

In Search of the Past in the Present: Landmark Analysis Questions

Subject

- Describe the landmark. (Note its location, most defining features, size and scale, and relationship to its surroundings.)
- What event/person is being commemorated?
- What is the time period being memorialized?

Occasion

- When was the landmark/memorial/statue built? By whom?
- What is the historical context surrounding the creation of it?
- What might have been the significance of this historical issue at the time?

Audience

- Describe or name the location of the landmark/memorial/statue?
- What group or groups of people might have been expected to view and appreciate this landmark?

Purpose

- What feeling, memory, or idea do you think this landmark is meant to inspire?
- What contextual information (if any) is provided for the public?

Significance

- What effect does the landmark have on the viewer? What aspects of the landmark create this feeling?
- How is the viewer being asked to interpret the landmark -- without any guidance, signage, a guide, or someone connected to the landmarked event? How does this impact the meaning of the landmark?
- How does the landmarking/memorializing of this event/person influence how we understand its importance?
- Overall, how does this landmark/memorial/statue preserve the past at this location? Consider the following categories:

Alive Today: Regularly used in the present with a strong understanding and link to its function in the past.

A Living Memory: Routinely thought of by many, reflecting a cherished memory of the past.

Simply a Memory: Remembered on occasion, but with little fanfare or celebration.

Forgotten Part of the Past: No longer affecting life, ignored or overlooked by most.