



Lesson Objective: To teach the children the process of creating a building.

A) Introduction/Vocabulary

Today we are going to talk about architecture. Who can tell me what **architecture** is? (Architecture is the art of designing buildings) An **architect** is the person who does the designing.

Like paintings and sculptors, architects make things that are beautiful to see. They plan buildings which people enjoy looking at and which are better places to work and live in. Architecture is just a larger kind of art. In our last lesson, we learned that sculpture is art you can see from all sides. You can see architecture from all sides, too, so an architect has some of the same design challenges as a sculptor.

Let's pretend we are a group of architects, and someone has come to us and asked us to design a building. What kind of things do we need to know before we can begin our design? (Make sure student ideas include the following)

- **Use** – How is the building going to be used? You would not build a house the same way you would build a church or shopping center.
- **Budget** – How much money does the person want to spend on the building?
- **Available materials** – What kinds of materials are used in buildings?
(Wood, bricks, stone, glass, cement, steel, etc) Architects often choose materials that are easily available because those materials tend to cost the least. A wood building will cost less in an area where there are many trees than in an area where wood has to be shipped in from far away. To design a building that will fit the budget, an architect must carefully consider the kinds of materials to use.
- **Location** - It is important to know where the building will be located. It would look silly to build a skyscraper in the middle of a residential area.
- **How the building will look** – Does the customer want a certain style, such as traditional or modern?

As you can see, being an architect is very hard work. An architect not only has to create a design that is interesting and beautiful to look at, but also one that works well and can be built within the budget. Once an architect has the kind of information we just talked about, she can begin the design by sketching ideas on paper. Who remembers what a sketch is? A sketch is an idea. The architect plans the way the shapes within the building will go together and creates a design, just as painter and sculptor do. But the architect must design a building that can actually be built. Have you ever made a building with blocks and had it fall over because it was not built correctly? Architects must design buildings that cannot fall down. They must know what materials to use and how strong they are. Once an architect has an idea for her building she will make a drawing of the outside of the building. She will also make drawings of the inside of the building. These plans are called **blueprints** because they used to be done on blue paper. **Blueprints are like maps that show the location of every single thing that will be a part of the building.** Windows and doors will be shown on the blueprint. What other things would you expect to find on the blueprint? (Heating vents, water pipes, electrical



outlets). Architects also make **models** of the buildings they design. Why would an architect want a model as well as a drawing of a building he had designed? The sketches and model help give the architect and his client a clear picture of what the building will look like when built. After changes are made, a builder constructs the building using the architect's drawings and blueprints.

B) Artwork

Now I want you to gather around and look at some real blueprints. These are actual blueprints used to build homes in this area.

Title: Blueprints

Details: Architectural Blueprints

- This picture is of an actual blueprint used to build a home. Can you see where the window and doors are located?
- Can you find the kitchen? What do you see in the kitchen?
- How many bathrooms have a shower or bathtub?
- What other details do you see on the blueprints? (Electrical, plumbing, venting, etc)

Now let's take a look at a picture of a Thorne *Miniature Room* titled *Japanese Interior, Traditional*

- This is a picture of the a Thorne Miniature Room. This is one of 68 miniature rooms that is on display in the Art Institute of Chicago.
- They were built on a scale of one inch to one foot, which means that each inch of the miniature room represents one foot of a full size room.
- Looking at this room, we see what the interior of a traditional Japanese home looks like.
- Wooden panels and paper shutters were usually used on the exterior or outside walls of the home. Panels of wood and rice paper were used to divide the space inside the home.
- Where do you see sliding panels in this picture? (On the left and right sides) This is the main room of the house. Notice how few furnishing there are. Japanese design is very simple. Bedding and other objects would be brought in when they were needed.
- Nature seems to be an important part of this room, where do you see nature? (Doors open onto the garden, the sliding screens and cabinetry are decorated with scenes of nature)
- How is this different from your home?

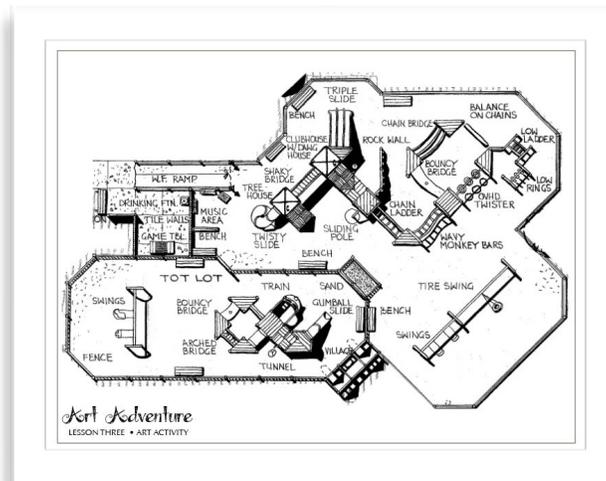
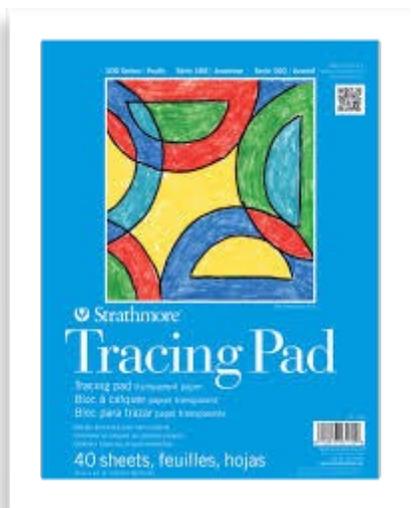
Reinforcement Activity

Materials provided: paper

Children provide: pencil and ruler

Hand out a piece of paper to each child and ask them to take out their pencils and ruler. Tell them to think about their room at home. Ask them what their dream room would be like. Tell them to draw their dream room.

Optional Activity



Materials provided: White Paper with Playground Architectural Drawing; Tracing Paper

Children provide: pencil

Give each student a piece paper with the playground and a piece of tracing paper. Have them place the tracing paper over the drawing and trace one of the sections of the playground equipment. Ask them to move and align that sketch next to another section of playground shapes. They should trace that section to build onto their current sketch. Continue to build shapes from the architectural drawing to create the perfect playground. Each item is clearly labeled on the drawing and the students should be able to create their own unique creations. They will need to move the tracing paper around a lot as they combine each of their concepts.



Additional Background Material:

This material is provided to give you, the discussion leader, additional information about the artists and paintings that may help you answer questions or generate additional discussion with the children if time permits. You are not expected or required to cover this information in the classroom.

Thorne Miniature Room, Japanese Interior, Traditional

In their traditional domestic architecture, the Japanese characteristically use wooden panels and paper shutters as the chief building materials for the exterior and fixed or sliding panels of wood and rice paper as dividers in the interior. Such dividers offer the convenience of flexibility in the arrangement of interior spaces. This miniature room is the zashiki, or main room, of the traditional Japanese home and the adjoining room customarily used by the mistress of the house. Essential elements of the main room are the two recessed areas at the back. The alcove to the left houses artistically arranged wall cabinets and shelves for art objects. The alcove to the right is traditionally used to display a single work of art chosen to be enjoyed for a day from a stock of such treasures kept in a fireproof storeroom. The floor of the main room is always covered with tatami, or straw mats, each of which measures about three by six feet and is bound with cotton borders. The translucent shoji (sliding door) which give easy access to the garden at the right and the floral motifs painted on the sliding screen doors that divide the zashiki from the room at the left, integrate the architecture with the natural setting outside. The absence of furnishings other than the lacquer writing desk and low tables in the main room is typical. Other accessories, including bedding