword and St George killing the dragon. Sometimes just one was incorporated into the design and other designs included several of these
 - Blomfield was responsible for the Cross of Sacrifice, a cross with a sword which represents the faith of many and the military aspect of the memorial
 - Lutyens' most well know design is the Cenotaph, Whitehall but he also designed cenotaphs in other locations. A cenotaph is an empty tomb and represents the government's decision not to repatriate the fallen. He also included flags as a sign of patriotism
 - Toft's designs and sculptures often featured figures of soldiers or several figures which represented the services

Which symbols would you include in a war memorial design?

- Explain pupils have been commissioned to design a war memorial by the local war memorial committee, just as architects and sculptors such as Baker, Blomfield, Lorimer, Lutyens and Toft would have been following the end of World War I
- Allow a quick discussion or moment of thought around symbols which pupils may use

What might your design look like?

- Pupils to produce several preparatory sketches of their war memorial which include different shapes and symbols
- It should be emphasised that these sketches provide pupils with an opportunity to try out different designs and include different symbols. The sketches can be quite rough and should be treated like a first draft. They can then evaluate and decide which one works best and is most suitable for their final design in the next lesson

Conclusion:

- Review some of the preparatory sketches either as a whole class or with talk partners. You may wish to display some key questions to help focus discussion
 - What shapes are the memorials?
 - Is this symbolic?
 - Which symbols have been incorporated?
 - What message is trying to be shared through these symbols?

Support/extension:

The activities in this lesson plan are suggestions only and teachers will need to adapt the lesson to take account of the needs of their class.

- More able pupils may be asked to include a written explanation of why certain symbols have been included in their preparatory sketches and which artist they have taken inspiration from

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