

## Exploration 2

### What is Architecture?

This is a good classroom exercise based on an activity from the Skirball Cultural Center (<http://www.skirball.org/>) to get students comfortable talking about architecture and defining what it is. You can use it as a stand alone activity, or it makes a great introduction to a site visit. Used in this way, you can explain to the class that they will soon be going on a field trip to Fallingwater (or other site) where they will not only tour a very interesting structure, but also learn more about architecture, the art and science of building.

#### *Materials:*

- Transparency of Native American Dwellings
- Map of the United States
- Something to write and draw on
- Something to write or draw with

#### *Objective:*

Using images of Native American dwellings students will analyze and discuss how location and culture influence architectural design.

#### *Standards:*

- Arts: VA: 2, 3, 4, 6
- English: NL-ENG: 7, 8, 9
- Mathematics: NM-PROB: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; NM-GEO: 1, 2, 4; NM-CONN: 1, 3; NM-PROB.REP: 2, 3
- Science: NS: 1, 3, 5
- Social Studies: USH: 4, 6; NSS-G: 1, 2, 4, 5

#### *Procedures:*

- Start the discussion by asking a series of questions:
  - “What basic things do people need to survive?”
    - Food, water, **shelter**
  - “How does where people live affect these basic needs, now and in the past?”
    - Local materials vs. imported materials; synthetic materials; increased knowledge of physics, etc.
  - Using Native American groups as an example, discuss how different people created structure that reflected both their location and their lifestyles
    - Agricultural, hunter-gatherer, migratory, etc.
    - Pueblo, Hogan, igloo, etc.

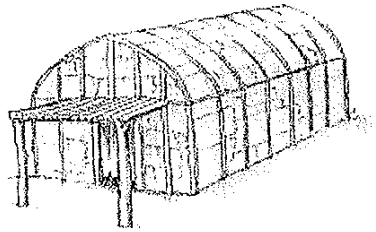
- Using their own homes as an example, discuss how the structures they live in reflect where and how they live
    - Single family house, trailer, apartment building, etc.
    - Local materials, pre-fabricated materials, etc.
- Make a transparency of Native American Dwellings and show it to the class. Explain that these are examples of homes once built by Native Americans in different parts of the country.
  - Ask, “How are they different?” “How are they the same?” “Which do you think were built by nomadic people?” Which do you think were built by people who stayed in one place?” “What materials did they use?” “Why?”
  - In and north of the United States, there were some twenty well-defined types of native dwellings, varying from the mere brush shelter to the five-storied pueblo. For images and more information, refer to this website: <http://www.greatdreams.com/native/nativehsg.htm#PIT>
- Using a map, point out the areas where the different dwellings were used and why, for example:
  - In the southwest, Hopi built pueblos out of adobe while the Navajo built Hogans made of wooden poles covered with mud and bark
  - Around the Great Lakes, Huron built longhouses made with white birch or alder trees that were small enough to bend into a frame, rope that had been made by braiding together thin strips of bark, and sheets of bark to cover the frame
  - In the east, Algonquin tribes such as the Ojibwa created wigwams, round buildings with domed tops made from logs covered with bark
  - In the Great Plains, nomadic tribes made teepees out of cleaned buffalo skins on a wood pole frame

### *Reinforcement Exercise*

Create a model of a Native American dwelling using historically accurate materials such as a pueblo from mud brick or a teepee from twigs, string, and fabric

# Native American Dwellings

Longhouse



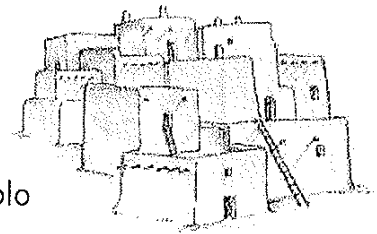
Hogan



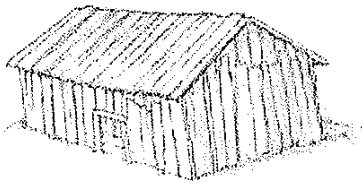
Wickiup



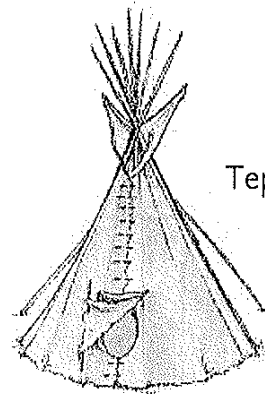
Adobe Pueblo



Plank House



Tepee



Igloo



Wigwam

