

Remembering and Honoring the Past

Bekah Reed, Hamilton County Schools



<https://bit.ly/3FoRV5j>

Welcome!



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Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions, Setting the Stage
- Remember the Past
- Honoring the Past
- Why Place-Based Education
- Digging In
- Reflection and Questions



Remembering the Past

John Ross



John Ross was part Cherokee and part Scottish. Growing up, he learned Cherokee ways as well as those of the white settlers. He owned a trading post and warehouse at Ross's Landing on the Tennessee River. The settlement that grew around the warehouse became Chattanooga, Tennessee.

In 1827, Ross was elected the principal chief of the entire Cherokee nation. He worked hard to save the Cherokee land. He hoped their rights could be won in court rather than by fighting a war. He served as the main chief of the Cherokee until his death in 1866.

Ross's Landing

Ross's Landing is located in the heart of Chattanooga's downtown. However, from 1819-1838, the Tennessee River served as the border between Cherokee lands to the south and United States lands on the north side of the river opposite Ross's Landing.

Ross's Landing became a designated departure point for Indian deportation. Between 1837 and 1838, more than 3,600 Cherokee were forced from their homes, placed in boats and made to depart West.

216 deaths were recorded in these departures.



Ross's Landing, 1910

Remembering the Past



In 1838, the United States government forced more than 16,000 Cherokee people from their homes in Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, and Georgia. The journey to Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) was called the Trail of Tears. Many Cherokee died during the trip, and thousands more died from the consequences of relocation.



Honoring the Past

Honoring the Past



Now, Ross's Landing is home to a memorial and outdoor exhibit to pay homage to the culture, art, and accomplishments of Chattanooga's original citizens.

The Passage is a pedestrian link between downtown Chattanooga and the Tennessee River memorializing this launch point of the Trail of Tears.

The Passage is a permanent outdoor exhibit, with symbolism of the seven clans of the Cherokee Nation.

The Passage

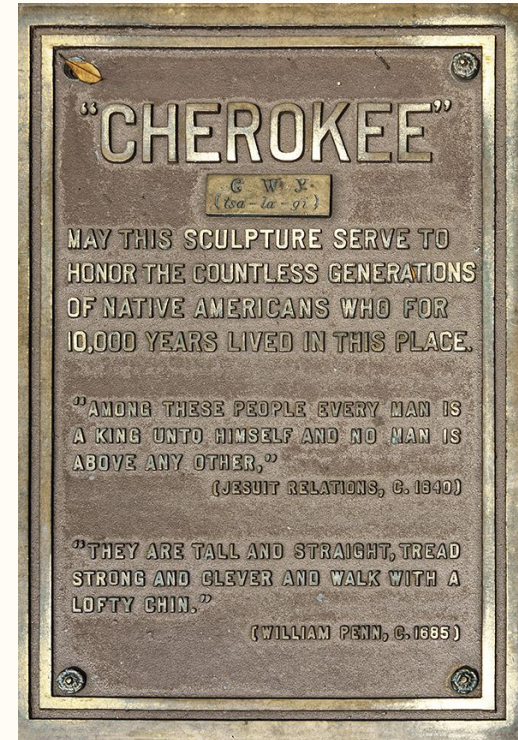
The Trail of Tears...passed through this place...and this journey will never be forgotten. Through perseverance the Cherokee people survived....To truly honor the memories of our ancestors, past and present, we felt it necessary to create contemporary public art...that inspires an appreciation of Chattanooga's artistic past...Through this art installation, we feel as though we are symbolically returning to our ancestral homeland.



The Passage

Standing on the Plaza just west of the Aquarium buildings is this statue of a Cherokee warrior holding a spear and a draft of fish.

"May this sculpture serve to honor the countless generations of Native Americans who for 10,000 years lived in this place."





The Passage

The retaining wall weeps the tears of the Cherokee. Those 'tears' descend as a stream, expand into a cascade, and flow down to the Tennessee River.

The Passage



In each of seven levels, the cascade opens into a place to rest and gaze across the cascading water to six-foot ceramic discs.

Each disc is a visual symbol bearing particular meaning in the Cherokee culture. Inlaid into the pavement are explanations of each symbol.

The Passage



Occupying the pool at the end of the cascade, the Little Water Spider, a mid-Mississippian design, had the gift of prophecy and foretold that the Cherokee would go west and suffer death.



The Passage

As you keep walking down the stairs and finally arrive at Ross's Landing, there are 7 stainless steel stickball figures with the constellation of the Pleiades.



Why Place Based Learning?

Place-based learning connects students to their local communities, environments, and histories, making learning more meaningful and engaging. It allows students to see the relevance of their education in real-world contexts while developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills.



- Authentic Learning
- Community Connections
- Interdisciplinary Learning
- Equity & Inclusion
- Increased Engagement



Setting the Stage

The Passage

Social Studies Practices:

SSP.02: Critically examine a primary or secondary source

SSP.03: Organize data from a variety of sources

SSP.04: Construct and communicate arguments, supported by evidence

SSP.05: Develop historical awareness

SSP.06: Develop geographic awareness

Content:

4.18 Analyze the impact of Andrew Jackson's presidency, including: the Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears, and preservation of the union.

5.38 Analyze the impact of Andrew Jackson's presidency on the American Indian population of Tennessee, including: the Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears, Treaty of Echota, and John Ross.

8.47 Describe the impact of the Indian Removal Act and the struggle between the Cherokee Nation and the U.S. government, including the significance of *Worcester v. Georgia* and the Trail of Tears.

TN.23 Describe the impact of the Indian Removal Act and the Trail of Tears on Tennessee.

Lesson Overview

Because this is a place-based lesson, students should have a basic understanding of the Trail of Tears and its significance on the Cherokee Nation.

Students will use the materials within the lesson to explore The Passage to gain a deeper understanding of Cherokee culture and Chattanooga's place within their history.

This lesson is broken into three different parts, the **Launch**, which will be done in the classroom before students come to The Passage, the **Explore**, which students will complete at The Passage and the **Summarize** portion, which will be completed back in the classroom.



The Launch

Launch:

In your groups, look at your medallion and fill out your notice, wonder, and predict sheet.

Medallion 1



What does this image show?

What do you wonder about this image?

Why do you think the artist chose this particular image to symbolize the Cherokee Nation?



Explore

Explore Part 1:




"The Cherokee are not foreigners but original inhabitants of America." -John Ross-1824	
What is the significance of this quote?	What is the gist of this quote?
"We...the people of the Cherokee Nation...in order to establish justice, welfare, tranquility, promote our common welfare, and secure ourselves and our posterity the blessings of liberty, acknowledging with humility and gratitude the goodness of the sovereign ruler of the universe, in offering us an opportunity so favorable in the design and imploring his aid and direction in its accomplishment, do ordain and establish the constitution for the government of the Cherokee Nation." -The Constitution for the Government of the Cherokee Nation-July 1827	
What is the significance of this quote?	What is the gist of this quote?
"If it be true that the Cherokee Nation have rights, this is not the tribunal in which those rights are to be asserted...This is not the tribunal which can redress the past or prevent the future." -Chief Justice John Marshall-United States Supreme Court-1831	
What is the significance of this quote?	What is the gist of this quote?

In your groups,
read your individual
quote.

What is the gist of
this quote?

What is the
significance of this
quote?

Explore Part 2:

	<p>What is the name of this medallion?</p> <p>What is the symbolism of this design?</p>
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In your groups, analyze your medallion and find its name.

What is the symbolism of this design?

Explore Part 2:



What is the significance of the Water Spider artwork?

Why do you think the artists chose to add this artwork to The Passage?



What is the significance of these 7 sculptures?

What are they playing?

Why do you think the artist chose to depict them playing that particular sport?

What is the significance of the Pleiades?

Why do you think the artist chose to include that particular constellation?



Summarize

Summarize:

Students take what they analyzed during their trip and write an essay answering the following question:

What is the historical significance of the Passage, and why is it important to preserve such a place for future generations?

SUMMARIZE: INFORMATIONAL ESSAY

Name: _____

Directions: Working individually, review your handouts from the field trip to The Passage, including your notes, quote summaries, and iconographic analyses. Write a 3 to 5 paragraph essay answer the following question:

What is the historical significance of The Passage, and why is it important to preserve such a place for future generations?



Let's Reflect

Reflection

- What stood out to you most during this lesson?
- How does this place connect to national historic events?
- How might different people view this place differently?



Questions?

Many Thanks!



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Weeping Eye Mask

From the early Proto-Historic period, this motif is representational of the falcon warrior. Made from lightning whelk shell used in ancient purification rituals, these mask were used to honor Dragging Canoe's fallen warriors in their 17 year resistance to colonial expansion. They were believed to have the power to protect the weaver from harm during battle and were also worn during the cleansing ceremony.



Coiled Serpent

This middle to late Proto-Historic period symbolic design represents So-Le-Ge-I, or Winged Serpent, who flew down from the sky, he was a source of ancient wisdom and traditional teachings for the Cherokees. The motif was used during the times of cross-cultural exchange and signifies the return of traditional customs to stop the loss of ancient knowledge and more tribal lands



Strength of Life

From the Mississippian and early Proto-Historic periods, this stylized design is symbolic of the Cherokee's spiritual counter-clockwise Stomp dance around the sacred fire. The smoke from the fire rises upward to the Creator and carries with it songs and prayers for strength in their lives. It also represents the spiral rotation of the Milky Way and Earth's changing weather patterns.



Connections

This reworked design of late Mississippian period represents the two roads that Indian people must travel. One is man's time on earth, the Red Road or Indian Way. The other is the White Road of Eternity, which is guided by one's spirituality. The circles begin at the time we are conceived and the time where we cross over into the spirit world. Unity is shown by the basket weave pattern that is formed.



Warrior Birds

At the cultural peak of the middle Mississippian period, designs of two facing wild turkeys appeared. They symbolize the players of the opposing sides of the stickball game, known as the “Little Brother to War.” When a player threw the ball towards the goal, he would make a war whoop of the turkey gobble. The design also signifies the two facing mountains along the Tennessee River where Chattanooga is today.



Four Journey Directions

This refined symbol, dating from the early Mississippian period represents the four directions the Cherokees would travel. Like birds in flight, they endured endless migration. North from their ancestral homeland; east toward the rising sun to a land that was only temporary. South where peace and contentment reigned for fourteen generations, and West where great upheaval, death, and sorrow awaited.



Sun Circle

From the Early Mississippian period, this stylized design symbolizes the Holy Sun in the form of a sacred fire sent by the Creator. The outer circle represents eternity where the spirit goes after death and exists forever. The central cross depicts the four logs that keep the sacred fire alive. The star refers to the 7 Cherokee Clans. It is said Cherokees will survive as long as the sacred fire burns.



Little Water Spider

This depicts a mid-Mississippian period design: Little Water Spider carried the Sacred Fire to the Cherokees and for this deed received the gift of prophecy from the Creator. She foretold that one day the Cherokees would go west and suffer death, which came about in 1838-39 when nearly one-fourth of all Cherokee perished on the Trail of Tears. The Sacred Fire was carried west where it still burns today.

