

III. Important Places for People in Our Town

WHAT?

Students will identify and locate significant buildings in their town including homes, stores, places of service, and recreational areas.

WHY?

To use maps to locate places in the students' town

To create a visual composition of various places in the students' town

To identify locations of stores and services in the students' town

To identify places of governmental service in the students' town

To examine developmental changes in the students' town

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills:

History

- Understand common characteristics of communities, past and present

Geography

- Understand the concept of location
- Understand the purpose of maps
- Use maps and photographs to determine and mark locations
- Understand the physical and human characteristics of an environment

Economics

- Understand the concept of goods and services

Government

- Understand services provided by a local government

Science, Technology, and Society

- Understand how technology has affected daily life, past and present

Social Studies Skills

- Apply critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology
- Communicate effectively in a variety of forms.

TAKS:

- Objective 1: Issues and Events in U.S. History
- Objective 2: Geographic Influences on Historical Issues and Events
- Objective 3: Economic Influences on Historical Issues and Events
- Objective 4: Political Influences on Historical Issues and Events
- Objective 5: Critical-Thinking Skills

HOW?

Materials Needed:

- *Communities* by Lisa Trumbauer. Yellow Umbrella Books, an imprint of Capstone Press. 2001. (ISBN 0-7368-0744-6) or another book that shows places in a town or community.
- *Murals: Walls That Sing* by George Ancona. Marshall Cavendish. 2003. (ISBN 0-7614-5131-5) or another book that illustrates murals. If a mural is available in your school or nearby, take the class to visit that particular mural.
- Handout titled “Places for People in Our Town”
- Large map of your town
- Small sticky notes
- If available: Polaroid, digital, or still shot cameras
- Polaroid or still shot camera film
- Large sheets of drawing paper
- Paint or markers

Suggested Resource Person: Someone who has photographs depicting the students’ town in the past. (Note: Some towns have these kinds of pictures on the Internet.)

Suggested Teaching Time: 2 class periods

Suggested Procedure:

1. Read the book *Communities* by Lisa Trumbauer or another book that shows places in a town or community.
2. Discuss the places people use in the students’ town or community. If they live in a small town or rural area, ask them to name a town that has some of the places mentioned in the book.
3. Divide the class into pairs. Have them complete the handout “Places for People in Our Town.” Tell students that if their town does not have some of the places, name the town they use to get the services. For example: doctor’s office or movie theater.
4. Have each pair join a pair to form groups of four. Each group compares their ideas and adds to their findings as they learn from each other.
5. Each group reports to the class and students add to their lists as needed.
6. Tell the students that they are going to make a mural of their town. If available show the book to the class titled *Murals: Wall That Sing* by George Ancona or another book that illustrates murals. If you use the *Murals: Walls That Sing* book, note especially pages 22, 33, and 34. If a mural is in the students’ school or nearby, take them for a visit. Discuss the components of a mural.
7. Students nominate places to depict on the mural. Have the class vote to select:
 - Five or six specific places to live (Example: person’s home, apartment complex, a street in a neighborhood)
 - Five or six specific stores

- Five or six specific places that offer services (Example: police station, fire station, library, post office, senior citizen's center, hospital)
 - Five or six specific places to have fun
- (The total number of places should equal the total number of students in the class.)
8. Students take pictures of places in their town. Choose one of the following procedures or use a procedure that complies with the policies of your school.
 - Take a field trip to the places voted on by the class to be depicted in the mural they will construct. Have students take turn using the cameras.
 - Ask parents to take their children to one or two of the places the students voted on and let the children take pictures and bring them to the class. (Be sure each place will be photographed once.)
 - Ask a parent or group of parents to take the pictures and send them to you.
 - Take the pictures yourself and provide them for the class.
 9. Give each student a photograph. Have them paint or use markers to replicate their photograph on large drawing paper. Students label their paintings to correspond with their photographs.
 10. Each student writes the name of his/her photograph on a small sticky note and attaches it to its proper location on the large map of the town. (Note: If students live in a rural area or a small town, have them place a map of their town beside a map of the larger town where they shop or use services.)
 11. Students attach their photographs to their paintings.
 12. Students attach their paintings to a wall side-by-side in mural effect and in the order the places appear on the map(s). If they depict their town and another larger town, they could use a strip of paper to represent the road between their town and the larger one.
 13. If available, show students pictures of their town in the past. Discuss differences and similarities. Ask students how they think their town might change in the future particularly in the areas of transportation, communication, and recreation.

Evaluation: Have each student write a paragraph titled, "Why Places for People are Important in a Town." In the paragraph, students explain why they think the places are important.