
"LOOKING AT THE HOME"

TO THE TEACHER:

This exercise was adapted from the strategies checklist developed by Cliff Knapp in **Community Studies for Primary Children** (WEDG) & from Heritage Canada's "**Spirit of Home**".

This activity looks at the function and architecture of different types of housing. By choosing a building in the student's environment and then analysing it, the class will soon look upon the things around them in a much fuller, more creative way.

NOTE:

for the purpose of illustrating this concept, a tour of a residential neighbourhood to look at different types of housing will be used.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- generate awareness of one's surroundings & build observation skills
- challenge students to distinguish one type of building from another
- learn the basic physical components of buildings
- gain an understanding of how the environment affects buildings
- develop information gathering skills

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- "House Detective" (2-4) & "Architectural Observation" (5-7) worksheets
- magnifying glass
- parental supervision

ACTIVITY:

(grades 2-7)

Step 1
Before the walk

- A. Discuss with the class what architecture is and ask them what they think makes up a house (walls, roof, rooms, etc.) Also, have the students discuss what they think is the purpose of a house is and why they are important. Have the students dream up an imaginary house. Think about how big the house is, how many rooms it has, what kinds of rooms there are, etc. Draw the house on the chalkboard. Create a family to live in that house. What do they do? Are there any kids? How many?
- B. Look at the concept of "housing and home" as it relates to animals and birds (e.g. beavers-lodges; birds-nests). Explore with the class how these species skilfully create their homes based on their size, needs and natural resources. Compare this to how we build our homes.

These activities allow the students to begin thinking critically about what makes up a building or house, and becomes the foundation for the following worksheets.

Step 2
During the Walk

A. Worksheets

Take a tour of a residential neighbourhood in your community and observe the different styles of housing (e.g. apartments, duplexes, single family homes). Have the students fill out one of the worksheets provided with this activity. Both "House Detective" (grades 2-4) and "Architectural Observation" (grades 5-7) deal with observing some type of housing. If a tour of a residential neighbourhood cannot be arranged, have the students use their own homes as examples to complete the worksheets.

B. Sensory Probe

After the students have completed the worksheets have them use their other senses to examine the structure.

Sight: The class has already observed the house from a distance. Now have them use a magnifying glass to study the exterior up close.

Hearing: What can you hear as the wind begins to blow stronger (e.g. windchimes, shutters banging)? Are there other sounds?

Touch: Use different parts of the body to touch the house. How does it feel different to different parts of your body? Is it cool or warm? Does the sun or wind affect the temperature of the house?

Taste: Some students may wish to try this sense, but use caution. Warn the students about indiscriminately tasting the house.

Smell: Is there any odour to the house exterior? Does it smell the same all over?

Step 3
After the Walk

A. Then and Now (grades K-7)

With the help of your librarian, archivist or local historical group, locate historic photos of the area you visited. Compare them with what the class saw on their walk. How has the area changed? How has it remained the same? Do any of the buildings or landmarks still survive? What has been lost? What has been gained? Is the purpose of a house the same today?

Discuss why these changes have taken place. Examine how changes in manufacturing, technology, or population might have caused these shifts.

NOTE:

if interested in this project, it may be wise to check with your local resources beforehand to make sure there are historic photos or images available for use and you have enough time to get them. Producing copies may take time, especially for small archives who are not open every day and have limited staff.

B. The True Story (grades 4-7)

Research the house from the worksheet. When was it built? Who built it? Has the house always been in the same spot? Has it moved? If so why? Why is it there (e.g. close to schools, downtown, quiet neighbourhood)? Who visits it? How is it important to all around it? Does the house influence others around it (e.g. style, colour, materials)? Use this information to write a report about that house.

Talking to the owner of the house is probably the best place to find information. If this is not possible, try contacting the local archives, museum (for older homes in particular) or City/Municipal Hall for information.

C. Jigsaw Puzzle (grades K-3)

Imagine all the parts that make up a house (roof, walls, door, windows, fence, chimney, walkway, garage, etc.). Draw each piece separately on construction paper and colour them in. Cut them out and arrange them on a larger piece of paper (or desktop). Make a background/yard for the house-include trees, gardens, bird feeders, cars, basketball hoops, satellite dishes, etc. Have fun moving things around and deciding where they should go!

D. Desk Facades & Model Town (grades K-7)

Try either "Desk Facades" or "Model Town" (both included in this kit) as a fun follow-up activity which incorporates the information gathered during the class walk.

"HOUSE DETECTIVE"

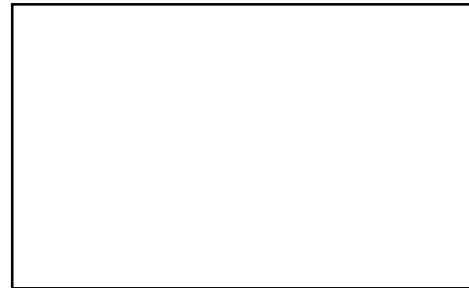
NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Pick a house in the block you are on. Study it and answer the following questions:

1. CLUES TO LOOK FOR:

- a. How many stories tall is the house? _____
- b. Is there a basement? _____
- c. Compare this house to the one next door.
Is it larger or smaller? _____
- d. How many windows can you see? _____
- e. What shape are the windows? _____

- f. What shape is the roof?
(Draw what you see in the box)



- h. What colours is the house painted? _____
- i. What is the outside of the house made of? (Can check more than one blank)
Wood: _____ Stucco: _____ Brick: _____ Other: _____

2. WEATHER:

- a. Sunlight: Is there a sundeck or porch? Yes _____ No _____

What is a sundeck used for? _____

b. Rain: Can you see gutters? Yes _____ No _____

What are gutters used for? _____

c. Cold: How many chimneys can you see? _____

What is the job of a fireplace? _____

d. Animals: Is there a doghouse? Yes _____ No _____

Can you see a cat door? Yes _____ No _____

Are there bird feeders near by? Yes _____ No _____

Is there a fence? Yes _____ No _____

What might be the job of a fence? _____

3. SHAPES:

a. Look at the house carefully. How many different shapes can you find? _____

What are they? _____

b. Do the shapes make neat patterns or designs? Draw the shapes and patterns you can see.

"ARCHITECTURAL OBSERVATION"

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. CHIMNEY

a. How many can you see?

b. Can you tell what materials it is made of?

(brick, stone, metal, other)

2. ROOF

a. What form is the roof?

(gable, hip, pyramid, flat)

b. Can you tell what material the roof is?

(wood shingle, asphalt shingle, tiles)

c. What is the direction of ridgeline?

(front to back or side to side)

d. Can you see dormers?

yes _____ no _____

e. Are there eaves?

yes _____ no _____

3. NUMBER OF STORIES

a. How many stories tall is the house?

4. OUTSIDE WALLS

a. What materials are the outside walls made of?

(brick, shingle, stone, wood siding, aluminium siding, other)

5. WINDOWS

a. How many windows can you see?

b. What shape are they? _____

(square, circular, arched, rectangular)

c. What colour is the window?

d. If you want, draw one of the windows using the back of this page.

6. OUTSIDE DOORS

a. What shape are the doors you can see?

(rectangular, arched)

b. What colours are the doors?

c. Is there decoration above, on or around the door? If so, draw what you see (use the back of this page).

d. Where is the door located?

(centre of the house front, on the side of the house, other)

7. PORCH

a. Is there a porch?

yes _____ no _____

b. What holds up the porch roof?

c. Can you see pillars or columns?

yes _____ no _____

Can you tell what the pillars or columns are made of? _____

(wood, stone, plaster, brick, other)

What shape are the pillars or columns?

(round, square, thick, thin, tapered, carved, other)

d. Where is the porch located?

(front, side, back of the house, other)

e. If you wish draw one of the porch elements, do so on the back of this page.

8. HOUSE DECORATION

a. What other decorative features can you see?

Decorative features may include:

- gingerbread along the eaves
- towers
- carved panels
- finials
- mosaic tiles
- iron scrolls
- brackets
- patterns in brickwork or shingles

b. What colours is the house?

(don't forget to look at the windows, along the roof edge, and around the door)

c. If you want, do a quick sketch of the front of the house and label where the colours are. (use the back of this page)