**Lesson Plan #6 for Genius of Freedom**: **Memorials by Liz Taylor**

**Grade Level:** Middle or high school

**Topics:** Frederick Douglass, memorials

**Pennsylvania History Standards:** 8.1.6 C, 8.1.9 C, 8.2.9 A, 8.2.9 B, 8.2.9 D, 8.3.9 A, 8.3.9 B

**Pennsylvania Core Standards:** 8.5.6-8 B, 8.5.9-10 B, 8.5.11-12 B, 8.5.6-8 G, 8.5.9-10 G, 8.5.11-12 G

***African American History,* Prentice Hall textbook:** N/A

**Overview:** Who should be memorialized, how should that memorial look, and where should it be placed are some of the major questions that confront historians, advocates, artists, and community members who seek to make an aspect of the past part of the permanent landscape. In this activity, which could be used as a culminating activity, students will examine the exhibit as a whole, the memorials presented in the “Claiming Public Spaces” portion of the exhibit, and some controversies over memorials more recently. Student groups will then choose a person, a group, an institution, or an event from northern African American History in the time frame of *Genius of Freedom* to memorialize and will create the memorial using available art materials with a brief written explanation.

**Materials from the exhibit:**

1. *Celebration by the Colored People’s Educational Monument Association in Memory of Abraham Lincoln…*
2. *An Authentic History of the Douglass Monument*.
3. The Statue of ‘The Freed Slave’ in Memorial Hall” in *Illustrated Historical Register of the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876* by Frank Henry Norton. New York: American News Co., 1879.

**Supplementary Materials:**

1. Maya Lin movie about the Vietnam Veterans memorial. *Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision* available from Facing History and Ourselves or Amazon.
2. 2009 article about the Frederick Douglass statue at 110th Street in New York, “In Douglass Tribute, Slave Folklore and Fact Collide” By Noam Cohen Published: January 23, 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/23/nyregion/23quilt.html>
3. Article about botched King Memorial in DC. “Righting two Martin Luther King Memorial Wrongs,” by Hampton Dellinger January 21, 2013. <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/01/righting-two-martin-luther-king-memorial-wrongs/266944/>
4. Article about the unintended consequences of the erection of a memorial to lynching victims in Duluth, Minnesota <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/04/us/letter-from-duluth-it-did-happen-here-the-lynching-that-a-city-forgot.html>
5. Pp. 256-258 from *The Image of the Black in Western Art* (pdf attached)

**Procedure:**

1. Introduce the concept of memorials. Ask students to identify some monuments in their hometown.
2. Show Maya Lin movie clip about making the Vietnam Veterans memorial in Washington DC.
3. Students work in pairs to read one of three articles (#2-#4 above) about the challenges of creating appropriate monuments.
4. Pairs answer question: What are five things that are important to consider when creating a memorial. Share to the whole class keeping in mind that not everyone has read the same article.
5. Have students consider the exhibit as a whole. This can be done after an on-line virtual field trip, during which students have a chance to look at the digital exhibit in a sustained and focused matter. Students with their partner should find three to five people, groups, institutions, or events that stood out to them and write them down.
6. Students should carefully explore the Abraham Lincoln memorial, the Douglass monument and view the engraving of *The Freed Slave* that was displayed during the Centennial celebration at Memorial Hall in Philadelphia.
7. Students with their partner will narrow their choices from step five to just one topic and will begin planning their memorial. Students will make a model or drawing of the memorial using available art materials.
8. Students should work on a 1-2 page write up in which they answer the following questions:
   1. Why did you choose the person/group/institution/event to memorialize?
   2. Describe your memorial in detail. How large will it be, what colors will be used, what shape is it, etc. This is a chance for the less artistic students to fully explain their concept even if it cannot be effected by their hand.
   3. Where will your memorial be displayed and why? This question demands a geographical answer (what city) as well as a more specific indication (in a park, in front of City Hall, etc.)
9. EXTENSION: After students’ work is final, it should be displayed in a gallery walk. Other classes from the school can be invited to expose more students to the concepts from *Genius of Freedom*. The gallery should be carefully set up chronologically or by concept, and students’ work should be treated seriously.