

# Informational Performance Task

## **Task:**

Your class has been learning about important monuments in the United States. Now, your class is going to analyze how monuments inspire emotions in their audience. Each student will write an informational article to post on the class website.

Before deciding what to write, you do some research and find three articles about important monuments. After you have looked at these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and answer the three questions that follow. Then, go back and read the sources carefully to gather the information you need to answer the questions and write an informational article for the class website.

In Part 2, you will write an informational article using information from the three sources.

## **Directions for Part 1**

You will now look at three sources. You can look at any of the sources as often as you like.

## **Research Questions:**

After looking at the sources, use the rest of the time in Part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the information you have read, which should help you write your informational article. You may refer to the sources when you think it would be helpful. You may also look at your notes.

**GO ON →**

## Source #1: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fought for equal rights for African Americans, always favoring nonviolent means of protest. The memorial that honors this great civil rights leader opened in 2011. It is located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., near other famous American monuments.

Dr. King was born in Atlanta in 1929. During his life, legal segregation existed in many parts of the United States. This meant that African Americans were denied jobs, education, health care, justice, and voting rights because of their race. Dr. King dedicated his life to ending these laws. He chose to fight segregation with strikes and protests instead of violence.

Many younger civil rights leaders were impatient and thought these methods were too slow. Many of his followers were hurt when they were attacked by opponents during the protests. Yet Dr. King held firm. Although he was sometimes scared, he was determined to bring lasting change through nonviolent action.

One of the high points of Dr. King's movement was the 1963 March on Washington. Near the place where his memorial would later be erected, he spoke to hundreds of thousands of Americans. He described his dreams for an America in which all people were treated equally. Not long after, the voting rights of all African Americans were guaranteed by law. In addition, segregation would soon become illegal.

On April 3, 1968, Dr. King spoke to a crowd of supporters. He said, "I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the promised land." The next day, Dr. King was shot and killed. He gave his life to make our country better.



NPS Photo

Dr. King’s memorial reminds Americans to work together to achieve the promised land. As they enter, visitors are met by a 30-foot sculpture of Dr. King. The sculpture shows Dr. King with a determined expression. The sculpture grows out of the Stone of Hope. Behind this stone is another, larger one. This is the Mountain of Despair, from which the Stone of Hope was cut. Despair means “hopeless,” which was how many felt before Dr. King’s movement. The two stones together show that hope can arise even in times of great despair.

From the gap between the stones, visitors can see the Jefferson National Memorial, another symbol of freedom. Around the memorial winds a wall of granite. Quotations from many of Dr. King’s most inspiring speeches are inscribed in the stone.

Nature plays a role in the memorial, too. Every year, cherry trees planted at the memorial bloom near the anniversary of Dr. King’s death. Elm and myrtle trees also grow there. The sight and sound of flowing water give a feeling of peace. The new memorial is neither a museum nor a shrine. Instead, it is a beautiful living space and an honor to a great man.

## Source #2: The National World War II Memorial

The National World War II Memorial stands on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. It recognizes the contributions all Americans made toward achieving victory in the war.

The first things you notice at the memorial are the 54 columns. There is one column for every state and territory in the United States at the time of World War II. These columns are linked with bronze ropes, showing how all Americans came together to support the war effort.

As you walk into the memorial, you can see the Rainbow Pool. This is a fountain with nozzles that create a perfect rainbow. The fountain was built before World War II and it was so beautiful that the architects refused to build over it. Instead, they built around it. You can admire the rainbows in the air and search the pool for reflections of the Capitol and the Washington Monument.

As you walk around the memorial, you will see brass plaques telling the story of World War II. Most plaques are based on photographs of the soldiers, workers, and medical staff who experienced the war. Some images show major battles, like Pearl Harbor and the Battle of the Bulge. Others show the home front. One shows Americans who gave money to the war effort. Another shows the women who worked in aircraft factories. Yet another shows the farmers who fed not just our troops but many British and Russian troops as well. These displays are divided by region. Those related to the war in Europe are on the north wall. Those related to the war in the Pacific are on the south wall.

The most solemn part of the memorial is the wall of stars. When you look at it, remember that each gold star represents about 100 Americans who gave their lives. Altogether, the 4,048 stars represent the more than 400,000 soldiers and civilians who were killed in the war.

If your relatives were involved in World War II, you may want to search the computerized Registry. This Registry lists all Americans who helped win the war. It includes people who lost their lives while overseas. It also includes workers and people who contributed money, food, or scrap metal to the war effort. You can look for your great-grandfather or great-grandmother! If you can't find them, you can let the memorial staff know so they can add the names to the database.

The memorial is not meant to be sad. It is a symbol of the strength of the American people when they all come together. It shows the choices and sacrifices made by the people of the United States to protect themselves and others.

### Source #3: The Gateway Arch

The Gateway to the West, part of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, is a steel arch rising 630 feet over St. Louis. It honors not only Thomas Jefferson but also the westward expansion of the United States.

In 1803, President Jefferson bought the vast lands stretching from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains from the French government. Then, Jefferson hired explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark to map the new territories. Lewis and Clark found huge plains, forests, and mountain ranges. As a result, eastern residents and new immigrants were able to travel to the West for better lives. These Americans became farmers on the plains, lumberjacks in the forests, and miners in the mountains.

The Gateway Arch represents Jefferson's effect on the United States. Because Jefferson opened the doors to the West, the arch is meant to look like a giant open gate. The size of it shows that all are welcome to come through St. Louis on the way to a better life.

Constructing the arch was difficult. The construction manager claimed that building the arch was harder than building a tower of the same height. This was because neither side of the arch supported the other until it was finished. Instead, support structures were built to prevent the two sides from falling toward each other.

When laying out the site, the engineers had to be especially careful. It was believed that the arch would fall if either side were even  $1/64^{\text{th}}$  of an inch off center. The lowest sections of the arch were measured over and over to make sure they were in just the right spots.

To make matters worse, no cranes were tall enough to lift the heavy metal pieces of the arch into place. Instead, the arch was built with tracks on the outside. Large elevators, called "crawlers," moved along these tracks, carrying the new pieces higher and higher. Once the new pieces were in place, workers extended the tracks so the crawlers could move even higher.

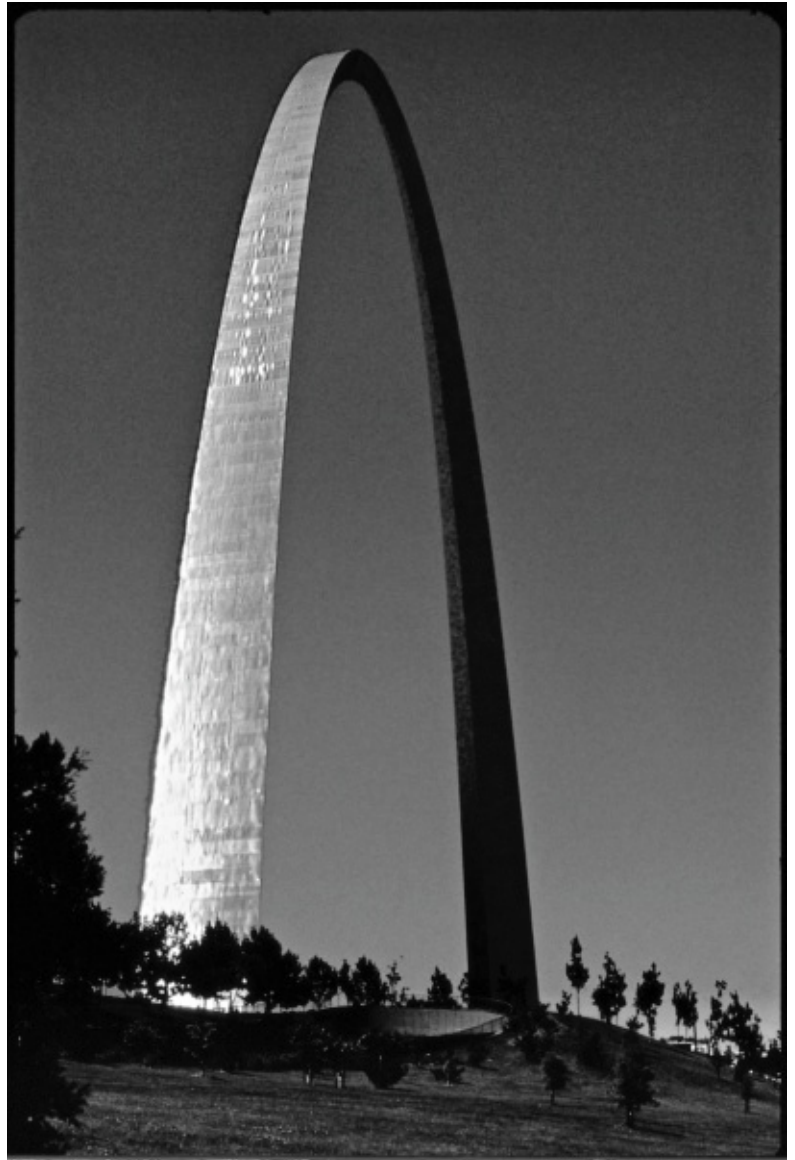
Today, visitors to the site can take elevators on the same tracks used by the crawlers. The elevators go to the very top of the arch. From this point, visitors can look west at the city of St. Louis. Beyond the city, they can see beautiful countryside. Looking east, they can see the Mississippi River. On a clear day, they can see for miles in both directions. Sadly, the observation deck windows are quite small. The pressure caused by the two halves of the arch pushing against each would shatter larger windows.

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While at the top, visitors might be scared by a slight sway. The arch moves a couple of inches back and forth in high winds. There is no need to worry, though. The arch is designed to sway slightly to take pressure off the structure. The swaying is perfectly safe and adds a little excitement to the visit.

In addition to the slight sway, the designers also used other methods to protect the arch. The tracks and viewing platform are electrically insulated so that lightning cannot hurt the people inside. Each leg is also stuck in 26,000 tons of concrete so that it won't blow over.

The arch now stands as a reminder of the time before the West was won. Thanks to Jefferson and Americans' hard-working spirit, we not only have the West but a beautiful monument to mark it.



- 1 Match each source to its main topic. There will be **one** topic for **each** source.

	Source #1: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial	Source #2: The National World War II Memorial	Source #3: The Gateway Arch
historical background	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
construction techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
visitor experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 2 Each source includes a physical description of a monument. How do these descriptions help you understand what the monuments represent? Use examples from all **three** sources to support your explanation. For each example, include the source title or number.

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**3** Explain how these three different types of monuments inspire the people who visit them. Use **one** detail from **each** source to support your explanation. Be sure to give the source number or title for each detail.

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## Directions for Part 2

You will now look at your sources, take notes, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your article for the class website. First read your assignment and the information about how your informational article will be scored. Then begin your work.

### Your Assignment:

Your class is writing papers about how monuments inspire emotion. For your part, you will compare or contrast the Gateway Arch, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and the National World War II Memorial. Your article will be read by other students and by your teacher.

Using information from the three sources, develop a main idea comparing or contrasting how these monuments inspire emotions. Choose the most important information from more than one source to support your main idea. Then, write an informational article several paragraphs long. Clearly organize your article and support your main idea with details from the sources.

Use your own words except when quoting directly from the sources. Be sure to give the source title when using details from the sources.

### REMEMBER: A well-written informational article

- has a clear main idea
- is well organized and stays on topic
- has an introduction and conclusion
- uses transitions
- uses supporting facts and details from the sources
- puts the information from the sources in your own words, except when using direct quotations from the sources
- gives the title or number of the source for the facts and details you included
- develops ideas clearly
- uses clear language
- follows the rules of writing (spelling, punctuation, and grammar usage)

**Now begin work** on your informational article. Manage your time carefully so that you can plan, write, revise, and edit the final draft of your informational article. Write your response on a separate sheet of paper.

**GO ON →**