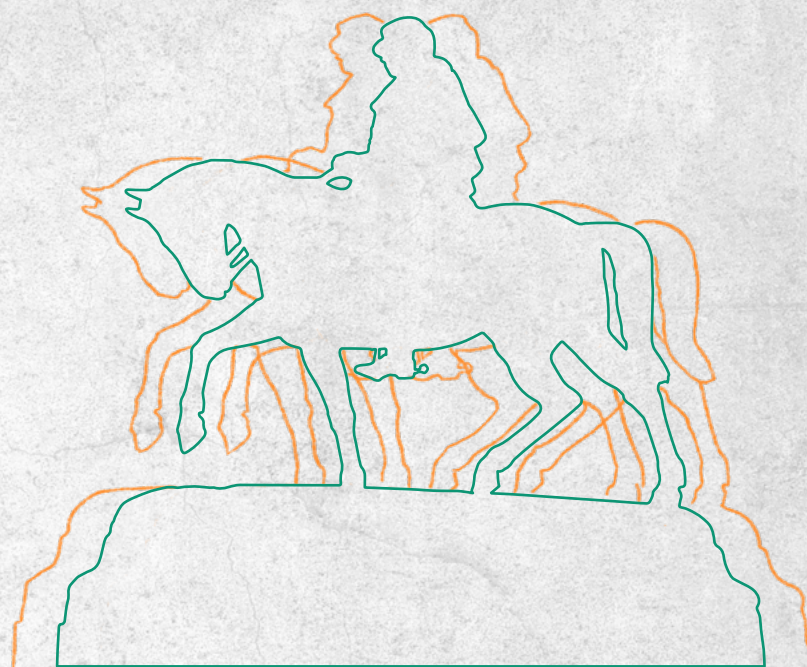


# NATIONAL MONUMENT AUDIT

## EDUCATORS GUIDE





# AUDIT PUBLICATION STUDY GUIDE

Prepared by Rabiya Kassam-Clay

These educational guides were written for youth, teachers, artists, activists, cultural workers, and you. They are meant to supplement Monument Lab's National Monument Audit, produced in partnership with The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This study guide can be used with the Audit's Report, available at [monumentlab.com/audit](https://monumentlab.com/audit). Please share your adaptations and additions with us online by tagging @monument\_lab and using the hashtag #MonumentEdu.

## INTRODUCTION LESSON

1. View the photograph of the artwork, [The Battle is Joined by Karyn Olivier \(2017\) on the Monument Lab homepage](#). Take note of the visual elements:
  - **Setting** – In what type of place was this image captured?
  - **Objects** – What materials were used for construction? What are the relevant items, possessions, or clothing?
  - **Actions** – What is being done - actively or passively?
  - **People** – Who is depicted? What do we know about them - race, gender, class, age, public role? How are they portrayed - positively or negatively?

What might make this monument or any monument significant? Why does it matter? To whom does it matter? What does it reveal about history? Does it create change in the present or future?

2. Read the preface or focus on just the quotes included in questions below from the *National Monument Audit*:
  - **“Monument Lab defines “monument” as ‘a statement of power and presence in public.’”**  
What works about this definition? What does not? What would you change, add, or keep the same, and why?
  - **“...we learned that monuments do more than just help us remember—they make our values visible, pushing us to build on and recognize what could never be captured or rendered in stone. History does not live in of statues. History lives between people.”**  
**“...our research team spent a year scouring millions of records of historic properties – created and maintained by federal, state, local, tribal, institutional, and publicly-assembled sources – looking for conventional monuments.”**  
What is the relationship between monuments and history? How are monuments connected to the present and future?
  - **“We, as a country, are in the midst of an intense struggle and debate over our monuments.”**  
What do you know about debates around monuments? What is newsworthy about monuments?

3. Examine the **four key findings** of the National Audit. What about these findings do you experience in the monuments in your neighborhood and life? What about these findings is surprising or outside of your experience? What are the questions that must be asked as a result of these findings?
4. Analyze the list of the **Top 50 Individuals Recorded in US Public Monuments**. Who do you recognize? Who is unfamiliar? Who is missing? What does this list say about gender, class, race, and sexuality in the American story?
5. Consider the **Calls to Action** embedded in the Key Findings. Rewrite them in language for a ten-year old to understand. What specific actions would be required for these calls to action to become real? Do you want to see any, some, or all of those changes? Why or why not? How would those changes impact broader American society?

## POSSIBLE PROJECTS

1. Write a report exploring the concept of “monument data”? What monument data is missing from the National Audit? Who does and who should lead creating, “tracking, maintaining, or understanding” monuments? Evaluate and compare the missions of:
  - United Daughters of the Confederacy
  - Daughters of the American Revolution
  - Monument Lab
  - Mellon Foundation
2. The National Audit is full of references to monuments, people, places, and events. Select a topic that intrigues you for further research. Be sure to craft a clear research question and consult trusted expert sources to draw your own original conclusions. Here are some examples of research questions:
  - What is the history of one monument that connects to your neighborhood or life?
  - What themes are conveyed by monuments in the U.S.? What lessons are missing? Why?
  - What groups are represented and what groups are left out from the national monument landscape? Why?
  - Why do our monuments focus on individuals more than groups? What collective stories are untold?
  - What monument types (forms or shapes) are most common in the United States? Why?
3. Who in your life (friend, relative, community member, or other) has a story about a monument? Record their oral history account and share it as text, drawings, audio or video.
4. Create a [sketchnote](#) (visual notes or graphic recording that combine handwriting with drawings) on one major theme of the *National Monument Audit*.
5. What other people and events in history do you think should be commemorated and how? What event, exhibit, museum, monument, public space, organization, or public resource do you think should be created to honor them? Create your vision.



# SEARCH INTERFACE STUDY GUIDE

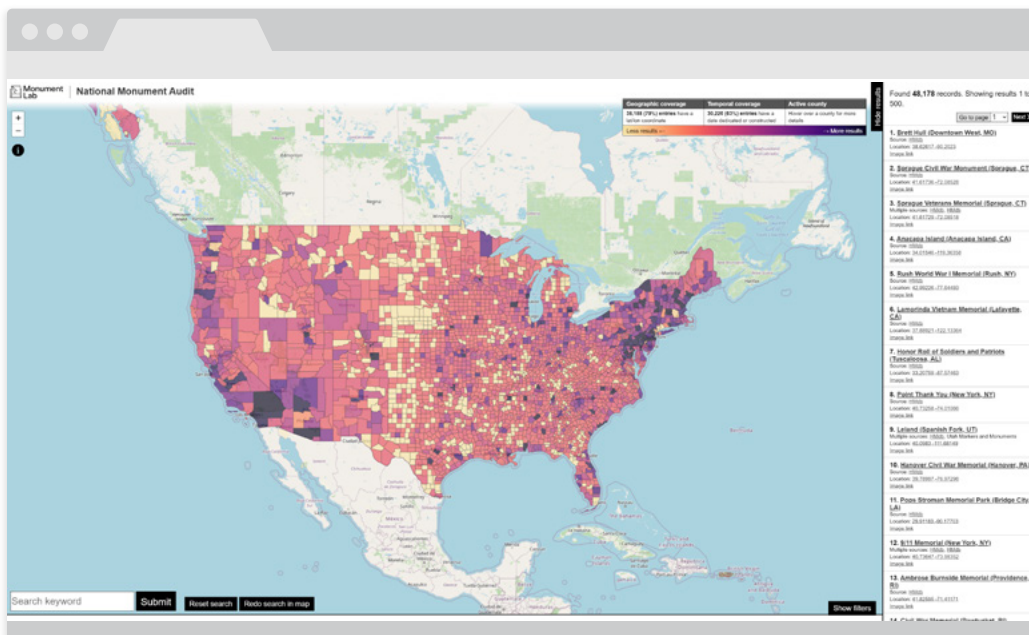
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## I. MAP

Notice the different colors in the National Monument Audit digital map. What does each color represent? Where are most monuments located? What does the “geographic coverage” and “temporal coverage” at the top of the map tell you about the monument data study set? Be sure to zoom out and scroll to view monuments in Alaska and Hawaii, as well as Puerto Rico and other US territories.

Turn your attention to the results list on the right. Click on the first entry in the list to take a look at what information is available about each monument. Take note of its source, location, and image. Then, view its full record to learn more about its form, creation, and materials.



## II. KEYWORD

Play with the keyword box at the bottom of the map. You might start by searching for one specific monument, for example, try “National Memorial for Peace and Justice Montgomery Alabama”. You might also take a look at sets of monuments. Here are few suggestions of keyword search terms that might spark questions and conversations:

### TOP 50 INDIVIDUALS

- Lincoln (193)
- George Washington (171)
- Martin Luther King Jr. (86)
- Robert E. Lee (59)
- Tecumseh (21)
- Harriet Tubman (21)
- Sacagawea (20)
- Frederick Douglass (19)

### COLLECTIVE THEMES, GROUPS, AND REPLICAS

- peace (1,221)
- war (15,758)
- massacre (100)
- soldier (4,770)
- student (351)
- mermaid (22)
- congress woman (11)
- Statue of Liberty (298)
- Berlin Wall (28)

## III. FILTERS

Investigate the “Show filters” tab at the bottom of the map. Each of the categories listed below are ripe for exploration on the map and even their drop-down menus contain numerical data that immediately begin lines of inquiry around methodology, representation, and historical change and continuity.

## IV. EXPLORE!

Use the map’s zoom function, keyword search bar, or filters to search for individual or collections of monuments. Below are possible projects for further learning and creativity:

### FOCUS ON INDIVIDUAL MONUMENTS

1. Select one monument and take note of its visual elements:
  - **Setting** – Where does it exist? When was it built?
  - **Objects** – What materials were used for construction of the monument? What relevant text, clothing, possessions, or animals are present?
  - **Actions** – What is being done - actively or passively?
  - **People** – Who is depicted? What do we know about them - race, gender, class, age, public role? How are they portrayed - positively or negatively?

Discuss the significance of the monument. Why does it matter? To whom does it matter? What does it reveal about history? Does it create change in the present or future?

2. Respond to one monument with a poem. Here are a few starting points to writing a poem of your own to, for, or with the monument:
  - Use the title or name of the monument as the first line in your poem
  - Speak to the monument's figure, creator, sponsor, or community
  - Create a poem near the monument. Consider whether the poem will be on a plaque or other form and where in relation to the monument it will be placed.
3. The final lead finding of the National Monument Audit is that, "the story of America as told by our current monument landscape is not true." Determine one monument that is "not true." What is the truth untold or hidden by this monument? Share that truth in any public format including an original monument. Consider creating a monument to any of the often untold or hidden truths in [Zinn Education Project's #TeachTruth syllabus](#).

## **PATTERNS BETWEEN COLLECTIONS OF MONUMENTS**

Curate a set of monuments that reveal a deeper story together than in isolation on their own. As an example, consider the eight monuments to the history of enslavement discussed in [Clint Smith's book, \*How the Word Is Passed\*](#). Share this deeper story between the monuments as a piece of writing, visual art, audio recording, community event, or the format of your choosing.

Create a playlist for a series of monuments grouped together by theme, geography, or some other characteristic. How might the music include historical and contemporary selections? Present your playlist in print, digital, or live format.