

HUMAN ARCHITECTURE

GRADE: K-2, 3-5

TIME: 45 minutes

Participants will explore important buildings and structures by collaboratively recreating specific landmarks through movement with their bodies. During this exploration of buildings and structures, participants will consider the physical space that these objects take up, their surrounding environments, and the decisions that were made by architects, designers, and engineers in order to make the structure possible. This activity also strengthens communication skills, visual literacy of famous landmarks, and help participants to think about the way they too take up physical space.

INTEGRATED SUBJECTS: Social Studies, Physical Education, Visual Arts

OBJECTIVES

MATERIALS | RESOURCES

Images of landmarks, buildings, and structures with titles & locations

1. Build awareness of physical three dimensional space.
2. Work collaboratively to create a successful design.
3. Communicate ideas and design concepts visually and verbally.
4. Increase visual literacy and awareness of buildings and structures.
5. Introduce basic architectural terms.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. How does a landmark's purpose influence its design?
2. What steps do you take when you design and create? Is this different for a 2D or 3D design? Is this different when you design with movement?
3. What strategies help when designing collaboratively?

LESSON PROCEDURE

EXPLORE

10 minutes

- To prepare, gather a series of images showing different landmarks. Include the name, location, and architect and/or designer. Wright examples are available at: <https://www.teachingbydesign.org/multimedia/>
- As a group, look through the images and discuss characteristics and basic architectural elements that stand out. Ask the group to consider why certain landmarks may be designed a specific way and the importance of landmarks to a community.

ENGAGE

30 minutes

- Divide the group into smaller groups of 4-6 students.
- Have each group take turns “acting out” a landmark as the others guess which one they are.
 1. As the first group is assigned a building from the landmarks previously discussed, everyone else will sit heads down or with their eyes covered.
 2. After the building has been assigned to the first group “acting out” the landmark, everyone else may look up. The group then has 30 seconds to silently work together to make a tableau of the building with their bodies. Participants should also consider the space around the structure (is it in a rural or natural environment? Is it near water? Is it in an urban area?)
 3. The other teams then guess which of the landmarks is being recreated.
 4. Groups continue to switch until all the landmarks have been created.

CRITIQUE & INTERPRET

5 minutes

- **Have participants reflect on their experience. Ask:** What landmark features were easy to recreate with your body? Which were more difficult? What strategies did your group use to collaborate in such a short time? What would have helped your group be more successful? What was the most difficult to communicate to others in your group without being able to speak?
- **Finally, have participants consider their school or local community and what landmark they would design to represent it and why.**