

UCF Veterans Legacy Program Curricular Materials



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U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration



Department
of History



Lesson Title	History & Design of National Cemeteries
Grade(s)	11-12 US History
Time (Minutes/ Days)	4 days [Three 120 minute & One 40 minute class]

Lesson Overview

Students will learn the history of national cemeteries and create a blueprint/layout of a new national cemetery.

Essential Questions

Why do national cemeteries hold importance in our society?
Why do other countries honor our veterans overseas?

Florida State Standards

SS.912.A.1 Use research and inquiry skills to analyze American history using primary and secondary sources.
SS.912.A.2 Utilize a variety of primary and secondary sources to identify authority, historical significance, audience, and authenticity to understand a historical period.
SS.912.A.3 Utilize timelines to identify the time sequence of historical data.
SS.912.A.1.4 Analyze how images, symbols, objects, cartoons, graphs, charts, maps, and artwork may be used to interpret the significance of time periods and events from the past.
SS.912.A.1.5 Evaluate the validity, reliability, bias, and authenticity of current events and Internet resources.

Required Materials

- [National Cemeteries Powerpoint](#)
- [National Cemeteries StoryMaps](#)
- National Cemeteries Notes (See Below)
- National Cemeteries StoryMaps Questions (See Below)
- Article- Design History of National Cemeteries Graphic Organizer (See Below)
- Teacher Answer Keys (See Below)
- Sample National Cemetery Designs (See Below)

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- Internet
- Computers/Tablets
- Paper
- Pens/Pencils
- Miscellaneous items to build a cemetery: paper, Legos, computer, art supplies, etc.

Learning Objectives

Students are to identify the difference between open and closed cemeteries. Students are to research and analyze documents to gather history on our national cemeteries. Students are to create their own layout of a national cemetery and the logistics of who is honored, the memorials created, and where it is located and the significance of that location.

Procedure

1. Introduce the history of National Cemeteries using PPT.
 - a. Students will take "closed notes" on PPT
 - b. Discuss with students the history and impact of National Cemeteries home and abroad.
2. Students will use StoryMaps to go through & answer questions
3. Students will read an article about the history of the design of national cemeteries and answer accompanying questions.
4. Have students create their own National Cemetery using their knowledge gained about national cemeteries and their design.
 - a. May create with paper, PPT, Legos, computer systems (like Unity)

Day 1 – Introduction to the creation of National Cemeteries [Block Period]

1. Introduce the history of National Cemeteries using this [PowerPoint](#).
 - a. Students will take "closed notes" on PPT (see notes below)
 - b. Discuss with students the history and impact of National Cemeteries at home and abroad.
2. Students will use [StoryMaps](#) to go through & answer questions.
 - a. Students will answer questions in the template provided below.

Day 2 – Planning a National Cemetery [40 minutes]

1. Students will [read this article](#) about the history of the design of national cemeteries.
 - a. While they read, have them answer the questions in the document below.
 - b. The goal is for students to think about the key components of a

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national cemetery that they should include in their original designs.

Day 3 – Creating a National Cemetery [Block Period]

1. Students will work individually or in pairs to create a layout of their own National Cemetery.
2. Ensure that students reference the PowerPoint (slide 8) with all of the necessary components they must include and the questions they must answer as part of their project.
3. Students have the autonomy to be as creative as they want with the design of their national cemetery as long as it includes the required elements. They can choose to create their cemetery digitally, on paper, or in three dimensions.

Day 4 – Presenting Your National Cemetery [Block Period]

1. Students will present their National Cemeteries in class to discuss the decisions behind their design choices.
2. Students will walk around to view each other's work and complete the peer feedback assignment (see below).

Bibliography for Further Reading/Teacher/Student Use

American Battle Monuments Commission. "Cemeteries & Memorials." Accessed June 13, 2024. <https://www.abmc.gov/cemeteries-memorials>.

American Battle Monuments Commission. "Infographic: ABMC Sites in the World." Accessed June 18, 2024. <https://www.abmc.gov/news-events/news/infographic-abmc-sites-world>.

Boyles, Fred. "Veterans Cemeteries." U.S. Department of the Interior. Accessed June 13, 2024. https://www.doi.gov/ocl/hearings/110/VeteransCemeteries_050807.

National Cemetery Administration. *World War II 75th Commemorative Series: America's World War II Burial Program*. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2020. <https://www.cem.va.gov/docs/wcag/history/WWII-Burial-Program-America.pdf>.

National Park Service. "Design History of National Cemeteries." Accessed June 16, 2024. <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/national-cemeteries-design.htm>.

National Park Service. "History of National Cemeteries." Accessed June 13, 2024. <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/national-cemeteries-history.htm>.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "America's Wars." Accessed June 14, 2024.

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U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "National Cemetery Administration." Accessed June 13, 2024. <https://www.cem.va.gov/index.asp>.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "On Memorial Day VA Honors All Who Have Served and Died." Accessed June 14, 2024. https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/Demographics/mem_day_20190524_F.pdf.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "The National Cemetery Administration." Accessed June 14, 2024. <https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/celebrate/nca.pdf>.

National Cemeteries Notes

History of National Cemeteries

Revolution & War of 1812

- Veterans buried in _____ or family cemeteries
- Army created “_____ cemeteries”
- Cities created “_____ cemeteries”

Civil War [1861-1865]

- _____ of _____ couldn't fit in regular cemeteries
- Hard to identify fallen soldiers (dog tags didn't exist yet)
- Buried where fallen, maintaining _____
- By 1870, _____ cemeteries created
 - First, reserved only for veterans that died _____
 - Later, opened to _____

First National Cemeteries

- 1862: Congress authorized
 - _____
- First cemeteries came from: _____, hospitals, “other troop concentration points”
- 1867 Act to _____ National Cemeteries
 - _____ for fences, headstones, superintendents
- Separate cemeteries or _____ for African American troops
 - Confederate soldiers _____ at first
 - By 1914, Confederates could be buried in national cemeteries in the _____

Who was in charge of veteran burials before the Civil War?

- _____ Office of the Quartermaster General

Who Runs the National Cemeteries now?

- Federal Agencies
 - National Cemetery Administration of the Department of _____(VA)
 - the Department of the Army of the _____
 - _____ of the Department of the Interior.



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Open vs. Closed Cemeteries?

- Open: _____ of veterans
- Closed: _____ burials of veterans (except for spouses of veterans)

American Battle Monuments Commission

- National Cemeteries grew _____ due to multiple foreign conflicts
 - _____, proxy wars
- American dead overseas could be _____
- Foreign countries created _____ to bury & honor fallen veterans
- Cemeteries and memorials in _____
 - _____, 31 memorials/markers/monuments
 - Most honor _____



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National Cemeteries StoryMaps Questions

Go to [this StoryMap](#) and answer the questions below.

1. **The Mission of the National Cemetery Administration Video**
What is the mission of the National Cemetery Administration?

2. **Image of National Cemeteries**
What do you notice about these National Cemeteries?
 - a. Write a list of 5 items that you observe from the photos.

3. **Review of American Wars/Conflicts**
Complete the quiz in the StoryMaps.

4. **Memorial Day Infographic**
 - A. Which war held the most American veterans that died after military service?

 - B. Which war held the most American veterans that died overall (in battle & in service)?

 - C. Using your answer from above, why would the war in Part B hold the most American casualties of veterans?



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5. Florida National Cemeteries Map

A. How many national cemeteries does Florida have?

B. Using the links, when (year) were these national cemeteries established (note: this might be different than first interred)?

a. Label if these national cemeteries are open or closed.

6. American Battle and Memorial Commission Sites in the World

A. Which country has the most American military memorials and cemeteries?

B. Why might that country have the most?



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Article- Design History of National Cemeteries

[Read this article](#) and answer the questions below.

1. A Solemn Landscape- How did national cemeteries compare to the typical Victorian-style cemeteries of the 1800s? Why was this difference important?

2. A Solemn Landscape- How did the passage of the National Cemeteries Act in 1867 impact the planning of national cemeteries?



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3. Establishing a Common Design for National Cemeteries- Explain the four “principles which should govern the selection of national cemetery sites.”

4. Establishing a Common Design for National Cemeteries- What was significant about the design of the headstones in national cemeteries?



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5. Burial Patterns- Explain the importance of the pattern of the headstones in national cemeteries.

6. Planting Design- In your own words, explain Olmsted's recommendation for cemetery designs.



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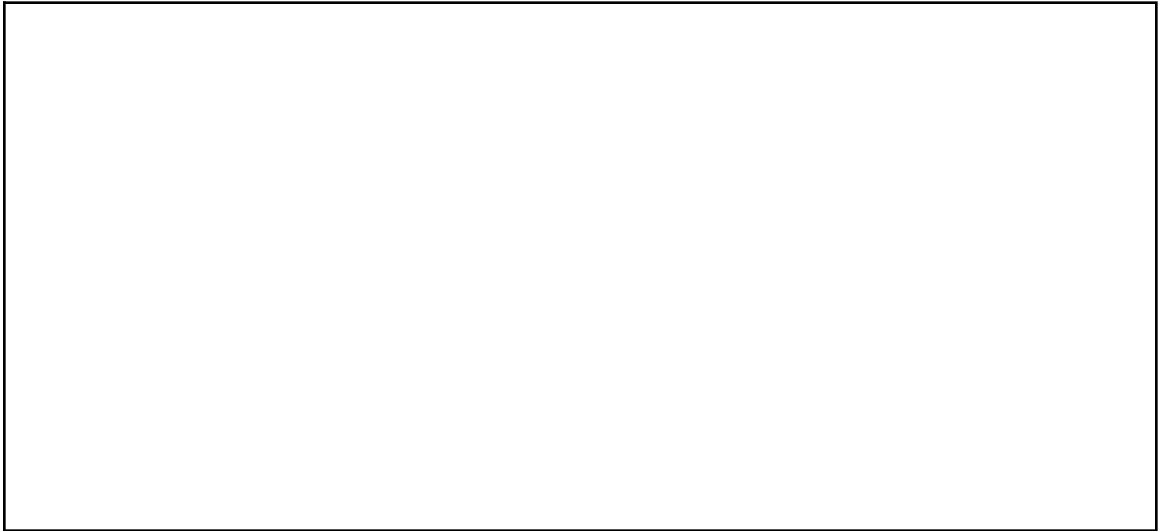


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7. Continuing Development and Use- What types of changes and improvements were made to national cemeteries from the 1800s through WWI?



8. Past and Present- Explain how national cemeteries are designed as historic landscapes.



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Peer Feedback

Give meaningful feedback for three classmates' presentations of their National Cemeteries

Student Presentation Name: _____

1 Part You Like:

1 Question You Have:

1 Suggestion You Have:

Student Presentation Name: _____

1 Part You Like:

1 Question You Have:

1 Suggestion You Have:

Student Presentation Name: _____

1 Part You Like:

1 Question You Have:

1 Suggestion You Have:

After observing all student-created cemeteries, whose is your favorite? _____



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KEY National Cemeteries Notes

History of National Cemeteries

Revolution & War of 1812

- Veterans buried in churchyards or family cemeteries
- Army created "post cemeteries"
- Cities created "rural cemeteries"

Civil War [1861-1865]

- High amount of casualties couldn't fit in regular cemeteries
- Hard to identify fallen soldiers (dog tags didn't exist yet)
- Buried where fallen, maintaining records grew difficult
- By 1870, 73 cemeteries created
 - First, reserved only for veterans that died in conflict
 - Later, opened to all veterans

First National Cemeteries

- 1862: Congress authorized
 - President established
- First cemeteries came from: battlefields, hospitals, "other troop concentration points"
- 1867 Act to Establish and Protect National Cemeteries
 - Gave standards for fences, headstones, superintendents
- Separate cemeteries or segregated sections for African American troops
 - Confederate soldiers were not included at first
 - By 1914, Confederates could be buried in national cemeteries in the South with specific headstones

Who was in charge of veteran burials before the Civil War?

- Army's Office of the Quartermaster General

Who Runs the National Cemeteries now?

- Federal Agencies
 - National Cemetery Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
 - the Department of the Army of the Department of Defense
 - National Park Service of the Department of the Interior.



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Open vs. Closed Cemeteries?

- Open: still taking burials of veterans
- Closed: no longer taking new burials of veterans (except for spouses of veterans)

American Battle Monuments Commission

- National Cemeteries grew worldwide due to multiple foreign conflicts
 - World Wars, proxy wars
- American dead overseas could be buried overseas or brought home
- Foreign countries created American military cemeteries to bury & honor fallen veterans
- Cemeteries and memorials in 17 countries
 - 26 cemeteries, 31 memorials/markers/monuments
 - Most honor World War I & World War II



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KEY National Cemeteries Story Map Questions

1. Mission of the National Cemetery Administration Video

What is the mission of the National Cemetery Administration?

“To provide a final resting places for our veterans and their families that commemorate the service and sacrifice of our veterans”

2. Image of Arlington National Cemetery

What do you notice about Arlington National Cemetery?

- Write a list of 5 items of what you observe from the photo above.

Answers could vary

American flags, matching headstones, trees, freshly cut grass, organized landscape, flagstaff in center, neighborhoods

3. Google Review on American Wars/Conflicts Link

1700s: American Revolution, Native Wars

1800s: War of 1812, Mexican-American War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, Native Wars

1900s: Philippine-American War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War

2000s: Iraq and Afghanistan War

4. Memorial Day Infographic

- Which war held the most American veterans that died after military service?

World War II

- Which war held the most American veterans that died overall (in battle & in service)?

Civil War



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- C. Using your answer from above, why would the war in Part B hold the most American casualties of veterans?
There were Americans on both sides (Union and Confederacy) which counted towards the American total. Also, soldiers died a lot due to disease and wounds which could have increased fatality rates.

5. Florida National Cemeteries Map

- A. How many national cemeteries does Florida have?
9
- B. Using the links, when (year) were these national cemeteries established? (note: this might be different that first interred)
- Label if these national cemeteries are open or closed.
- Barrantas: est. 1914–open;
 - Tallahassee: est. 2012–open;
 - Jacksonville: est. 2008–open;
 - St. Augustine: est. 1881–closed;
 - Cape Canaveral: est. 2015–open;
 - South Florida: est. 2008–open;
 - Sarasota: est. 2008–open;
 - Florida National: est. 1983–open.

6. American Battle and Memorial Commission Sites in the World

- A. Which country has the most American military memorials and cemeteries?
France
- B. Why might that country have the most?
We fought two world wars with France and in France
World War I–The Western Front was along the French-German border
World War II- liberation of France from the Germans; our invasions from the north and the south of France



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Key- Article- Design History of National Cemeteries

[Read this article](#) and answer the questions below.

1. A Solemn Landscape- How did national cemeteries compare to the typical Victorian-style cemeteries of the 1800s? Why was this difference important?

National cemeteries were much more restrained and simplistic than the ornate Victorian cemeteries of the time. They were intentionally designed in this manner to create a “solemn landscape” that honored those who sacrificed so much for their country.

2. A Solemn Landscape- How did the passage of the National Cemeteries Act in 1867 impact the planning of national cemeteries?

It created specific elements that national cemeteries needed to have, including lodges for the superintendents, masonry walls, and marble headstones.



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3. Establishing a Common Design for National Cemeteries- Explain the four “principles which should govern the selection of national cemetery sites.”

1. Localities of historical interest
2. Easily accessible
3. Located on the thoroughfares of the nation
4. Locations must have favorable conditions for trees and shrubbery

4. Establishing a Common Design for National Cemeteries- What was significant about the design of the headstones in national cemeteries?

They are standardized white marble headstones. There were different headstones for known vs. unknown remains. The slightly-arched marble upright headstone was reserved for identified remains, and they included the person’s name and military unit. Unidentified remains had a low marble block.



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5. Burial Patterns- Explain the importance of the pattern of the headstones in national cemeteries.

National cemeteries used geometric patterns that evoked the precision and patterns of the military in their design.

6. Planting Design- In your own words, explain Olmsted's recommendation for cemetery designs.

He wanted the cemeteries to appear to be simple, while actually focusing on creating a tranquil and dignified space that honored those buried in the cemetery. The goal was to establish a "sacred grove" where everyone within was protected by the walls and calmed by the trees.



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7. Continuing Development and Use- What types of changes and improvements were made to national cemeteries from the 1800s through WWI?

Roads leading to national cemeteries and within the cemeteries themselves were improved. The government also constructed rostrums and service buildings.

8. Past and Present- Explain how national cemeteries are designed as historic landscapes.

Historic landscapes are a type of cultural landscape. The main idea is that the different elements of the national cemetery hold historical value; even if some of them change or deteriorate, they still hold enough integrity to give them the title of historic landscape. This helps to reinforce the concept that national cemeteries are hallowed grounds where the sacrifices of the many Veterans buried in them can be honored and memorialized.



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- [10 points] Explanation of:
 - Location
 - Historical Relevance
 - War Veterans
- [20 points] Must haves:
 - Flagstaff
 - Marble headstones
 - Layout pattern
 - Memorials
 - Shrubberies, trees, plants, flowers, etc.
 - Organized sections
 - Based off wars, state of birth/death, etc.
 - Accommodations for burials and cremations
- [5 pts] Answer Essential Questions
 - Why do national cemeteries hold importance in our society?
 - Why do other countries honor our veterans overseas?
- [5 pts] Appropriate Materials
- [30 points] Presentation



Location: South Florida Coast - near Ft. Myers or Key West.

Significance: There are no national cemeteries farther south than Lake Worth or St. Pete.

Sections by Service: A - Army C - Coast Guard/National Guard
* matches the memorial locations on the Walkway. B - Air Force D - Marines
E - Navy

Essential Questions:

1. Why do National Cemeteries hold importance to our society?
 - The importance is held due to the recognition and honor given to those who sacrificed their time, family, and lives for the safety of our country. These sacred places + the organization of them help us realize the seriousness + true importance that these lives hold for us.
2. Why do other countries honor our veterans overseas?
 - To commemorate + honor our fallen veterans who helped to fight for their people and freedom, as well.



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