

SHOULD MAPS BE CONSIDERED WORKS OF ART?

THIS ACTIVITY SHOULD TAKE ABOUT 90 MINUTES. IF LEARNERS ARE ABLE TO REVIEW MEDIA PRIOR TO THE LESSON, ACTIVITY TIME SHOULD BE 45 TO 60 MINUTES.

INVESTIGATE

Read, watch, and listen to the three media resources on the Thinkalong module. Learners can use the Investigate graphic organizer to summarize each piece of media and record new information. Below are summaries of the three pieces of media curated in the Thinkalong module.

RELIGIOUS WALKING TOUR MAPS OUT THE HISTORY OF MUSLIMS IN NEW YORK CITY

KRCW/NPR | October 12, 2019 | Audio

3:49 minutes

A walking tour of New York's Harlem maps the history of Muslims in the neighborhood.

- Tour guide Katie Merriman started giving walking tours highlighting the Muslim history of Harlem in 2014. While Merriman is not Muslim herself, she hopes the tour gives participants a new view of Harlem.
- As a graduate student, Merriman studies religious history and was interested when she found mention of Muslims in Harlem. When she put all the pieces together, she claims "a map appeared before my eyes in Harlem."
- The history of Muslims in Harlem dates back more than 400 years when enslaved people from North Africa were brought to the area by the Dutch.
- One stop on the tour guides walkers to the Apollo Theater, where she emphasizes the connection between Jazz and Islam.
- Other stops highlight locations that are no longer standing or that are lesser known, including former site of the Asque Mosque and the Latinx Muslim community, Alianza Islámica. The tour ends at Malcolm Shabazz Mosque, where Malcolm X once preached.

400 YEARS OLD AND FILLED WITH FOOTPRINTS, THESE AREN'T YOUR EVERYDAY MAPS

NPR | August 23, 2019 | Audio/Article

4:57 minutes

A 2019 exhibition at the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin, TX called "Mapping Memory" explored the appearance and function of historical maps made in the late 16th century in what is now Mexico.

- The exhibition included 19 separate maps made by Indigenous artists during the late 1500s, after the arrival of Europeans to the Americas. The maps reflect Indigenous artistic practices, like representing space differently and using visual symbols like footprints or hoofprints to represent walking and riding paths.
- The maps were created for King Philip II of Spain, who commissioned the work from Indigenous artists in 1577 so he could better understand the lands that Spain had forcibly taken control of earlier in the century.
- One piece in the exhibition, a map of the city of Tezacoalco, represents the urban center as a globe filled with pathways, rivers, and buildings. A series of images represents the dynastic line of rulers who controlled the city before the Spanish.
- The exhibition's curator, Rosario Granados, argues that these maps demonstrate that Indigenous practices and culture continue to flourish, even after colonial rule was established in this area of the Americas.

Using public media — video, audio and digital reports — about newsworthy topics, these classroom-based exercises help learners to think critically about media messages, develop informed opinions, and practice how to take a stand.

THIS GRAPHIC DESIGNER MAKES ‘SMELL MAPS’ OF CITIES AROUND THE WORLD

PRI The World | May 13, 2014 | Article

961 words

Kate McLean, a graphic designer, studies cities by observing local smells to understand how smell impacts how people experience or remember a place.

- McLean translates her notes about a city’s aromas into visual representations she calls “smell maps,” which identify a city’s different smells geographically as well as according to their strength and range. She says it takes a lot of concentration to identify smells around you, but that doing so helps you understand your surroundings in a new way.
- She has conducted “sensory research trips” around the globe, in cities like Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paris, Amsterdam, Milan, and New York City. In an early map, McLean recorded the aromas of cheese, wine, rain, and perfume in Paris. Her map of Edinburgh notes that the city’s main smell comes from the local beer brewery.
- McLean led a “smell walk” through Boston’s North End, where participants identified sewage, garlic bread, bug spray, and calamari.

KEY WORDS

Look out for these important keywords in the news stories. Discuss the definitions with your learners and see how they affect the understanding of the story.

- Subjective
- Olfactory
- Dynasty

CONTEMPLATE

Learners will use media literacy questions to critically engage with news by thinking about its purpose, searching for bias and discussing missing perspectives. They will answer the 5 Key Questions of Media Literacy created by the Center for Media Literacy, which are:

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message differently than me?
4. What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

A graphic organizer is included in this guide and the Thinkalong website to help learners answer these five questions about each piece of media.

DEBATE

Use the debate tool on the module webpage to help form evidence-based responses to the debate question.

Thinkalong is designed to help learners engage with real issues that are relevant to their lives. [Structured discussions](#) allow learners to practice their critical thinking skills through evidence-based debate with their peers. Discussions are designed to take about 30 minutes. Educators are encouraged to modify aspects that work best for their learners.

To encourage civil discourse, please review the [Code of Conduct](#) with your learners.

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