

6. Great artists and war memorials



Background: This lesson forms the final one in 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 through 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 design features and symbols used by some of the great artists studied in their own war memorial design. They will also review their own and others work.

Suitable for: Key stage 2

Learning objective: Pupils will learn:

- To produce a final war memorial design incorporating the features used by great artists

Learning outcomes: Pupils will be able to:

- Use paint or pastels to produce a final piece depicting a war memorial in a local setting
- Review the work of their peers
- Identify the ideas of great artists which have been used in other people's designs

Resources:

- Painting materials or pastels
- Photographs of local area e.g. local church, town hall, town centre, village green

Introduction:

- The introduction to the lesson should provide pupils with a quick recap of the different symbols and features used in war memorial designs so they are ready to continue with their final design. Ideas for activities which will provide this opportunity include:
 - Each pupil to have an image of a war memorial. Pupils to move around and then at certain points stop and tell someone nearby about their war memorial and what the symbols which feature are trying to convey
 - Guess what I am drawing – pupils to have the different symbols which have been identified previously written on cards. Working in pairs, one should select a card and begin to draw it. Their partner should try to guess which symbol is written on the card

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Suggested teaching points and activities:

Designing a war memorial

- Before picking up their art materials to continue pupils should review their design
 - What is good about it so far?
 - What do they need to work on this session?
- Pupils to complete their war memorial design ensuring it includes some of the symbols used by the artist(s) they have studied during this unit. The background of the design should be where the memorial is going to be situated locally

Reviewing the work of others

- Time should be allowed for pupils to either review their own work and/or the work of their peers
- Questions which you may ask pupils to consider or answer when reviewing their own or their peer's work include:
 - What do they like best about their own/others work?
 - What could be improved next time?
 - How would they change it next time?
 - Do the symbols which have been included succeed in conveying the meaning behind the war memorial?

Conclusion:

- Throughout the unit of work pupils will have had the opportunity to look at and share their opinion about the design of war memorials by some of the great artists, find out about the lives of these architects and sculptors, discuss the use of symbols to represent ideas and convey meaning, sketch elements of these war memorials before finally creating their own war memorial design. To bring the unit to a close ask pupils to consider what they will take away from their work on great artists and war memorials
- You may wish to get pupils to write an overriding thought, feeling, idea or fact which will stay with them on a sticky note or similar

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.

Ideas for further work:

There are many opportunities to extend this lesson and link it with other areas of the curriculum:

- Art – If time allows, pupils may be able to make their war memorial design using different materials such as clay
- Create a gallery or exhibition with the pupils' designs – In some instances when war memorials were commissioned, artists were invited to submit their designs. These were then judged by a panel or displayed so that the public could decide which war memorial design would be used. One example of this is the Birmingham Hall of Memory. Architects S.N Cooke and W Norman Twist won the design competition. Albert Toft was the sculptor who designed the seated figures which formed part of the winning design. School staff, other pupils, parents, governors could be asked to view the gallery and vote for their favourite design

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