

Whose Cultural Heritage?

Tia D. Larese

Penn Alexander School

America is a nation of immigrants with vibrant stories and cultural backgrounds. So then, why does our teaching of history, with monuments and symbols, only sometimes reflect those backgrounds? Whose narrative are we teaching in the classroom? What cultural experiences do we elevate in our teaching? Moreover, which texts do we use to discuss American history? As the English teacher for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), I primarily work with children who are immigrants or children of immigrants to our country. When engaging in history lessons, often there is a disconnect between the history taught about “our” country and the rich stories and backgrounds that students bring to the classroom. The primary question I pose for students to explore is, “How can cultural artifacts, monuments, museums, and public art, or lack thereof, help us understand the multiple histories of the United States?”

Abstract

This curriculum will focus on how English Language teachers can use media and diverse texts to explore representation and identity. Studying murals and monuments can help English Language Learners thrive in a few different ways. First, these types of visual arts often depict historical events or cultural stories, which can provide context and background knowledge for students. This can help them understand and engage with the material they are learning in class. Also, studying murals and monuments can expose English Language Learners to new vocabulary words and phrases, which can help them expand their language skills. Finally, analyzing and discussing the content of murals and monuments can provide English Language Learners with opportunities to practice and improve their speaking and writing skills as they describe and explain the significance of these works.

Key Words

English Language Learners, ELL, mural, monument, heritage, Immigrant, Representation, Diversity, Cultural, Misrepresentation, Digital Learning, Elementary, Indigenous Voices

Unit Content

When faced with the ever-growing pressure of meeting Common Core Standards in literacy and math, how can teachers find ways to empower their students to voice their concerns and use their creativity to improve the world? More importantly, how can educators create space in their everyday classrooms (in person or virtually) for authentic conversations surrounding identity, race, and cultural norms? This curriculum uses art to fuel complex and meaningful instruction for English Language Learners by exploring identity, immigration, and social justice themes.

Educators are responsible for preparing students for academic success but also engage in the discourse surrounding the social inequalities and discrimination their students face. Specifically, there is a need to be conscious about confronting intersectionality in the education of English

Language Learners. There also demands a constant examination of policies, curricula, and teaching practices and how they impact students' identities and performance in the current structures of our educational system. Students need safe spaces to examine who they are, where they have come from, and whom they envision becoming while also challenging systemic racism and xenophobia. More so, students can learn about the immigration or migration narratives of their peers and their community.

During our studies in the seminar, "Social Justice, Monuments, Museums, and Heritage" with Dr. Richard Leventhal and Ph.D. student Charlotte Williams of the University of Pennsylvania, we explored the idea of the American immigration narrative, what it means to be American, and how that is represented through monuments, museums, and cultural artifacts in our country. Through videos, artwork, artifacts, articles, and literature, we explored the ideas of shared heritage, land rights, ownership, and collective memory. Dr. Leventhal shared that "There are a series of narratives that exist around us at all times... the real question is 1) How do we change those narratives and 2) What brings memories together... What is collective memory?" (9/28/2022). Our class pondered what it means to be American, how stories are passed down through generations as truth, how figures are memorialized despite having committed heinous crimes, and what our roles as educators are in continuing or breaking the cycle of institutionalized indoctrination. How can we offer counter-narratives and diversify the voices and stories we share in the classrooms to get a more accurate picture of the greater American narrative? Dr. Leventhal further explained the work of Maurice Halbwachs, an expert on collective memory. He proposes that "We all have individual memories, but we are part of groups - each group sells a story about who is in and who is out." As teachers, we are not only teaching narratives, but we are also controlling the narratives. Every day, we can introduce new or different voices... or not.

Based on one of our class readings by author Michel-Rolph Trouillot, we discussed who controls the power to shape history. Trouillot (1996) described that "Each historical narrative renews a claim to truth" (6). Those in positions of power, such as teachers, may select certain events or sources to highlight while downplaying or ignoring others. Power shapes the narrative of history in a way that supports the agendas of those in power. Our class discussed the importance of being critical of the histories that we are presented with and those we present. Our students require us to seek out alternative perspectives and voices. Professor Leventhal emphasized this idea by describing how "Narratives can change... if communities step up." We investigated this further when we explored the creation of public art as a reflection of various accounts and identities. The Monument Lab is an organization that aims to challenge traditional notions of what a monument should be and to create a more inclusive and diverse public realm. It encourages the creation of monuments that celebrate underrepresented groups, such as women, people of color, and LGBTQ+ individuals, and that address controversial narratives. In general, the monuments of Philadelphia tend to focus on the stories of key historical figures and events rather than on the experiences and perspectives of everyday people. Still, the Mural Arts program and other organizations in the city are trying to change that and are working towards shaping a more diverse and inclusive public art scene.

During our term together, we also further discussed the importance of land rights and discussions surrounding who *owns* the culture and heritage of a people. During one of our sessions, we had the opportunity to meet with Maya Land Activists Christina Coc, Pablo Mis, and Filiberto

Penados. Coc described how “ Heritage, practices, and people change with time... we create our heritage in our present realities and express our culture through our art and craft... we can't do that with the absence of our land... it's our inspiration.” She further explained that the Maya people were denied the right to shape their heritage and regain agency. Her colleague Pablo Mis connected these ideals with Philadelphia's narrative, “These monuments (in Philadelphia) tell a story... We share the journey we all live. There is trauma in Philadelphia's story. There is also a story that comes from it.” The children of Philadelphia have their individual stories and heritages, but they also share a common history and narrative. But whose voices are featured in that narrative, and whose are missing? For example, few murals or monuments acknowledge the history and cultural heritage of the Lenape people in Philadelphia. This group was forcibly removed from their ancestral lands in the 18th century. However, in South Philadelphia, the Columbus statue at Marconi Plaza has been a focus of heated debates. Some people called for its removal or replacement because Columbus exploited Indigenous groups, and others argued for its retention or restoration. A leader in our class, Ph.D. candidate Charlotte Williams, described a growing debate “over what we want to memorialize & commemorate.” Educators have the opportunity to discuss the importance of decolonizing public art and cultural institutions to create a more inclusive and accurate representation of history and culture so that their students can be represented and seen.

Many K-3 students are taught about American symbols with little debate about what should be memorialized. Like many other US monuments, statues, and artifacts, the Statue of Liberty is a universal symbol of freedom and hope that has cultivated a story passed down through generations through history books and a nationwide curriculum. As the daughter of an immigrant and the teacher of many first- and second-generation Americans, immigration narratives and experiences have always had a compelling interest to me as a source of analyzing one's identity. My father often talked of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island as symbols of hope to the United States, retelling how my aunt inscribed our family name on the Wall of Honor in the back of the museum. Even the statue's inscription, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free," has become a powerful and enduring symbol of the country's history of immigration. To this day, the Statue of Liberty's promise of a better life resonates with many Americans of European descent. Ellis Island was a major entry point for European immigrants during the late 19th century. Sadly, it is often the only place mentioned in elementary school curricula regarding immigration. This Eurocentric perspective negates other immigrant narratives and furthers the implicit bias that European heritage is superior.

Since this narrative is pervasive, as educators, we have a responsibility to develop curricula that engage students with authentic conversations about the impact of immigration on our identities, as well as the social contexts of our futures. However, not everyone's immigration or migration story is a positive one. What about Angel Island on the West Coast? Or even our own local Washington Avenue Immigration Station? Or African Americans who migrated north for work or to escape slavery? What about the voices of the Native American Tribes that lived on the land before us? Students need to learn about the difference between individuals who travel to a location and are considered outsiders versus those who have always lived in a region with a new border imposed, thus becoming outsiders. Native North Americans had deep historical ties to the land and were suddenly perceived as foreigners. Today, immigration has become a contentious issue, with various groups advocating for stricter or more lenient policies. This is especially heated in regard to the US-Mexican border, illegal immigration, and the often-inhumane

treatment of asylum seekers. It made me consider whether our city reflects the diversity of immigrants and provides a voice to the often voiceless. It raises the question of whose stories are being valued or erased. Even within our city walls, monuments and murals can illuminate the often-perilous experiences of immigrants. How can we use them to think critically about what is collective heritage while also finding space for our own narratives? This proposed unit will work with *third graders* and seeks to explore Immigration & Migration history through the lens of the symbols, monuments, and murals used to tell the narrative of Philadelphia.

We will accomplish this through...

- Thinking critically about symbols of US & Philadelphia history
- Exploring diverse text sets, videos, and images that explore immigration in the US (past & present)
- Reflecting on stories of immigration or migration
- Field Trip, touring murals and monuments within the city of Philadelphia
- Field Trip, touring a local museum to explore Indigenous art & artifacts
- Field Trip, visiting a local museum that specializes in immigration
- Meeting Guest Speakers that specialize in cultural artifacts, murals, and monuments
- Project-based learning, developing a symbol, artifact, or monument for our school

By the end of the unit, students will be able to...

- Read diverse stories about American immigration & migration
- Think critically about why specific individuals or events are honored through monuments or memorials. Notice when voices are left out.
- Observe & learn more about sculptures, memorials, plaques, houses, statues, and murals in Philadelphia and the United States. What do they symbolize, or why are they important?
- When engaging with one of these monuments & murals, question: Who created this? When was it created? Why? Who is the audience? Where is it located, and why? What is the message? Whose voice is missing?
- Elevate their voices and stories by researching monuments or cultural artifacts that are significant to them in the country or worldwide.
- What is an appropriate museum, monument, or artifact for the current city of Philadelphia? (Monument Lab) Work collaboratively to plan and design a new museum for the city and fill it with inclusive artifacts.

Teaching Strategies

As a Teacher of English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), it is my responsibility to instruct English Learners based on the WIDA Standards in Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking goals, as well as support classroom teachers with content instruction. The following units are designed primarily to support English Language Learners in grades 2-5, although student resources and content would be best geared for any ELP level with scaffolding and support. In many instances, ESL teachers use both push-in and pull-out models for instruction during the school day; however, this curriculum would work best in a co-teaching model that could be integrated into existing units of study. Collaboration with the classroom literacy and social studies teachers is also essential to address the specific academic goals for each grade level.

Cultural artifacts, such as art, literature, music, and more, can help us understand our collective heritage by providing a window into the beliefs, values, and experiences of people from different cultures and historical periods. These artifacts can also help us understand the complexity of our own city's heritage. They can provide insight into the perspectives of immigrants and other groups that may not be represented in mainstream histories. Including migrant and immigrant experiences can help us appreciate these groups' contributions to the city of Philadelphia and acknowledge the challenges they have faced. One way to include a broader range of voices is by seeking out sources not traditionally included in mainstream narratives, such as personal accounts and non-traditional public art. Alternatively, in the case of our seminar, the monuments and murals adorning our city of Philadelphia. It also involves critically analyzing public artwork to identify biases or decide whose voices are elevated or left out. By doing so, we can work to create a more accurate understanding of our collective heritage and who controls the narrative. While the following unit is developed to feature Philadelphia, the structure of the curriculum can be used to think critically about the purpose of statues, memorials, and public art across our country and the world.

Many teaching strategies will be useful when working within this unit or developing additional activities. Some highlighted strategies include:

Direct Instruction: This strategy involves educators providing a clear explanation or demonstration of a concept or skill to the students. This could involve showing images of murals, memorials, and statues, explaining the artwork's history and purpose, and discussing different techniques and styles used by artists.

Inquiry-Based Learning: This strategy involves posing a question or problem to students and allowing them to explore and discover the answer or solution through their research and investigation. Students will be asked to research and analyze a particular mural or memorial, debate its importance in our city and create their own museum inspired by a particular theme or issue.

Collaborative Learning: This strategy involves students working in small groups to solve a problem or complete a task. Students will work together or independently to create an artifact, memorial, or mural as a group project and discuss the meaning and significance of a particular symbol or public artwork in the city.

Case-Based Learning: This strategy involves presenting students with a real-world problem or situation and asking them to apply their knowledge and skills to analyze and solve the problem. Students will be asked to consider the social and political context of a particular mural or memorial and to think about how it reflects or challenges dominant narratives or values.

Project-Based Learning: This strategy involves students completing a long-term project that requires them to apply their knowledge and skills to a real-world problem or challenge. Students will be asked to propose a new museum and design inclusive artifacts.

Gallery Walk: This strategy involves students exploring multiple texts or images in places around the room. When using this activity, students should work with partners or small groups to examine documents, images, quotes, or more to think critically about a topic. This could be used to introduce background information at the beginning of the unit, even draw out connections mid-unit, or highlight student performances at the end of the unit.

Classroom Activities

This curricular unit could be split into four bends, taught in sequence, or broken into four sections (bends) taught at various points in the year. While each bend has a featured lesson, additional lesson ideas can be developed based on grade level and student population. Each bend could last about two to three weeks, depending on the number of lessons developed.

Bend 1: Immigration & Migration: Narratives Behind Our Nation

Immigration and migration are integral to the American experience, shaping the country's history and contributing to its diverse culture. In this curricular unit, students will delve into the narratives behind immigration and migration within the U.S., exploring why people have chosen to leave their homes and relocate to a new country. Through various texts, including primary source documents and personal accounts, students will learn about the experiences of immigrants and, more so, the challenges they faced as they sought to build new lives in America. The unit will also consider the social and political contexts in which immigration and migration have occurred, examining how economic, social, and political forces have shaped these movements. Overall, this unit gives students a deeper understanding of the complex histories of immigration and migration to the United States.

Featured Lesson 1: Gallery Walk - "Immigration and the City: An Introduction to Analyzing Immigrant Monuments and Murals in Philadelphia"

Objective: Students will be able to understand the role of immigration as it influences the history and culture of Philadelphia, and will be able to reflect on the diverse experiences of immigrants in the city.

Materials:

- Images of different immigrant monuments and murals in Philadelphia (e.g. [History of Immigration](#) Mural (which has since been painted over and the building will be

demolished), [Migrant Imaginary](#), [History of Chinatown Mural](#), [Irish & Scottish Immigrant Monuments](#), [Monument to New Immigrants](#), [Aqui y Alla](#), etc.)

- Handout or poster with guiding questions and sentence frames for discussion (*Below*)
- Anchor chart paper with images of immigration-themed artwork or monuments around the city.

Hook:

- Whole Class - Ask students to brainstorm a list of things they know about immigration in Philadelphia. Do they have any personal connections that you feel comfortable sharing? What artwork (murals or monuments) have they seen in our neighborhood or city?
- Have students share their ideas as a group and then discuss them in class.

Lesson:

- Introduce the topic of immigrant monuments and murals in Philadelphia and explain that these public artworks reflect the diverse experiences of immigrants in the city.
- Show images of the monuments and murals and have students brainstorm what they notice and wonder about the artworks. Each image will be placed on an anchor chart around the classroom.
- Have students work in small groups to observe one of the immigrant monuments or murals on the list more in-depth. Students can write their observations around the image on the paper.
- Each group will rotate around the room, adding observations.
- Once the groups have completed the cycle. Have each group present their findings from their original image to the class, including information about the artwork, what history or significance it could represent, and any connections.

Discussion Questions:

- What themes and experiences do these immigrant monuments and murals depict?
- How do these artworks reflect the diversity of immigrant experiences in Philadelphia?
- What can we learn from these artworks about the history and culture of the city?
- Whose experiences are shared and whose are missing?

Sentence Starters

- I notice...

- I wonder...
- I agree/disagree...
- Can you tell me more?
- This reminds me of _____, because _____.
- Why do you think that?
- Can you give me an example from the picture?
- In addition to what you said about _____, I noticed....
- I agree with _____, because....
- I disagree with _____, because...

Supports & Modifications

For students with ELP Levels 1-3, offer a graphic organizer or template with transitional phrases to help guide their understanding. Beginner English Language Learners work best with sentence frames and simple sentences to guide their speaking and writing. It supports them to then focus on building vocabulary about the content. To help support students in their native language, you can utilize Google Translate.

Evaluation Tools

- This unit is intended to build background knowledge, and therefore, students can work to evaluate their own thinking about the texts. I would encourage students to set up an independent reading log with tasks on paper or Google Slides to track their learning about immigration and migration through grade-appropriate texts.
- Use this lesson as an introductory and informal assessment to gauge students' understanding of the diverse experiences of immigrants in the city and art analysis. Use of comments and post-it note observations can be used in a learning portfolio.
- As a summative assessment, students can create a symbol or artwork representing their cultural heritage. The class can combine their symbols into a mural to keep on display through the end of the unit.

Additional Lesson Ideas:

- Students will complete close readings of the texts below or work in Literature Circles (Book Clubs): “National Geographic Reader: Ellis Island,” “Grandfather’s Journey,” “The Keeping Quilt,” and “Coming to America”
- Students participate in Independent Reading of diverse text sets, as well as book talks and partner reading

- During this bend, I also encourage educators to complete an audit of their own classroom libraries and explore whether they include texts that are representative of the immigration and migration stories of students or members of the community that exist in their section of the city and beyond. Additional text suggestions are located in the resources.
- Students can also work towards creating a class mural of symbols that represent their identities and cultural heritage.
- *Vocabulary Development*: Sculptures, Immigration, Migration, Prejudice, Transcontinental, Persecution, Economic, Tolerance, Memorial, Monument, Indigenous

Bend 2 - Indigenous Voices

The second bend of the unit focuses not on the immigrants who traveled to Philadelphia, but rather the Indigenous tribes that were already there. Specifically, students will learn more about the Lenape, a Native American tribe with a long and rich history in the Delaware Valley region of the United States. Through studying Lenape art and artifacts, students will explore the culture and traditions of this Indigenous group and gain a deeper understanding of their unique perspective on the world. These lessons will begin by introducing students to the Lenape people and their history in the Delaware Valley, including their relationships with European settlers and the impact of colonization on their way of life. Students will then have the opportunity to examine a variety of Lenape art and artifacts, including pottery, baskets, and carvings, and consider the cultural and artistic significance of these objects during visits to the Penn Museum and exploration of online exhibits and resources created by Indigenous groups. The unit will also include a focus on contemporary Native American communities and how they are working to preserve and revitalize their cultural traditions, while also giving voice to their histories and current realities. Overall, this bend aims to provide students with a well-rounded understanding of the Indigenous Tribes from our area.

Featured Lesson #2 - Article Deep Dive - "Native Voices and the Representation of Native History and Culture"

Objective: Students will be able to understand the importance of including Indigenous voices in the representation of native history and culture, and will be able to reflect on their own role in creating a more inclusive and respectful society.

Materials:

- ["Native People Have a Story to Tell – Their Own"](#) article
- Handout with key points and questions for discussion
- Images and background information of a unique installation called [“Alpha Sacred Beings \(The Origin of Creation\).”](#) which is a life-size replica of a Parasaurolophus dinosaur, adorned with beadwork resembling Lenape symbols and creation myth artwork. This was created by Mexican artist Marianela Fuentes in collaboration with local Lenape Tribes.

Hook:

- Part 1: Show students the picture of the “Alpha Sacred Beings” dinosaur. What do they notice or wonder? Share out with a partner.
- Part 2: Have students work with a partner to explore the website: <https://americanindian.si.edu/americans/> to discuss how Native American imagery exists in our country.
- Extend: Ask students to brainstorm a list of things they know about Indigenous history and culture. Have students share their ideas with partners and then the class

Lesson:

- Introduce the article "Native People Have a Story to Tell – Their Own" and explain that it discusses the importance of Indigenous voices in the representation of native history and culture.
- Have students read the article as a class or in small groups.
- Use the handout to guide a class discussion about the key points and themes in the article.
- **Extension:** Students can independently choose another article from Indigenous Voices (Smithsonian Institute) to read critically. <https://www.si.edu/spotlight/native-voices> This online platform features writers and artists from around the world, including a range of artistic content, such as poetry, fiction writing, and visual art.

Article Background for Teachers:

"Native People Have a Story to Tell – Their Own" is an article that discusses the importance of Indigenous voices in the representation of native history and culture. The article argues that Indigenous people have been historically marginalized and their stories and perspectives have been largely absent from mainstream narratives about native history. The article calls for the inclusion of Indigenous voices in the creation of public art and memorials and in the interpretation of historical events and cultural practices. It also highlights the importance of respecting the rights of Indigenous people to control the representation of their own history and culture and the need for non-Indigenous people to listen to and learn from Indigenous perspectives.

Discussion Questions:

- How have Indigenous voices been marginalized in representing native history and culture?
- Why is it important to include Indigenous voices in creating public art and memorials and interpreting historical events and cultural practices?
- How can non-Indigenous people, work towards a more inclusive and respectful society?

Conclusion:

- Return to the image of the dinosaur and give students background information about the art that adorns it. Ask them to evaluate whether or not this would be an example of the inclusion of Indigenous voices in public art.
- Encourage students to consider ways to learn more about Indigenous cultures and histories and work to support Indigenous communities.

Supports & Modifications

For students with ELP Levels 1-3, offer a graphic organizer or template with transitional phrases to help guide their understanding. Beginner English Language Learners work best with sentence frames and simple sentences to guide their speaking and writing. It supports them to then focus on building vocabulary about the content. To help support students in their native language, you can utilize Google Translate.

Evaluation Tools

- Have students write a short reflection about either of the articles and their thoughts about the importance of Indigenous voices in representing native history and culture.
- Use the reflection to assess students' understanding of the key points and themes of the articles and their ability to think critically about their own role in creating a more inclusive and respectful society.

Additional Lesson Ideas:

- Tour of the Penn Museum's Native American Voices Galleries, and if possible, a behind-the-scenes talk about [NAGPRA](#). The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) is a federal law passed in 1990 that supports the rights of Native American tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. The focus is to support groups to regain ownership of cultural items, including human remains, sacred objects, and other objects of cultural significance, held in museums, federal agencies, or other institutions. NAGPRA requires institutions to inventory collections and consult with tribes to determine the appropriate repatriation of these items. The program aims to address the harm caused by removing these items from their original contexts and respecting Indigenous groups' rights to reclaim their cultural heritage.
- If possible, have students visit different museums in the Philadelphia area. Have students focus on an analysis of an artifact or artwork. Be sure to check out [We are the Seeds](#) Philadelphia for upcoming events or connect with local artists.
- Watch videos about local tribes' cultural practices or learn more about American Indian culture. <https://www.si.edu/spotlight/native-voices>

- Have a class discussion on Land Activism and explore places in Philadelphia that are named based on Lenape words. Let students explore the Native Land Map <https://native-land.ca/> to further their understanding of Land Acknowledgements.
- *Vocabulary Development:* Algonquian, Wampum, Medicine Man, Powwow, Cradleboards, storytelling, Wigwams, Longhouses, Moccasins, Canoe, Farming, Beadwork, Basketry
- Exploration of additional murals or monuments in the city of Philadelphia that feature Native American Voices
 - One notable mural is the "Lenape: Keepers of the Water" mural, which is located in the Fishtown neighborhood.
 - One statue with significance would be the Chief Tamanend Bronze statue at Front & Market Sts.
 - Another famous statue would be the Statue of Tedyuscung in the Wissahickon, located at Council Rock.
 - The portraits of Lenape leaders Tishcohan and Lapowinsa at the Philadelphia Museum of Art would be excellent to spark background knowledge discussions of the Walking Purchase in Pennsylvania.

Bend 3 - Up for Debate: Critical Thinking

This bend seeks to engage students in critical thinking about the role of public art in shaping our understanding of immigration and migration. The unit will begin by introducing students to a variety of public artworks, some controversial, that address these themes, including murals, sculptures, and places named after individuals. Students will then have the opportunity to analyze and interpret the artwork, considering the messages they convey and the perspectives they represent, and debate their existence. As part of this process, students will also learn about the artists who created these works and the contexts in which they were produced. The unit will also focus on how public art can be used to promote social justice and inspire change, encouraging students to think about the power of art to influence public discourse and shape our understanding of the world.

Featured Lesson #3: "Monuments and Memory: Debating the Existence of Public Art"

Objective: Students will be able to understand the role of monuments in shaping the collective memory and identity of a community and will be able to engage in a respectful and informed debate about the existence of a particular monument.

Materials:

- Information about a controversial monument or places in Philadelphia (e.g., Frank [Rizzo](#) statue/relics, [Columbus](#) Statue & Monuments, [Marconi](#) Plaza, [Andrew Jackson](#) School, Justice [Taney](#), George [Whitefield](#) Statue, [William Penn](#), and others)

- Graphic Organizer Note Catcher to compile pros and cons, notes from other groups
- Debate rules and structure (e.g., pro/con teams, speaking order, time limits)

Hook: Show students an image of the monument, “Monument in Waiting” by Theaster Gates. Have them work with partners to talk about what they notice (especially about the inscription) and what they wonder about why there is no person or symbol represented on the stand. Have students share their responses or collect them on a digital note catcher.

Lesson:

The teacher will model debating the pros & cons of a monument in the community. Introduce the topic of controversial monuments and explain that these public artworks often spark debate about their significance and appropriateness.

Example - The Christopher Columbus statue in Philadelphia has been the subject of controversy due to the complex history and legacy of Columbus and his impact on Indigenous people. Here are some potential pros and cons for the statue:

Pros:

- The statue is a significant historical and cultural symbol for the city of Philadelphia and especially for the Italian American community. It is a reminder of these groups' rich history and cultural heritage. The statue itself was gifted to the city by the Italian-American community in 1876.
- Attorney George Bocchetto, working to save the statue, said, "We are not a society ruled by canceled culture mobs. That all ethnic groups can proudly protect and honor their diverse heritages."
- The statue is a work of art that has historical and aesthetic value.

Cons:

- Columbus is controversial due to his role in the colonization and exploitation of Indigenous peoples. Some say that keeping the statue can be seen as honoring this legacy.
- The statue does not accurately reflect the history and experiences of Indigenous people and can perpetuate a one-sided narrative glorifying Columbus and his impact.
- The statue can be seen as a symbol of oppression and cultural appropriation, and its existence can be hurtful and offensive to Indigenous people and other marginalized groups.
- Provide students with the names of specific controversial monuments, statues, and places and have them brainstorm what they notice and wonder about the artwork.
- Divide the class into pro and con teams and have each team develop key points and

questions for debate provided on the handout. Students should use the time to read about the statue, monument, place, or person online and collect talking points.

- Have students participate in a debate about the existence, using the key points and questions as a guide.
- Give students a list of evaluative guiding questions to help them develop pros and cons.

Guiding Questions:

By considering these factors, you can better understand how a piece of art represents diverse heritages and whether or not it is a positive and respectful representation.

- What is the history and significance of this monument?
- What are the arguments for and against the existence of this monument?
- How does this monument reflect the values and identity of the community?
- Does the art present multiple perspectives on a subject or only one dominant narrative? What are potential alternative ways to remember and honor this history?
- If this monument should not exist, what should go in its place?
- Does the art depict people from various racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds? Are these groups depicted in a nuanced and respectful way, or are they reduced to stereotypes?
- Was the art created by artists from diverse heritages or by a homogenous group?
- Does the artwork provide sufficient context to help viewers understand the cultural background and experiences of the people depicted?
- Does the art have the potential to positively or negatively impact how people from diverse heritages are perceived and treated in society?

Conclusion:

- Encourage students to consider how monuments shape a community's collective memory and identity and think about their own role in shaping these narratives.

Supports & Modifications

For students with ELP Levels 1-3, offer a graphic organizer or template with transitional phrases to help guide their understanding. Beginner English Language Learners work best with sentence frames and simple sentences to guide their speaking and writing. It supports them to then focus on building vocabulary about the content. To help support students in their native language, you can utilize Google Translate.

Another strategy for Level 1-3 ESL students would be to debate the monument or statue modeled by the teacher so that they have been exposed to vocabulary and sentence frames for the assignment.

Evaluation Tools:

- Have students write a short reflection on the debate and their thoughts about the existence of the controversial monument. This should be a structured, 3+ paragraph essay. Students will be graded using the following scale based on their inclusion:
 - 1) *Students craft a clear and concise topic sentence that argues for or against a particular monument.*
 - 2) *Students have at least three clear examples or reasons why the monument should or should not exist.*
 - 3) *Each example is supported by elaboration (details) from the text or another close connection.*
 - 4) *The essay closes with a clear conclusion statement that includes the student's proposal for an alternative monument or an evaluative statement about the importance of the monument.*

EE: exceeds expectations ME: meets expectations PME: partially meets expectations DNME: does not yet meet expectations

- Use the reflection to assess students' understanding of the key points and themes of the debate and their ability to think critically about the role of monuments in shaping the collective memory and identity of a community.

Additional Lesson Ideas:

- Have students learn more about the Monument Lab & Mural Arts Programs using their online resources for field trips.
- Taking a walking tour or bus tour of different murals or monuments in the city.
- Host a debate to create a new monument to display at the school.
- Learning more about the city museums and researching their mission and any controversial acquisitions in their keep.
- *Vocabulary Development:* Audience, Environment, Scale, Community, Heritage, Representation, Interactive,

Bend 4 - Taking a Stand - Creating Inclusive Public Art

This bend encourages students to think about how public art can promote inclusivity and diversity. Begin by allowing students to analyze and interpret the process through which

museums and artwork are created, considering the messages they convey and the perspectives they represent. As part of this process, students will be challenged to propose a new, inclusive immigration museum for the city. They will also create public artworks that celebrate diversity and inclusivity, encouraging them to think about how art can promote social justice and create positive change in the world.

Featured Lesson #4: “Creating a New Immigration Museum”

Objective:

- Students will write a proposal for a new immigration museum in their community, including ideas for exhibits and artifacts to be displayed.
- Students will create an artifact or statue representing a specific immigrant group or immigration experience.
- Students will present their proposals and artifacts to the class and discuss the importance of immigration in their community.

Materials:

- Writing materials (paper, pens, pencils) and Chromebooks with Google Suite
- Art materials (clay, paper, paint, and more)
- Letter Template for proposal (student or teacher created)
- Monument Lab Field Trip Museums [Resource](#)

Vocabulary Development: Curator, Exhibition, Gallery, Display Case, Immigration, Migration, Institution, Museum, Collection, Proposal, Ideation

Hook:

- Read the text “A is for Art Museum,” an alphabet book featuring the different artwork that is featured in the Philadelphia Museum of Art.
- Introduce the concept of creating a new immigration museum in the community.

Lesson:

- Begin the lesson by asking students what they have learned about immigration in their community. Have students jot down their ideas on post-it notes and compile big ideas on chart paper to place around the room. Also, consider using a Jam board.
- Discuss the purpose of museums and how they can serve as a way to preserve and share important history and culture. Have students list local museums they have visited and consider the purpose of each. Compare and contrast why museums exist and also delve into the types of artifacts or artwork students see at different museums.

- Explain that students will be writing proposals for a new immigration museum, including ideas for exhibits and artifacts to be displayed.

Small Group:

- Have students work in small groups to brainstorm ideas for their museum proposals.
- Encourage them to think about different areas when developing their proposal. There are several things to consider when creating a museum about immigration:
 - Purpose: It is crucial to determine the museum's purpose and how it will serve the community. Will it be a place to celebrate and honor the contributions of immigrant groups, or will it serve as a way to educate the public about the challenges and struggles immigrants face?
 - Audience: Consider whom the museum is intended for and how it can best serve and engage them. Will it be geared toward families, students, or community members with a specific interest in immigration?
 - Content: Think about what exhibits and artifacts to include in the museum. Consider the diverse immigrant groups and experiences represented in the community and how to accurately and respectfully portray them.
 - Partnerships: Consider partnering with local immigrant groups, community organizations, and other institutions to help develop and support the museum. These partnerships can also provide valuable resources and expertise.

Independent Work or Partnerships:

- Have students write their proposals for the new immigration museum using a template or letter form, including details about the exhibits and artifacts they plan to include.
- Encourage them to think about how their museum can accurately and respectfully represent the immigrant groups and experiences they have chosen to focus on.

Extension:

- Have students create an artifact or statue representing a specific immigrant group or immigration experience. This can be a physical object or a model of an object. For example, “Monument in Waiting” by Theaster Gates.
- Encourage students to think about what symbols or themes are essential to the immigrant group or experience they represent and how they can use these to create their artifact or statue.
- They should create a label to display with their artifact, including materials, a description of the object, and an explanation of its connection to the theme.

Conclusion:

- Have students present their proposals and artifacts to the class, invite families and community members, or even share with other students in the school. Encourage discussion about the importance of immigration in the community and how the museum can serve as a way to honor and learn about the diverse immigrant experiences in the area.
- Prepare students to serve as museum docents, taking other classes or families on tours of the exhibits and artifacts.

Evaluative Tools:

- Observe students as they work in small groups working on the museum proposal.
- Review the written proposals and artifacts for accuracy.
- Use the artifact label as a summative assessment.
- Evaluate student participation in class discussions and presentations.

Resources

Campfens, E. Whose Cultural Objects? Introducing Heritage Title for Cross-Border Cultural Property Claims. *Neth Int Law Rev* 67, 257–295 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40802-020-00174-3>

Erika Doss, 2010, “Statue Mania to Memorial Mania: Scope of the Subject,” in *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America*, pages 17 – 60

Horse Capture, Joe : ‘Native People Have a Story to Tell – Their Own,’ *Indian Country Today*, April 25, 2015 <https://indiancountrytoday.com/archive/horse-capture-native-people-have-a-story-to-tell-their-own>

Amy Lonetree (2021). Decolonizing Museums, Memorials, and Monuments. *The Public Historian*, 43(4), 21-27.

Lowenthal, D. (2015) Knowing the Past. In *The Past is a Foreign Country-Revisited* (pp. 289-302)

Merry, Michael. What is an appropriate educational response to controversial historical monuments? <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12562>

Philippe de Montebello, “Whose Culture Is It? Museums and the collection of antiquities,” *The Berlin Journal*, Fall 2007, No. 15, pages 33 – 37

Smithsonian Magazine. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/endangered-cultural-heritage-sites-world-monuments-fund-2022-180979665/>

Sypnowich, Christine. Monuments and monsters: Education, cultural heritage and sites of conscience. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9752.12578>

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph, 1996, "The Power in the Story," in *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*, pages 1-30

Educator Mentor Texts & Online Resources

<https://www.associationforpublicart.org/explore/> A site that provides visual resources for public art around Philadelphia, as well as explains issues and controversies that are debated.

<http://www.artsobserver.com/2012/02/26/philadelphia-mural-program-features-narrative-installation-on-immigration-to-u-s/> The article is titled "Philadelphia Mural Program Features Narrative Installation on Immigration to the U.S." and describes in-depth the History of Immigration mural.

http://explorepahistory.com/displaygallery.php?gallery_id=1-7-3C&bcolor=ggreen&showimage=10 This site offers images of the History of immigration mural to be used for educational purposes.

<https://hiddencityphila.org/2019/08/philadelphias-forgotten-forebears-how-pennsylvania-erased-the-lenape-from-local-history/> The article is titled "Philadelphia's Forgotten Forebears: How Pennsylvania Erased the Lenape from Local History." The article is about the Lenape, a Native American tribe that lived in the region now known as Philadelphia and discusses the Lenape's history, culture, and role in the area, as well as how they were erased from local history by settler colonialism and other forces.

<https://hsp.org/history-online/digital-history-projects> A digital resource that provides students with oral histories, maps, and digital exhibits that are Philadelphia-based.

<https://monumentlab.com/> Monument Lab, based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is known for producing public art installations, completing research projects, and developing educational programs that explore the meanings and histories of monuments and memorials.

<https://data.monumentlab.com/monument-lab/assets/nvlcmdztz5cowgcg> This resource from Monument Lab is a tool that can be used by students when preparing for field trips to museums. This can also be an asset for students when evaluating and designing their own museum.

<https://whyy.org/articles/we-just-want-to-be-welcomed-back-the-lenape-seek-a-return-home/> This article published by WHYY, is titled "We Just Want to be Welcomed Back': The Lenape Seek a Return Home." The article concerns their efforts to reclaim and revitalize their ancestral lands and cultural traditions. It discusses the history of the Lenape, their displacement, and their ongoing struggles to reclaim their art, music, dance, and other aspects of their cultural heritage.

<https://time.com/3665776/immigration-how-to-talk-to-your-kids-about-it/> The article "Immigration: How to Talk to Your Kids About It," is about how to approach the topic of immigration with children and young people.

<https://upfront.scholastic.com/issues/2021-22/011022/monumental-decisions.html> Upfront Magazine is a current events magazine for high school students published by Scholastic. The

article "Monumental Decisions" is about the ongoing debates and discussions surrounding the removal or preservation of historical monuments and memorials.

<https://sn56.scholastic.com/issues/2020-21/100520.html> The website is a part of Scholastic News, a weekly news magazine for students. The article "Why was this statue removed?" could be a great conversation starter for students to debate the purpose behind public art.

http://explorepahistory.com/imagegallery.php?gallery_id=1-7-3C&bcolor=ggreen&display_image=1&imgId=1-2-37F This website is a part of ExplorePAHistory, a digital platform that aims to provide information about the history and culture of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

<https://americanindian.si.edu/online-resources> This website provides resources developed in conjunction with the National Museum of the American Indian.

Student Texts

A is for Art Museum, This book features the different types of artwork that is on display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

"Untitled Photograph of Evacuees Seeing the Statue of Liberty," History Extra: This photograph portrays the iconic Statue of Liberty greeting immigrants as they arrive in the United States.

Liberty Enlightening the World, Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi: The Statue of Liberty famously symbolizes America's immigration story.

Hedy's Journey by Michelle Bisson Hedy's Journey is a picture book about a young girl named Hedy who flees Nazi-occupied Austria with her family and travels to America.

How to Build a Museum, Tonya Bolden: The first national museum whose mission is to illuminate for all people, the rich, diverse, complicated, and important experiences and contributions of African Americans in America is opening. And the history of NMAAHC--the last museum to be built on the National Mall--is the history of America.

Dumpling Dreams by Carrie Clickard Dumpling Dreams is a picture book about a young girl who immigrated to America with her family and the difficulties they face, but also the comfort and joy that food brings to their new life.

Island Born by Junot Diaz Island Born is a picture book about a young boy named Yunion who immigrated to America with his family and the challenges and joys they experience in their new home.

Her Right Foot by Dave Eggers Her Right Foot is a nonfiction picture book about the Statue of Liberty and its history as a symbol of freedom and immigration.

I'm an Immigrant Too by Mem Fox I'm an Immigrant Too is a picture book that celebrates the diversity and experiences of immigrants.

Family Pictures, Carmen Lomas Garza: Garza, a renowned Mexican American artist, combines text and images to depict the warmth and dignity of her childhood home in Kingsville, Texas.

O, Say Can You See? America's Symbols, Landmarks, and Important Words by Sheila Keenan: The book gives background to many of the symbols we see representing our country.

Here I am by Patti Kim Here I Am is a picture book about a young child who immigrated to America with their family and their challenges in adjusting to a new culture.

Paper Son by Julie Leung Paper Son is a picture book about a boy named Chang who immigrated to America with his family and their experiences adapting to a new place.

Coming to America: The Story of Immigration, Betsy Maestro: Maestro's informational book provides an overview of immigration to America through sophisticated writing and vivid, detailed illustrations.

La Frontera By Deborah Mills La Frontera is a picture book about a young girl named Maria who immigrated to America with her family and the struggles and triumphs they face as they adjust to a new culture.

"Visiting the Washington Monument," Robert Mills: This important piece of American public art honors George Washington and the promise of the American dream.

Dreamers by Yuyi Morales Dreamers is a picture book about a young boy and his mother who are immigrants and their experiences in America.

A Different Pond by Bao Phi A Different Pond is a picture book about a boy and his father fishing in a pond in Minneapolis and reflecting on the boy's immigrant father's experiences in Vietnam.

The Keeping Quilt, Patricia Polacco: A family is linked to its past through a quilt created from the well-loved clothing of the author's great-grandmother and passed on through several generations.

My Name is Yoon by Helen Recorvits My Name is Yoon is a picture book about a young girl named Yoon who immigrated to America with her family and the challenges she faces in adjusting to a new culture and language.

Gateway Arch, Eero Saarinen: Saarinen created his architectural monument to recall the westward expansion of the United States.

Tea with Milk, Allen Say: Masako returns with her parents to their homeland in Japan but misses the freedom women in the United States enjoy.

Grandfather's Journey, Allen Say: By using exquisite, photo-realistic watercolor paintings and simple, lyrical text, Say tells the story of a grandfather who travels from Japan to the United States and who develops a love for both countries.

Four Feet, Two Sandals by Karen Lynn Williams Four Feet, Two Sandals is a picture book about two refugee girls who share a pair of sandals on their journey to find a new home.

Appendix

The unit's objectives will include the following key skills outlined in the WIDA English Language Development Standards and grade-appropriate Common Core Standards.

- **Standard 1 – Language for Social and Instructional Purposes**
English language learners communicate for social and instructional purposes within the school setting.
- **Standard 2 – Language for Language Arts**
English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of language arts.
- **Standard 3 – Language for Mathematics**
English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of mathematics.
- **Standard 4 – Language for Science**
English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of science.
- **Standard 5 – Language for Social Studies**
English language learners communicate information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in the content area of social studies.

Focus Standards

Reading: RL.3.1, RL.3.6, RL.3.9

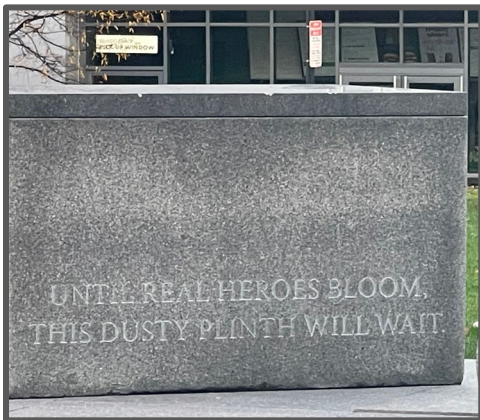
Writing: W.3.3, W.3.4

Speaking and Listening: SL.3.1.a, SL.3.1.c, SL.3.3

Language: L.3.1.b, L.3.1.c, L.3.1.d, L.3.1.e, L.3.1.f, L.3.2.b, L.3.2.c, L.3.2.d, L.3.4.c, L.3.5.b

“Monument in Waiting” by Theaster Gates

Photographs by Tia Larese



Post-it Note Catcher

I notice...

I wonder...

Speaking or Writing Frames Bookmark

NAME: _____

Sentence Starters

- I notice...
- I wonder...
- I agree/disagree...
- Can you tell me more?
- This reminds me of _____, because _____.
- Why do you think that?
- Can you give me an example from the picture?
- In addition to what you said about _____, I noticed....
- I agree with _____, because....
- I disagree with _____, because...

Pros/Cons 4-Square

Description of Public Artwork:

Image:

Pros:

Cons:

Museum Proposal Ideation

- Purpose: It is crucial to determine the museum's purpose and how it will serve the community. Will it be a place to celebrate and honor the contributions of immigrant groups, or will it serve as a way to educate the public about the challenges and struggles immigrants face?
- Audience: Consider whom the museum is intended for and how it can best serve and engage them. Will it be geared toward families, students, or community members with a specific interest in immigration?
- Content: Think about what exhibits and artifacts to include in the museum. Consider the diverse immigrant groups and experiences represented in the community and how to accurately and respectfully portray them.
- Partnerships: Consider partnering with local immigrant groups, community organizations, and other institutions to help develop and support the museum. These partnerships can also provide valuable resources and expertise.
- Other: What other considerations are there when proposing your museum and/or artwork?