

Exploration 13

Visual Representation: Architecture in Your Mind's Eye

Part of designing a building is being able to imagine it before it's built and conveying that vision to others. Architects may want to activate certain senses, include a spatial memory from a previous experience, or allude to nearby landscape or building features when designing a building. You can help your students develop their minds' eyes in very simple ways, which will help them understand how to think like an architect.

Materials:

- Digital camera, cell phone with camera capability, or Polaroid camera
- Something to write and draw on
- Something to write or draw with
- "Mind's Eye Coins"
- A selection of items to make a collage, such as magazines, photos, scissors, glue, etc.

Objectives:

After visiting a building students will take photographic images that represent adjectives that describe the experience of the space/place.

Using "Mind's Eye Coins" each student will imagine and visually/spatially represent a space indicative of the adjectives on his/her coin.

Standards:

- Arts: NA-VA : 1, 3; NA 8
- English: NL-ENG: 4, 5, 12
- Mathematics: NM-PROB.CONN 3
- Science: NS: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
- Social Studies: NSS-G: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6

Procedures:

- After you visit a building, have students brainstorm a list of adjectives or terms that describe the experience of visiting the site in terms of all five senses.
 - Assign each student a selection of terms and ask him/her to take photographs that illustrate them, one per word.

- Display the images and have the class match the words with the images, discussing similarities and differences in the experiences of the spaces.
- Using the resources below, make a set of “mind’s eye coins” and put them in a box or bag.
 - Have each learner choose one of the coins randomly and imagine a space that has the experience of the adjectives on the coin. They can use photographs, models, words, etc. to show their imagined space. Their imagined space should have some reference to a person—either through a scale figure or reference in the text—to show how the space is used or occupied.

