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PreK-2 Lesson Plan: First Grade

Objectives:

- Students will learn how neighborhoods and communities are similar and different through observation and discussion.
- Students will design and create their own building using architectural aspects such as landscapes, windows, doors, roofs, etc.
- Students will discover the importance of individual people to make up the entire community by collaborating with classmates to recreate a neighborhood.

Visual Arts Standards Addressed:

- **Creating:** Engage collaboratively in exploration and imaginative play with materials.
- **Creating:** Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art.
- **Perceive:** Select and describe works of art that illustrate daily life experiences of one's self and others.
- **Perceive:** Compare images that represent the same subject.
- **First Grade – Visual Arts**
 - **Standard 1:** Students will develop a sense of self.
 - **Objective 2:** Develop and demonstrate skills in gross and fine motor movement.
 - C. Develop manipulative skills (e.g., cut, glue, throw, catch, kick, strike).
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Other Standards Addressed

- **First Grade – Social Studies (Culture)**
 - **Standard 1:** Students will recognize and describe how schools and neighborhoods are both similar and different.
 - **Objective 1:** Recognize and describe examples of differences within school and neighborhood.
 - A. Recognize differences within their school and neighborhood.
 - **Objective 2:** Recognize and identify the people and their roles in the school and neighborhood.
 - B. Explain the roles of the people in the neighborhood (e.g., police officer, firefighter, mail carrier, grocer, etc.)



“Paper Bag Neighborhood”

Pre-K-2: First Grade

Students will explore the differences and similarities in neighborhoods as well as the interactions between people and their roles in the community by observing the functions of their personal neighborhood. Students will then recreate a familiar building and person from their neighborhood using their own design. The students will then discuss the differences and similarities between their created neighborhood and real ones around the community.

Materials Needed:

- Paper Bags
- Construction Paper
- Markers
- Scissors
- Crayons
- Glue Stick or Elmer's Glue

Optional Materials:

- Scrapbook Paper
- Ribbons/Buttons
- Tissue Paper

Vocabulary

- Observation: the action or process of noticing something or someone carefully in order to gain information. It can also mean to make a comment about something one has seen, heard, or noticed.
- Landscape: all the visible features of the surrounding natural scenery (trees, grass, plants, the sky)
- Community: a group of people who live together in the same area (a city, town, or neighborhood)

Pedagogy

- The day before this art lesson, I would ask my students to go home and observe their neighborhood. I would tell them to pay attention to what buildings make up their neighborhood. For example, I would say, “See if your neighborhood is mostly houses, or are there other buildings?” I would also tell them to see what kind of people live in the neighborhood. Ex: “What kinds of jobs do those people have?”
- On the day of the lesson, I would start a discussion in the classroom by asking my students what they noticed in their neighborhoods. I would also ask what kind of people make up their neighborhoods.
- Write their answers on the board making sure to get a variety of buildings and people. If there is not a large variety, ask leading questions to get them thinking further. For example, if no one has mentioned the elementary school as being in their neighborhood then ask, “What do you think your occupation is?”
- Once a good variety is reached, ask the students if they know what a community is. If they do not, give the definition and explain that every person and building they have just described can make up neighborhoods and the neighborhoods make up a community. Ask how each person contributes to the community. Ex: “What do firemen do for the community?” Altogether, this discussion should take no more than fifteen minutes.
- When the discussion is over, divide the kids into groups of about 6-7 and explain that within their group they will be making a neighborhood out of paper bags by working together, just as people do every day in a community. Tell the kids that each of them will choose a building to represent with their bag and that the construction paper will be used to decorate the building, and to create the landscape and a person.
- Explain that they will need to communicate with one another to figure out who will make what so they don’t end up with a neighborhood full of firehouses or the like. Make sure they know that they do not have to incorporate every building/person listed on the board because every neighborhood is different and not all of them have each listed item.
- Invite two helpers from each group up to gather supplies. One will grab enough brown bags for each person in their group as well as some construction paper. The other will grab the scissors, glue, crayons and markers for the group.
- Next, show them that to make their building, they simply open the bag, and then put the top together, fold down a small edge and staple the edge closed. If only one staple is provided, walk around and staple the bags for the kids as needed.
- As they work, remind the kids that all buildings have a landscape, no matter how small so encourage them to think about incorporating grass, the sky, trees, plants, roads, etc. into their design. If needed, nudge student’s toward the remembrance that every building needs a door, windows, a roof etc. as well. Allow them to be extra creative with the use of scrapbook paper, ribbon, buttons, and tissue paper if desired. Try to keep the project under an hour long.
- When the kids are finished, instruct them to clean up their mess making sure to pick up and throw away left over pieces of construction paper, put the glue, scissors, etc. back in their place and to wipe down their desks with a wet paper towel if glue has dried on them.

- After clean up, have the students arrange their neighborhood in the way they would like in their groups. Then have the groups walk around to the other neighborhoods and note the differences and similarities.
- To end the class, lead a classroom discussion about the neighborhoods:
 - “What buildings/people differed?”
 - “Was there a building/person that each neighborhood had?” “Why do you think that is?”
 - “Did they follow directions in order to have a variety of people and buildings working together?”
 - “How are the created neighborhoods similar/different from the ones we see in real life?”
 - “If we were to put all the neighborhoods together, what would it create?”
 - “How does each individual neighborhood benefit the community as a whole?”
 - At this point, make sure to also ask what the students liked about each other neighborhoods and tell them at least one thing you liked about each one as well.

Assessment (Can do just the first one or both depending on time)

- Summative: Having the kids walk around and discuss the similarities and differences between the neighborhoods as a class. Also asking them how each neighborhood contributes to a community.
- Summative: Ask each student about their personal building one-on-one and ask them to tell you how their building/person contributes to the community. Ask why they chose those to create, why they picked that color of building, why they chose that landscape, etc. Make sure to note how well they understood the meaning behind the assignment and if they didn't, be sure to discuss with them the importance of our communities and what they do for us.