**Memory & Memorials**

***DO NOW***

**How should we memorialize the events of September 11th, 2001?**

*Identify and explain the considerations and decisions made in creating the 9/11 Memorial and Museum.*

What is a memorial?

What is the purpose of a memorial?

Why do we memorialize things?

What do we memorialize?

Examples?

What is the purpose of a museum?

Why do people go to museums?

Examples?

**Memory & Memorials**

**How should we memorialize the events of September 11th, 2001?**

*Identify and explain the considerations and decisions made in creating the 9/11 Memorial and Museum.*

*Memory is as the affection:*

*we remember the things which we love and the things which we hate.*

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson

The push to memorialize the WTC site began almost as soon as the debris had been removed. The cleanup of the 1.8 million tons of rubble and debris was a painstaking process as each piece of debris had to be carefully sifted and preserved as there were so many personal effects and human remains mixed in. A tiny fraction of that material was selected for possible use in a future museum and kept at Hangar 17 at John F. Kennedy International Airport. Eventually, more than 1,200 pieces of steel, as well as other objects, filled the 80,000 square feet of Hangar 17. The last piece of debris was removed from the Ground Zero site on May 20th, 2002 and the process of rebuilding began.

The root of the term memorial is in the idea of memory. The city and nation, faced with how to memorialize, met disagreement and varying opinions. The decision was made to create an open contest to solicit ideas for a new memorial at the Ground Zero site, where the Twin Towers had once stood.

Below were the guidelines provided to entrants for consideration in proposing their ideas.

* Convey the magnitude of personal and physical loss at the location
* Recognize each individual who was a victim of the September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993 attacks
* Respect and enhance the sacred quality of the overall site and the space designated for the Memorial
* Provide an area for quiet visitation and contemplation
* Provide an area for the families and loved ones of victims
* Provide a separate accessible space to serve as the final resting-place for the unidentified remains from the World Trade Center Site
* Make visible the footprints of the original World Trade Center Towers
* Inclusion of surviving original structure elements from WTC towers

-- James E. Young, *The Future of Memory*

Why do you think these were the suggested guidelines for memorial submissions?

A panel of judges, including victim’s families, city officials, historians, and memorial experts, selected the design submitted by architects Michael Arad and Peter Walker, entitled *Reflecting Absence*.

Below is an excerpt of their proposal. Do a close-read of this document with your partner, to determine how their memorial idea met the established criteria. Then record your findings in the graphic organizer with specifics evidence from the passage.

This memorial proposes a space that resonates with the feelings of loss and absence that were generated by the destruction of the World Trade Center and the taking of thousands of lives on September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993. It is located in a field of trees that is interrupted by two large voids containing recessed pools. The pools are set within the footprints of the Twin Towers. A cascade of water that describes the perimeter of each square feeds the pools with a continuous stream. They are large voids, open and visible reminders of the absence.

The surface of the memorial plaza is punctuated by the linear rhythms of rows of deciduous trees, forming informal clusters, clearings and groves. This surface consists of a composition of stone pavers, plantings and low ground cover. Through its annual cycle of rebirth, the living park extends and deepens the experience of the memorial.

Surrounding the pools on bronze parapets are the names. The enormity of this space and the multitude of names underscore the vast scope of the destruction. Standing there at the water's edge, looking at a pool of water that is flowing away into an abyss, a visitor to the site can sense that what is beyond this parapet edge is inaccessible.

The memorial plaza is designed to be a mediating space; it belongs both to the city and to the memorial. Located at street level to allow for its integration into the fabric of the city, the plaza encourages the use of this space by New Yorkers on a daily basis. The memorial grounds will not be isolated from the rest of the city; they will be a living part of it.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Guideline Met** | **Evidence from *Reflecting Absence*** | **Guidelines not Met by *Reflecting Absence*** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

*ALL OF YOU TAKING PHOTOS*

*I wonder if you really see whats here or if you’re so concerned with getting that perfect shot that you’ve forgotten this is a tragedy site, not a tourist attraction. As I continually had to move “out of someone’s way” as they carefully tried to frame this place [of] mourning. I kept wondering what makes us think we can capture the pain, the loss, the pride & the confusion – this complexity – onto a 4x5 glossy.*

*I LOVE My City*

*-Firegirl, NYC, 09-17-01*

- Note posted on a gate near Ground Zero, 2001

On Thursday, May 15th, 2014, the 9/11 Memorial Museum opened to the victim’s families and survivors of the attacks. The museum will open to the public on Wednesday, May 21st. In the intervening twelve plus years since the attacks there has been much debate and controversy over what should and what should not be included in the museum’s exhibits.

As a class we will do a close-read of this 2012 *New York Times* to uncover the considerations and sensitivities that the museum curator and staff have had to take into account in making these decisions. We will record these understandings and criteria in the space at the bottom of this page. Then you will be assigned the role as museum curator, as you are presented with two 9/11 artifacts to consider for inclusion in an exhibit. You will note its significance, role, and whether or not it is appropriate and proper to include your artifacts in the collection. You will report your findings to the class for a discussion.

**Museum Artifacts Criteria** (from *NYT* article)

**9/11 Artifacts Analysis**

**Artifact # \_\_\_\_\_**

Detailed description of the artifact:

What does this artifact communicate about the events of 9/11?

Could this artifact be considered controversial or sensitive? How or why?

How might a visitor view, respond, reflect, and or interact with this artifact in the museum?

What possible value does this artifact have for the museum?

(What recorded criteria does this artifact meet?)

Should this artifact be included in the museum’s exhibit halls?

**9/11 Artifacts Analysis**

**Artifact # \_\_\_\_\_**

Detailed description of the artifact:

What does this artifact communicate about the events of 9/11?

Could this artifact be considered controversial or sensitive? How or why?

How might a visitor view, respond, reflect, and or interact with this artifact in the museum?

What possible value does this artifact have for the museum?

(What recorded criteria does this artifact meet?)

Should this artifact be included in the museum’s exhibit halls?

**Suggested Artifacts for Inclusion**

**1.** Artifact Name:

Proposed Inscription/Description

Criteria Met for Inclusion

Justification/Reasoning for inclusion

**2.** Artifact Name:

Proposed Inscription/Description

Criteria Met for Inclusion

Justification/Reasoning for inclusion

**Suggested Artifacts for Exclusion**

**1.** Artifact Name:

Proposed Inscription/Description

Criteria Considered for Exclusion

Justification/Reasoning for Exclusion

**2.** Artifact Name:

Proposed Inscription/Description

Criteria Considered for Exclusion

Justification/Reasoning for Exclusion

***EXIT TICKET***

**How should we memorialize the events of September 11th, 2001?**

*Identify and explain the considerations and decisions made in creating the 9/11 Memorial and Museum.*