

# ARCHITECTURE IN EDUCATION

## RAINY DAY OR "EMERGENCY" ACTIVITIES

*Sometimes your plans for a particular week won't work out--it may rain the day you planned to go outside, or the students might finish a lesson much earlier than you anticipated, leaving you with a block of time to fill. You certainly don't have to wait for a rainy day to try these activities, but they are suggested here because they need little or no preparation and can be easily adapted to fit into any theme.*

\* **Take advantage of the classroom itself.** Look for examples of the vocabulary words you've introduced and label them. Have the students measure the room and make floor plans of it. Ask them how they might change the room's design or furniture arrangement. Explain some of the differences between natural and artificial light and point out the lighting systems in the classroom. Look out the classroom window and see if some aspect of the view relates to the topics you wish to cover. Many classrooms look out on interesting parts of the city that show a variety of building types, buildings from different time periods, skylines, natural and built landmarks, transportation systems, street furniture, etc.

\* **Make up word puzzles based on vocabulary words:** hidden words, simple crossword puzzles, jumbled words.

\* **Play "dictate a building":** Each student draws a facade or structure that incorporates at least five vocabulary words and then describes it to a partner who makes a second drawing. Compare the drawings to show that the same elements can be used with very different results. You can also choose an image of a building or building type you've been studying and "dictate" the description to the whole class, letting them ask questions to complete their drawings.

\* Have students **illustrate a passage about some aspect of the built environment**--a description of a room, a house, or a town, for example--**from a story or a novel** that they've been reading in class. Or read such a description to them from a book from your own library. (*Be sure to check with the teacher about any book's reading level and appropriateness first.*) Have students write their own poems or stories using their vocabulary words.

\* **Take students on a sensory walk to different parts of the school** (entrance, basement, cafeteria, library, gym). Ask them to close their eyes and concentrate on what they can hear, feel and smell. Have them record their impressions: What makes this place unique? What was it designed for? What do you notice about the design of this place (size or scale, shape of space, materials, lighting, acoustics, etc.)?

\* Take students to different **parts of the school** and have them **take rubbings of the surfaces and textures** that they find.

\* **Draw a series of different kinds of doorways**--large, small, wide, thin, ornate, plain, ancient, modern, actual, fanciful--and have the students draw their images of what they imagine might be inside the door, or what the rest of the building might look like. Students can make these images for each other, too.

*These and many other ideas are in the AIE book and in the Resource Center!*