



Post-Visit Processing Activities & Projects for NC Freedom Park

The North Carolina

African American

Heritage

Commission

"...Through their wisdom and unwavering determination, they not only shattered the chains of oppression but also paved the way for a more just and inclusive society." NC African American Heritage Commission on NC Freedom Park

Overview

Incorporating processing and reflection activities and projects after a visit to [North Carolina Freedom Park](#) transforms the experience from a one-time outing into a valuable and memorable learning opportunity that extends far beyond the time spent on-site. The following activity and project suggestions are designed to help students apply and synthesize what they've learned in a hands-on, creative way, promoting deeper understanding and retention of knowledge. The ideas provided can be implemented as short, in-class activities, or expanded as major projects that last over a period of time.

If students completed [Freedom Park Field Notes](#), referring to their journal during discussion and processing activities can be helpful.

As the ideas below are developed and customized for use in individual classrooms, teachers may want to provide students with a rubric to help ensure specificity of expectations. [Click here](#) for sample project-based-learning rubrics.

Culminating Activity Ideas

- ❖ **NC Historical Highway Marker Program:** Explain the purpose of the [NC Historical Highway Marker Program](#) and have each student (individually or in pairs) research one of the "Voices of Freedom" to determine whether or not there is a [NC Historical Highway Marker](#) that honors their contributions to the state. (If there is no Marker, is there any other type of recognition of the person, other than NC Freedom Park?) Have students design a historical road marker or to commemorate their assigned person; if one already exists, have students evaluate its effectiveness and work to re-design/update it.
- ❖ **Hashtag History:** Even though social media wasn't in the picture when most of the people commemorated in NC Freedom Park were doing their work, allow students to have some creative license and tell them to create a "Tweet" that one of the "Voices of Freedom" could have sent out if social media were actually a part of their reality. Teachers may want to provide context for the Tweet, such as having students base their Tweet on how this person may have responded to a particular modern-day event. Teachers should determine a word count (actual Tweets are limited to 280 characters) and instruct students to end with a #hashtag.
- ❖ **Create a NC Freedom Park Play List:** Allow students will delve into the different periods of history, individual people, or overall themes highlighted in NC Freedom Park by instructing them to create thematic playlists that capture the essence and spirit of the assigned topic/theme through music. By combining historical research, musical analysis, and creative curation, students will gain a deeper understanding of the cultural and social aspects connected to NC Freedom Park. Sample topic ideas include: "Anna Julia Cooper's Play List;" Songs that Represent the 'Beacon of Freedom';" Songs that Represent the Bush Arbor;" "Freedom Songs Through the Ages;" etc. Students will research and analyze the music of the time, or music across time, and consider how certain songs can reflect the mood and values of their person, era, topic, theme, etc. Students may want to consider both popular songs from that time and potentially include modern songs that evoke the same feelings and themes. Based on their research, analysis, and creative thought, students will curate a final playlist of songs that accurately represent the chosen topic/theme/person. Have students provide written justification for their song choices, and provide time for students to present their playlists to class (perhaps in small groups). Have

devices on hand so that students can play and listen to the music as they discuss. By combining history and music, this project provides an interdisciplinary learning experience that engages students' creativity and analytical skills.

- ❖ **Poster Design:** Tell students that NC Freedom Park is seeking a compelling poster design to advertise the Park, with the goal of boosting visitation and excitement for its mission. Now that they are familiar with NC Freedom Park, and the people, themes, and history it represents, students should consider what to highlight in a creative and visual way that would encourage others to visit. Teachers should determine and share poster specifications, such as:
 - Include visuals such as art work, pictures, symbols, etc. (literal or abstract) that represent NC Freedom Park (either in general or any specific aspect you decide to feature); teachers should let students know what mediums are acceptable for their final product (i.e., can the poster be designed using technology, or should it be hand-made?)
 - Contain text or phrases that offer interesting or inspirational “teaser” information about NC Freedom Park
 - Be effective in recruiting and/or educating future visitors
 - Be creative, colorful, and show that the creator of the poster put forth thought, time, and effort into the design
- ❖ **“Freedom Buddies:”** Arrange a time for your students to partner with a class of younger students, where they can serve as “Freedom Buddies.” Older students can engage younger students in learning about the theme of freedom and or NC Freedom Park in myriad ways – e.g. by sharing about their trip to NC Freedom Park; showing their completed Field Notes journals; or sharing any photographs they may have taken; presenting one of their completed projects from the list below (e.g., if your class creates a board book, have your students read it to younger students.)

Culminating Project Ideas

- ❖ **Design a “Freedom Celebration” for NC Freedom Park:** Tell students to imagine they are part of an event planning team that has been given the important job of planning a special celebration at North Carolina Freedom Park, with the theme of “Celebrating Freedom.” Explain that the goal is to plan an inclusive celebration that honors the historical fight for freedom and perseverance in the face of adversity shown by African American’s throughout North Carolina’s history to present. Using what they have learned regarding NC Freedom Park and related themes, students (in groups) will create an event plan inclusive of a pitch, a visual, and a draft agenda. [Click here for a sample project description.](#) (Teachers can also tailor this assignment to relate to a particular holiday, such as Juneteenth or the Fourth of July, or have another focus based on classroom learning goals.)
- ❖ **Write an Article for a Travel Magazine:** Instruct students to write a travel article that focuses on NC Freedom Park. Their article should include a headline that captures the reader’s attention, engaging paragraphs, and an accompanying image that they choose (or create.) [Here are some real-world tips](#) for writing an inspiring travel article. Article topics can also be diversified (i.e., each student might take one of the “Voices of Freedom” and center their article on that person and their work in a specific location around the state.) Articles can be combined into a class magazine.
- ❖ **Write a Scene/Dialogue:** Instruct students to write a dialogue between Two “Voices of Freedom,” or between one of the Voices and another NC figure of their choice. Determine what two people are speaking and the reason for the dialogue. Remind students that a dialogue is a conversation and encourage them to be creative, but also factual, realistic, and to avoid stereotyping. (One model for effective scenes is to have students think about why these two people are they speaking, what do they want, and what action might take place? Relatedly, students can create a mock interview with one of the “Voices of Freedom.”

- ❖ **Podcasts:** For a more tech-savvy approach, allow students to create short podcasts or vlogs where they narrate their experiences at NC Freedom Park, share insights, and reflect on the educational value of the trip. [Here is a student guide](#) for creating a podcast.
- ❖ **Create a Social Media Advertisement:** Instruct students to plan a social media advertisement campaign for NC Freedom Park. Their social media ad should: be targeted to a specific audience of their choice; include a high-quality, relevant & eye-catching image/graphic or video; provide a short description in clear, engaging text that ends with a hashtag; and have one specific call-to-action (what they are trying to get whoever views it to “do.”) [Click here for a sample project description](#). Similarly, students could be instructed to create a commercial or “teaser” for NC Freedom Park. ([Here](#) is an example created before the Park started construction to build awareness and excitement.)
- ❖ **“My Own NC from A to Z:”** Create a class picture book or board book in which students explore a specific historical event, period, person, or theme from NC Freedom Park in a creative way. Teachers may want to share a book example with students, such as the NC African American Heritage Commission’s board book by the same name; see [“My NC from A to Z”](#) . Many of the same people and themes commemorated in NC Freedom Park are also represented in this lovely children’s book. Each student (or pair of students) can be assigned to create one page for the book based on one of the “Voices of Freedom,” or an event or topic that is relevant to the story and message of NC Freedom Park (i.e., the “Beacon of Freedom,” the Arbor, or general topics such as freedom, justice, etc. Teachers should determine how much text students should provide regarding their assigned page, as well as what the specifications are for art work. Book pages can be completed using art supplies, or electronically (e.g., via technology such as [Flip](#).)
- ❖ **NC Freedom Park Phase II:** Tell students to imagine they have been commissioned to design a “Phase II” of NC Freedom Park. What events, people, ideas, etc. should be added and/or expanded? Students should take time to reflect on what they learned and experienced regarding NC Freedom Park and think about what is most important to amplify or add. Students will create a plan by thinking about:
 - What message to you want your Park additions to convey?
 - Who is your audience for Phase II? What do you want them to do, feel, experience, etc.?
 - How will you communicate your ideas? What specific materials, structures, words, images, elements, etc. will be needed?

After students have finalized their ideas, they can start creating. Teacher should provide specifications regarding expectations for the final products. (For instance, will students just create a simple sketch and diagram, or will this be a more detailed project in which they create a model out of physical materials?) Students should create a brief description, or artist’s statement, to accompany their final product.

- ❖ **Digital Interactive Timeline:** Have students create an interactive digital timeline of NC Freedom Park that illustrates the people, time periods, events, relevant legislation, etc. using platforms like TimelineJS, Google or Canva. Students can include text, images, videos, and links to showcase the sequence of events and their significance in history.
- ❖ **Create a Virtual Tour:** Begin by exploring what a virtual tour is, and allow students to participate in some virtual tours themselves. (Samples to explore are recommended [here](#).) Divide the class into small groups and explain that they will be creating a virtual tour of NC Freedom Park, or a tour of a specific area or aspect of NC Freedom Park. Teachers may want to assign roles within each group, such as researcher, scriptwriter, photographer, videographer, and editor. Guide students through the process of creating content for their assigned area. This could include:
 - **Script:** Writing informative and engaging descriptions for each stop on the NC Freedom Park tour.
 - **Images and Videos:** Capturing high-quality images and videos of the Park's features.
 - **Audio:** Recording narrations, finding background music, using natural sounds, etc. to enhance the virtual tour experience.

Select a platform for hosting the virtual tour (e.g., 360-degree media platforms or a simple website) and work with students to arrange their content logically and creatively (requiring a draft storyboard of students may be helpful.) They will also want to consider how to ensure a smooth navigation experience, which audio elements to integrate, how the tour will be narrated, and whether they will feature any interactive elements.

- ❖ **NC Freedom Park Through Art:** Each student will choose an artistic medium (visual arts, music, poetry, dance, theater, or multimedia) to express their insights and feelings about NC Freedom Park. (Teachers may assign a particular person commemorated in the Park, a related historical event, a general theme, etc.) Students will further research the historical context, key events, influential figures, social issues, etc. related to their topic. They will then use their experience at NC Freedom Park, what they have learned in class, and their extended research create their artistic piece, focusing on capturing the essence their topic, the challenges faced, the victories achieved, and the overall impact on North Carolina. Alongside their creative work, have students provide a reflective statement that explains how their chosen medium represents their assigned topic, and why they made specific artistic choices. Students' creative pieces can be compiled into a showcase, such as an art gallery, performance night, or online platform, where the broader school community can experience and learn from their work.
- ❖ **Several of the activities in the [Freedom Park Field Notes](#)** can also be utilized/expanded as culminating activities, including:
 - Choose one of the "Voices of Freedom" & write a **letter of gratitude** to them for their service to NC (p. 16)
 - Write a **review of NCFP** (p. 18)
 - **Postcard to a Friend** (p 19)

Share Your Visit and/or Classroom Work with Us!

As part of our ongoing commitment to NC Freedom Park as a site of educational excellence, we extend a warm invitation to educators around the state to share your experiences with us. Let us know how you have introduced students to NC Freedom Park, how you have utilized the materials provided, or how you have developed your own – whether related to an on-site visit, or back in the classroom. Whether you and your students visited NC Freedom Park, incorporated our materials, created your own engaging activities inspired by your visit and/or understanding of NC Freedom Park, or have unique insights or classroom celebrations to share, **we would love to hear from you and possibly feature you/your students on our website!**

We welcome photos, videos, student work samples, and descriptions of the activities you implemented either on-site at NC Freedom Park or back in your classroom. Highlight/summarize any creative projects or discussions, or send in your own reflections or student reflections. Brag on yourself and/or your students and share your creativity with us!

Have something to share? Or, want to discuss ideas or questions about being featured? Contact Christie Norris at cnorris@unc.edu. (Educators whose experiences/reflections are deemed suitable for publication may be eligible for a monetary stipend!)

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