



Creating a Historic Preservation Infographic

This lesson asks students to define historic preservation and then identify one place, site or structure that they will feature in an infographic, persuasively making a case for its continued preservation. This lesson may take three to four class sessions.

STANDARDS

- United States History National Standards: Era 5, Civil War and Reconstruction (1850 – 1877); Standards 1, 2, and 3
- Common Core State Standards: English Language Arts, grade 8: Writing 7; Speaking and Listening 5; Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 7; Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 7

Note to teachers: If you are studying the Civil War, take advantage of this opportunity to think about sites in your region or in the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area. If you are not studying the Civil War, consider identifying a historic place or structure in your community or one that relates to your specific curricular focus.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduce historic preservation and review some key terms: conservation, preservation, restoration, re-use, survey, stabilization, significance. Ask the class to consider what makes a building historic. Generally speaking, “historic” refers to a building that is over 50 years old and meets the National Register Criteria for evaluation. Why do students think historic buildings are important (or why not)? Are students familiar with any historic buildings in their communities? Consider creating a list of some local historic buildings in advance. For more on historic preservation, see references on the **Resource List**.
2. In small groups, students carefully examine one historic site or building in their community. Assist as needed with the research process (i.e. historic photos and more information can be found at a local library or historical society). Encourage students to visit the site in person if possible. Depending on your classroom needs, you may consider working as a whole class, grouping students in small groups/pairs, or previewing or modeling the research process for the class before asking students to work on their own. For an example of a historic site in the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, look at Tolson’s Chapel (<http://www.tolsonschapel.org/>).
3. As students research, consider the following questions: Does this structure meet the criteria of a historic building? And if not, why not? Where is it located? What was it used for? Who used it? Is it still in use today? Why might it be important, historically? Has it already been recognized on the National Register of Historic Places or by any local groups? Do you know of

- any threats to the property (i.e. demolition by neglect, plans to develop the area). What additional information are you curious to know?
4. Review the research. Are there any similarities in students' findings? Sometimes, one has to make a case for preserving or protecting historic structures. Explain that students will be designing infographics as a way of making a case and communicating the importance of historic structures and places. Share examples of infographics and outline key characteristics of strong infographics. A list of infographic examples and links to additional references can be on the **Resource List**.
 5. Students choose one structure or site to focus on (ideally, the site they researched). Students should outline this structure's historical significance and some suggested uses. Use the [Creating a Historic Preservation Infographic worksheet](#) as an organizational (and assessment) tool. Once they have their information, students create an infographic that makes a compelling case for preservation. Note: you might want to consider asking students to both create an infographic and write a story to narrate important lessons to be learned from the infographic (as a reflection piece).
 6. Share completed infographics and talk about the decision-making process (what information was highlighted and what was left out). Based on student discussion, consider wrap up questions: Why are some historic sites well preserved but others are threatened? Why do some sites have more protection and stronger political allies than others? How do these decisions impact the landscape? What would be lost if these buildings no longer stood?
 7. Prepare an in-class or online exhibition of infographics as a way of celebrating students' work. Consider sending the infographics to the featured historic sites or local historic preservation commissions/planning departments.

EXTENSIONS

Visit one of the historic sites in the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area (for example, Antietam National Battlefield and/or Tolson's Chapel) and do some reflective writing on the power of place and the importance of preservation. Be sure to share your reflections with the site you have visited. Consider exploring the idea of historic preservation even more deeply and invite a preservationist to come and speak with the class (a local historic district commissioner, a city/county planner, someone who has lived in or restored a historic building, or a representative from the State Historic Preservation Office).

RESOURCE LIST

Historic Preservation

- Website of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a privately funded nonprofit organization working to save America's historic places: <http://www.preservationnation.org/>
- National Park Service introduction to Historic Preservation: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation/what-is-historic-preservation.htm>
- National Park Service "Teaching with Historic Places" web portal with property listings and classroom activities: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/teachingwithhistoricplaces/index.htm>

- Lesson plan about Tourism and Preservation designed to accompany Ken Burns' documentary film on national parks: http://www-tc.pbs.org/nationalparks/media/pdfs/tnp_lesson_plan_tourism_and_preservation.pdf
- Lesson plan on preserving culture in changing times from the New York Times: http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/10/16/here-today-gone-tomorrow-preserving-culture-in-changing-times/?_r=0
- Video about Tolson's Chapel exploring the story and importance of this historic structure: <http://www.crossroadsofwar.org/videos-maps-images>
- Text from *A Collection of Commentaries*: <http://bit.ly/cwflipbook>, chapter 12, pages 307 - 308
- Video clip from the flipbook about preserving Civil War battlefields and monuments: <https://vimeo.com/101560828>
- Video clip on the importance of preservation: <https://vimeo.com/101557999>
- Frequently asked questions about battlefield preservation from the Civil War Trust: <http://www.civilwar.org/aboutus/preservation-faqs.html>

Teaching with infographics

- "Data Visualized: More on Teaching with Infographics" by Shannon Doyne, Holly Epstein Ojalvo and Katherine Schulten: <http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/04/08/data-visualized-more-on-teaching-with-infographics/>
- "Beyond the Book: Infographics of Student's Reading History" by Sarah Gross: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/infographics-students-reading-history-sarah-gross>
- Lesson Plan on creating and using infographics by Kelly Gallagher: <https://www.edsurge.com/n/2014-04-27-how-real-kids-create-real-infographics>
- Piktochart, an easy to use, online infographic maker with instructions and templates to chose from: <http://piktochart.com/>

Examples of infographics

- Battles of the Civil War by the Civil War Trust: <http://www.civilwar.org/resources/battles-of-the-civil-war-infographic.html>
- Civil War Facts created by the National Park Service: <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/facts.htm>
- Civil War Love Letters created by the Missouri History Museum: <http://www.historyhappenshere.org/archives/7392>
- Pioneer Farmsteads of the Willamette Valley from Restore Oregon: <http://restoreoregon.org/pioneer-farmsteads/#lightbox/1/>
- Sea Turtles created by the World Wildlife Fund: <http://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/infographic-sea-turtles>
- Fun Facts about San Francisco's Tenderloin District by Zendesk: <https://www.zendesk.com/blog/fun-facts-about-san-franciscos-tenderloin-district/>
- Information is Beautiful, the website of David McCandless, data journalist and information designer: <http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/>

CREATING A HISTORIC PRESERVATION INFOGRAPHIC

1. What is the main message you want to communicate in your infographic?
2. Knowing this, what stories will you highlight? What can you leave out?
3. What information will make your infographic visually compelling?
4. What types of images will support your message? Where will you find them?

5. What facts and statistics support your persuasive argument? Why did you choose those sources?

6. Remember, you need to cite the sources where you obtained your information, using proper MLA citation format. Keep a running list.

7. How can you make the infographic easy to understand for a variety of audiences? Who is your target audience?