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Place History: Santa Fe National Cemetery Grades 7-12 Secondary Lesson Plan

Time: 1-2 50 minute class periods

Lesson Overview: Students will engage with the purpose of national cemeteries by researching the history of the cemetery as well as discussing the present and future role of national cemeteries in preserving the legacy of veterans of a variety of conflicts.

Inquiry Question: How do dedicated landscapes preserve the memory of veterans? How does the design and appearance of cemeteries affect the perception of the veterans themselves? How might the public use of veterans cemeteries change in the future?

Relevant Common Core Literacy Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3 Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

Relevant New Mexico Social Studies Content Standards:

- 8.83. Discuss the nature of civil wars in general, and the role of border states and territories in the U.S. Civil War specifically and explore the role the territory of New Mexico played.
- 9-12.Geo.19. Evaluate the process of place-making and the development of place-based identity.
- 9-12.WH.22. Identify individuals, groups, and events in New Mexico's history that have influenced or were influenced by events in world history.

Required Materials:

- Chromebooks or other means to access the internet
- Means to project video

Learning Objectives:

- Students will use secondary sources to analyze the history of the Santa Fe National Cemetery and connect that history to its enduring importance to veterans, families, and communities.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Sense of place:** the emotional, personal, and/or intangible connections that humans make to different physical places due to familial or cultural histories.
- **Landscape history:** the study of the way in which humanity has changed the physical appearance of the environment – both present and past.
- **Human-environment interaction:** the variety of ways that people interact with their surrounding ecosystems.

Procedures:

Introduction: (10 minutes) Begin by asking the students if they have ever been to the Santa Fe National Cemetery. Project a picture of the cemetery in order to spark familiarity with the location. Review the key vocabulary. Explain to the students that they will be getting into groups of three to research the history of the cemetery itself. Select groups randomly or pre-select groups before class if necessary. Explain that each group member will have different research responsibilities.

Guided Research: (20-30 minutes)

- Group member #1 will research the history of the landscape itself. This group member should answer the following questions in their findings:
 1. How has the landscape that the cemetery is now on changed over the years (ownership, uses, size etc)?
 2. Which conflict was the cemetery originally created for, and how did its purpose change?
 3. Why does the cemetery have the look that it does? What are the different types of grave markers?
- Group member #2 will research the wide variety of people who are buried there.
 1. Who are some of the well-known people who were buried there?
 2. Are there unknown people buried there? What do we know about these people?
 3. Tell us about Dennis O'Leary. Should the statue stay? Why or why not?
- Group member #3 will research how the cemetery is being used today, as well as any potential issues in the future.
 1. Describe some of the recent events that have occurred in the cemetery.
 2. Describe some of the current conflicts around the use and the look of the cemetery.

Wrap Up: (15-20 minutes)

- Have one or two groups share their findings, possibly for extra credit. Group members, especially members #2 and #3, should prepare to plug in to a larger display or projector to show videos and pictures they found.

- Most groups should have arrived at similar conclusions in their research, but ask the students to respond to the inquiry questions: How do dedicated landscapes preserve the memory of veterans? How does the design and appearance of cemeteries affect the perception of the veterans themselves? How might the public use of veterans cemeteries change in the future?

- Depending on the age and ability of the students, inquiry question responses could be written as a separate assignment, discussed as a whole group, or as a think-pair-share.

- Optional extension: Discussion or exit ticket about how the Santa Fe National Cemetery fits into the broader sense of place in the southwest United States.

- Discussion resource: <https://www.thenatureofcities.com/2016/05/26/sense-of-place/>

Resources:

Depending on the abilities and ages of the students, have students search for resources to answer their respective questions on their own, or provide the following to them. The resources are not exhaustive; many others can help students come to valid conclusions.

Group Member #1 Printable and helpful resources

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Period:** _____

1. How has the landscape that the cemetery is now on changed over the years (ownership, uses, size etc)?

2. Which conflict was the cemetery originally created for, and how did its purpose change?

3. Why does the cemetery have the look that it does? What are the different types of grave markers?

Suggested Resources

- https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/national_cemeteries/new_mexico/santa_fe_national_cemetery.html
- <https://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/nchp/santafe.asp>

Group Member #2 Printable and helpful resources

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Period:** _____

1. Who are some of the well-known people who were buried there?

2. Are there unknown people buried there? What do we know about these people?

3. Tell us about Dennis O'Leary. Should the statue stay? Why or why not?

Suggested Resources

- <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1985-05-12-vw-18782-story.html>
- <http://www.davidgunter.com/2018/04/26/cemetery-tales-the-odd-sandstone-tombstone-in-the-santa-fe-national-cemetery/>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Olw_g0KuSUw

Group Member #3 Printable and helpful resources

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ **Period:** _____

1. Describe some of the recent events that have occurred in the cemetery.

2. Describe some of the current conflicts around the use and the look of the cemetery.

Suggested Resources

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVvIK_VO5VY
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6ZaHRzQ7Jc>
- https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local_news/honoring-veterans-who-never-got-a-thank-you/article_3e6cd81a-aeac-11ec-8c56-7faf6e1b0982.html