Remembering Greenwood

How public history presents the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre

SS24.HS.1a "Identify and explain examples of how the historical subject is currently represented."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number the three present-day representations 1, 2, and 3. For each one, underline a detail about how it presents history and circle a phrase explaining what that choice helps an audience understand.

Three Ways to Remember Greenwood

1. In 1921, a white mob attacked Greenwood, a prosperous Black neighborhood in Tulsa, Oklahoma. People were killed, and homes and businesses burned. The exact number of deaths remains disputed. Today, Greenwood Rising, a history center that opened in Tulsa in 2021, presents this history through exhibits about the neighborhood before, during, and after the attack. Its displays bring attention to the businesses and community life that existed before the destruction. That choice matters: visitors can understand Greenwood as more than a site of tragedy. A museum visit also lets people move through a story in a planned order.

2. Another representation stands outdoors at John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park in Tulsa. Its Tower of Reconciliation traces African American history in Oklahoma, including the Greenwood community and the 1921 massacre. Unlike a museum exhibit that visitors enter, the park is a public place for gathering and reflection. A monument gives physical space to a history that was long neglected in public discussion. Its location in Tulsa also connects remembrance to the city where the violence occurred. Yet a visitor who sees only the tower may need more sources to learn how people experienced the attack or rebuilt afterward.

3. The 2021 documentary *Tulsa Burning: The 1921 Race Massacre* offers a third way to encounter the event. It combines historical images with interviews and narration, so viewers can hear people discuss the attack while seeing evidence from the era. Because a film can reach audiences far from Tulsa, it carries this local history beyond the city. Editing also shapes the story: filmmakers choose which images, voices, and events receive time on screen. Comparing the documentary, park, and museum reveals that each represents the same past through different choices. None can include every perspective or detail.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does Greenwood Rising represent Greenwood as more than a site of tragedy?

2. How does John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park represent this history differently from a museum?

3. How does the documentary represent the massacre, and how can it reach people beyond Tulsa?

4. Compare one choice made by the park with one choice made by the documentary. How might each choice shape what an audience learns?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Design a new present-day representation of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre for a public library. In 4 to 5 sentences, name its format, describe two specific features, explain how each would shape visitors' understanding, and identify one limitation.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.HS.1a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Number the three present-day representations 1, 2, and 3. For each one, underline a detail about how it presents history and circle a phrase explaining what that choice helps an audience understand. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does Greenwood Rising represent Greenwood as more than a site of tragedy?	**Its exhibits show Greenwood's businesses and community life before the attack, as well as its history during and after it.**
2	How does John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park represent this history differently from a museum?	**The park is an outdoor public place for gathering and reflection. Its monument gives the history a physical place in Tulsa.**
3	How does the documentary represent the massacre, and how can it reach people beyond Tulsa?	**It combines historical images, interviews, and narration in a film that audiences can watch outside Tulsa.**
4	Compare one choice made by the park with one choice made by the documentary. How might each choice shape what an audience learns?	**The park's location connects remembrance to Tulsa, where the attack occurred. The documentary's interviews and historical images let distant viewers hear discussion of the attack while seeing evidence from the era.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would create a listening station at the public library about the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. A recorded survivor account would let visitors hear a person's memories instead of only reading a summary. Reproductions of Greenwood business ads would show that the neighborhood had an active economy before the attack. Together, these features would connect personal loss to the destruction of a community. The station could not represent every resident's experience, especially those whose stories were never recorded.

Accept accurate explanations of how each medium's choices shape an audience's understanding. For Your Turn, look for two distinct features with an explained effect for each and a plausible limitation.