



Neighborhood Survey

The school neighborhood can be a primer for understanding basic architecture and planning concepts. Mentors are encouraged to facilitate this exercise and can help serve as the translator of the neighborhood's visual language. Students use a survey worksheet to observe and record the building mix, transportation modes, and natural features in their neighborhood. They can also narrow their focus to one particular building and identify architectural concepts like form, materials and siting.

Grade Level

Grades 2-5

Subjects

Social Studies, Visual Arts

Materials

"Investigate a Building"
or "Neighborhood Survey"
or "Neighborhood Scavenger Hunt"
or "Building Survey",
or Blank "City Game"
for you to create your own

Plus pencils, crayons,
a hard surface like a
clipboard to write on.

Time

Considerations

Preparation: 1 hour
Activity: 1 hour

Group Size

Recommended one
mentor to lead a
classroom. Teacher
and parents will be
helpful in keeping the
group together.

Related Pages In Box City

Field Study "Finds"
pg 31
Reading the Streets
pg 88
City Planning
Vocabulary pg 90
Important Buildings
Questionnaire pg 93

Standards

Social Studies Grade 4

Describe and give examples of ways in which people interact with the physical environment, including use of land, location of communities, methods of construction, and design of shelters

Visual Arts Grade 4

Know basic information, such as the history, public art, and unique architecture, of their own cultural community

Getting Ready

Choose the area you'll cover on your walk. Usually, one to two blocks adjacent to the school is sufficient to do a survey.

Note that the accompanying handouts were designed for students to use in a self-directed manner. There are several to choose from, each with a slightly different purpose. Discuss with your partnering teacher which would be best for the group. Decide whether to have each individual student record on a sheet or work in pairs or small groups. Don't forget to provide writing surfaces and pencils.

As a mentor, you will enrich the students' experience by pointing out key features of the landscape and sharing background and history. Select a few highlights and do any necessary research.

Consider whether your route might encounter any major intersections where safety might be an issue. Plan ahead to provide accommodations

for students of different abilities. Will you need to include a restroom or water break?

Doing the Activity

Inside, provide a brief introduction to students.

Let them know:

- a) how you want them to travel- as one large group or smaller groups?
- b) to keep eyes and ears open.
- c) to record their observations on the worksheet for later discussion.
- d) to ask questions.

2. Return to the classroom to discuss the students' findings. Did they see things they might want to include in their box city? Did they identify problems that they could design a solution for?