

Victorian America: Reflections of Life in Death

Lesson Developer: Michelle Dahlsten Kratofil

Grade Levels: 9-12

Time Allotment: 2-3 50-minute class periods

Overview: This lesson should be used as culminating activity for a unit on Victorian America. Students must have previous knowledge of the changes in society during the late 1800's (ie. reform movements to better society, the revival of classical art, the growth of professionalism, the development of leisure time/activities, and the status symbols of the wealthy). Students will use a prediction-confirmation guide to consider how changes in burial customs in the late 1800's reflect the changes in society at large.

Subject Matter: American History

Learning Objectives: After viewing segments of the video and completing this activity, students will be able to:

- work effectively with a partner,
- make logical predictions based upon prior knowledge,
- demonstrate how changes in burial customs parallel selected developments in Victorian society,
- and compare and contrast Victorian burial customs with burial customs today.

Standards (from the Missouri Show-Me Standards):

Social Studies 2: continuity and change in the history of Missouri, the United States and the world

Social Studies 6: relationships of the individual and groups to institutions and cultural traditions

Communication Arts 5: comprehending and evaluating the content and artistic aspects of oral and visual presentations

Communication Arts 6: participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas

Fine Arts 2: the principles and elements of different art forms

Fine Arts 5: visual and performing arts in historical and cultural contexts

Performance Standard 1.2: conduct research to answer questions and evaluate information and ideas

Performance Standard 1.4: use technological tools and other resources to locate, select and organize information

Performance Standard 1.5: comprehend and evaluate written, visual and oral presentations and works

Performance Standard 1.6: discover and evaluate patterns and relationships in information, ideas and structures

Performance Standard 1.8: organize data, information and ideas into useful forms for analysis or presentation

Performance Standard 1.9: identify , analyze and compare the institutions, traditions and art forms of past and present societies

Social Studies Grade Level Expectations (from www.dese.state.mo.us)

2a.C.3 Describe the historical development of the American economy, including impact

of technological change and urbanization on land, resources, society, politics and culture

2a.E.5 Describe the changing character of American society and culture

7.D.4 Interpret maps, statistics, charts, diagrams, graphs, timelines, pictures, political cartoons, audiovisual materials, written resources, art and artifacts

Media Components: *Stories Under the Stones*

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/afamilyundertaking/resources.html>

<http://historiccamdencounty.com/ccnews43.shtml>

<http://www.ancestry.com/learn/library/article.aspx?article=151>

<http://www.funeralmuseum.org/pdf/mourning.pdf>

<http://www.gardner-webb.edu/essays/05June-Hobbs.htm>

<http://www.yk.psu.edu/~glc/cemetery.html#1840>

<http://www.victorianstation.com/lifestylemenu.htm>

Materials: Handout 1 – Prediction-Confirmation Guide (1 per student)

Handout 2 – Compare/Contrast Chart (1 per student)

Prep for Teachers:

The teacher should

- copy the appropriate number of Handouts 1 and 2 to accommodate students in the class(es),
- preview video and cue video tape to “With the passage of another generation or two, the rite of burial took on greater formality”, and
- arrange for access to computer lab for research (sites identified above could be bookmarked for easy reference).

Day 1

Introductory Activity:

1. The teacher will begin by listing the changes in society that will be addressed in the Prediction-Confirmation Guide on the board or overhead.
2. Students will work with a partner to recall as many details as they can remember for each category. These details will be shared in a class discussion.
3. After the discussion, the teacher will distribute Handout 1 and students will work with their partners to make predictions based upon prior knowledge of how changing burial customs reflect changes in Victorian society at large.

Learning Activities:

4. Students will be instructed to view the video segments of *Stories Under the Stone* to confirm or correct their predictions. Specific evidence from the video must be cited or described in this column of the handout.
5. Play cued video (see Prep for Teachers); pause video at “and they might go and picnic... It wouldn’t be just a place to go and visit the dead”.
6. Instruct students to review their Prediction-Confirmation Guides to see if anything they have just learned confirms or corrects any of their predictions.
7. Rewind and re-play this segment of the video.
8. Ask students to share what they discovered about their predictions to demonstrate what students are expected to do with this activity.
9. Press Play; pause at “some of the very special designs were done around the turn of the century when the Egyptian Revival design became very popular after

the discovery of King Tut's tomb”.

10. Fast Forward to “Elmwood an early garden cemetery in Kansas City, has passed through seasons of a different kind”; pause at “and famous frontiersman Daniel Morgan Boone, who, at his death in 1839, was buried on land that had once been part of his Jackson county Missouri farm”.
11. Fast Forward to Sleeping in Style, “I tend to view the artwork in cemeteries, it's really sort of like an outdoor art museum because of the amazing types of sculptures that you can find...”; stop video at “You can tell a lot about a community, a lot about the times by visiting a cemetery, and observing the symbology that you'll see.”

Day 2

12. The teacher will begin the class period by reviewing the information obtained from the video the previous day.
13. Students will have access to computers to continue their research. The following websites should be bookmarked for their use -
<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/afamilyundertaking/resources.html>
<http://historiccamdencounty.com/ccnews43.shtml>
<http://www.ancestry.com/learn/library/article.aspx?article=151>
<http://www.funeralmuseum.org/pdf/mourning.pdf>
<http://www.gardner-webb.edu/essays/05June-Hobbs.htm>
<http://www.yk.psu.edu/~glc/cemetery.html#1840>
<http://www.victorianstation.com/lifestylemenu.htm>

Day 3

Culminating Activity:

14. Teacher will distribute Handout 2 to students.
15. Students will work with their partners from Day 1 to complete the compare/contrast chart.

Cross-Curricular Extensions:

Students could take a field trip to a local garden cemetery to sketch headstones and

mausoleums from the late 1800's that exemplify a revival of classical art.

Student Materials:

Handout 1 – Prediction-Confirmation Guide

Handout 2 – Compare/Contrast Chart

Handout 1

Reflections of Life in Death: Prediction-Confirmation Guide

The changes in burial customs during the Victorian Age reflect many of the changes in Victorian society at large. Consider the societal changes listed below and predict how the changes in burial customs might parallel them. Then, view segments of *Stories Under the Stones* and research using the internet to confirm or correct your predictions citing specific evidence as support.

<i>Changes in Victorian Society</i>	<i>Predictions</i>	<i>Confirmations/Corrections</i>
How did changing burial customs <u>benefit society</u> ?		
How did changing burial customs reflect the <u>social status</u> of the deceased?		
How did changing burial customs reflect a <u>revival of classical art</u> ?		
How did changing burial customs contribute to the <u>growth of professionalism</u> ?		
How did changing burial customs factor into <u>leisure time and activities</u> ?		

Handout 2

Reflections of Life in Death: Compare/Contrast Chart

Complete the chart below to show the similarities and differences between burial customs in Victorian America and today. Be sure to identify the categories to which the differences belong.

Burial Customs: Victorian America	Burial Customs: Present-Day America
Similarities _____ _____ _____ _____	
Categories	
Differences _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	Differences _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____