

hands-on lessons that

Land Reuse Architects

Students will become landscape engineers as they transform a small vacant piece of land into a beautiful “land reuse” community space.

Grade Level: 3-6

Objectives

Students will understand the impacts humans can have on the environment.

Students will use principles of scale and proportion to create a 3-dimensional model of a transformed community space.

Literature Selections

Just a Dream by Chris Van Allsburg

Not Your Typical Book About the Environment by Elin Kelsey

Skills

scale, proportion, landscape composition, fine motor skills

Set up and Prepare

Begin the lesson by asking students to think of a location in their community (such as an empty lot) that could be transformed into a more useful, enjoyable space. Engage them with a discussion about what they might create there (e.g., dog park, ice skating rink, flower garden, playground, etc.) Read the book *Just a Dream* aloud to the students. Discuss the character’s sense of personal responsibility that evolves throughout the story. Draw parallels to relevant student experiences. Revisit the brainstorming about transforming a place in the community to create something else that could be attractive and provide enjoyment to the people who live there.



Materials

Elmer's® X-TREME™ School Glue, Elmer's® White Foam Board (11" x 17"), paint and paint brushes, shallow bowls, pencil, ruler, tissue paper (various colors), cardboard, fabric, felt, craft sticks, pebbles, sand, styrofoam balls, and a variety of other items that students can use to create an outdoor space model.

Preparation

Cover your work surface. Provide each student with a piece of foam board and a wide variety of materials they can use to create the model. Review the properties of proportion and scale so that students can create the items in the model to scale.

Directions

Instruct students to sketch the architectural plan on the foam board and use a ruler to make sure that it is in scale. Think about the items they'll need to include so that the space is both functional and aesthetically appealing. They must decide where to put benches, trees, flowers, etc. to make it more comfortable and enjoyable for people to spend time there.

Tell the students to start with the outside edge and the major features of the space (e.g., trees, sandbox, fountain, etc.). Put those in place first and continue to add other items. Encourage them to use their imagination to create walkways, fences, lights, and other items to add to the model.

As the model begins to come together, students will begin to see where flowers, grass, small trees, etc. might work well. Continue to add detail until the model is complete.

Elmer's® X-TREMET™ School Glue is perfect to use to create pebble paths, sandboxes, benches, and a variety of other items that students may wish to add to their models.

Lesson Extensions

Write a story about this new space and the characters that enjoy it. Who are they? Why do they appreciate it? How do they make it a special place to spend time? Write about the transformation of the space or a special event held there.

Let students partner with a peer and provide time for them to discuss the differences and similarities of their models. How is each space different and what materials have they used creatively?



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