



Building Historical Understanding by Exploring American Landscapes

Curriculum Unit 05.03.02
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Background

It was a Friday. I was driving two of my 8th grade students to the Grove Street cemetery in New Haven after school so we could take pictures of 18th century grave symbols for a history project. As we drove past High and Elm Streets, at the corner just past the Doodle, Stephanie commented, "I really like that corner - something good happened to me there." We drove on through the late afternoon traffic, rounded a few more corners, and parked outside the cemetery. We had no quarters for the meter but decided not to worry. It was a beautiful cool and breezy spring day. We had only twenty minutes before the graveyard closed.

Another student said, "Let's hurry up; this place is creepy." I responded, "How can you say that? It is quiet and peaceful here and such a nice place to walk and think about the people resting nearby." Ana muttered, "If I step on their graves I will have nightmares and their ghosts will haunt me." Stephanie nodded in agreement. I smiled - not worried about ghosts or ghouls - because to me the cemetery was a retreat.

A sense of place is a personal thing. I think of the phrase "*Cogito ergo sum*" and want to stretch it to "I am in a place, therefore I am." Think of an introductory art class where the teacher suggests looking at the view forming outside the shape: the turns and lines and pictures are created by what is outside the vase and not the vase itself. Look at the context, the locale - the place. Without place we float free and being "grounded" (always something viewed as positive and healthy) is beyond our reach. My students showed me that *being* in the same place may not always be the same as experiencing the same place.

I think of the people who march across the textbook and shine through the primary documents of our American History class, and wonder if my students and I can capture a real understanding of the distant world of the past if we have ignored the sense of place that enveloped the people living back then? I have never taught history as merely a study of its artifacts; the documents, the battles, the structures, the ideas, can never stand alone and cannot be introduced to students only at the factual level. We have always used cause and effect and comparisons and analysis to work our way through the major topics of the curriculum. But is there a better way to help students appreciate America history and the link between past and present?

I began to rethink the way I presented content to my students when the seminar on *Sense of Place* collided

with a long term curriculum project connecting archaeology, and science and history developed by the staff at the Mashantucket Pequot Museum. The 7th and 8th graders at Troup are involved in this three year National Science Foundation grant that encourages the study of Native American “ways of knowing” through informal science learning and archaeological research at the 17th century Pequot fort site in eastern Connecticut. A core idea for the project is to show students that “the archaeological record of Native peoples in the Americas represents long-term histories of community adaptation and survival, processes which also reflect how scientific practices and knowledge are integrated into everyday life.” Students are investigating how historians and archaeologists study the past and they are experiencing first hand the tools, techniques and observation strategies that investigators use to interpret cultural activities at a historical site.

In spite of the training the students have received through this program, the 8th grade students continue to have a difficult time understanding the relationship of location, time, and place to the events and changes of history, and they struggle to see that artifacts and ecofacts might have a story to tell. I think their understanding of a different community, one that is unlike their own in another time and place, is restricted, not by their abilities, but by the framework they use to ask questions.

The students also have a difficult time knowing not only where the Pequot site is located, but where the site is in relation to their own familiar environments. Geographic locations and the distances between them are meaningless and the notions of place, location and region are hard to conceptualize. Some students who have traveled back and forth to Puerto Rico, or who have driven down I-95 to South Carolina for summer visits or family reunions bring some experience into the classroom. We all benefit when they share their travel stories but it doesn’t happen often. Not many students venture far from home and the world remains a very unknowable place.

However, if I ask a student, “Who has a community garden in his neighborhood?” or “Who fishes for bluefish off the Forbes bridge?”, or “Who lives in Monterey Place, the new housing area that replaced those eyesore red brick buildings in Newhallville?”, my students respond with descriptions, and details, and anecdotes of adventure and close calls and fun. We read a short book, *Seed Folks* by Paul Fleischman, that told the tale of a community coming together in Cleveland to create a garden out of a trash filled vacant lot. The characters didn’t know they were building a community until the garden was flourishing. My students had similar stories to tell about exploring vacant lots, and leaning out of apartment windows, and hauling little kids in wagons around the block. The book reminded them of their own real-life experiences and they could connect with the story.

As in the novel, my students have seen changes in their neighborhoods as much as they take for granted what remains the same: in the changing and the preserving, they must be subconsciously aware that people shape the environment as the environment shapes people. In their travels from home to the family reunion or to a favorite vacation destination, or to church on Sunday, they experience traditions and patterns and the creation of memories. And, like all of us, they begin to take the familiar for granted, to count on the smells and feel and functions of a location, and miss them only when they are gone. Can I tap in to this ‘sense of place’ to connect my students to the traditions and memories and patterns of other groups of people?

With this personal context in mind, I think that my students can become interested in learning about other places and the sensibilities that people, groups, and cultures develop in response to those places, by looking at American history with a more reflective eye. If they can begin to appreciate that people in the past were as closely tied to their personal and public places as we are to our own, then perhaps the study of history will make more sense. We can investigate the facts and concepts that inhabited the past (recognizing, comparing,

explaining), and can move to analyzing and evaluating those developments, by approaching American history through its landscapes.

I will use the concept of landscapes in a unit for my 8th grade students at Troup Magnet Academy in New Haven. We follow a survey course for American history that focuses on turning points. The New Haven curriculum encourages research, writing, and critical thinking; venturing in to explorations of landscape should provide new material, new stories to tell.

Ironically, while researching public and private places to include in the unit, I came across a book titled *Susan B. Anthony Slept Here* by Lynn Sherr. The book is written as a detailed guide to historic places, public and private, that represent the involvement of women in the events of the American past. In the entries under New Haven, Troup Middle School was included. Troup is an important part of the cultural landscape of 20th century New Haven, so the unit *Building historical understanding by exploring American landscapes* can begin with a landscape and “sense of place” very close to home for my students. Troup Middle School was built and dedicated in 1925 to recognize the contributions of Augusta Lewis Troup. She worked as a women’s labor organizer alongside Elizabeth Cady Stanton and moved from New York to New Haven with her husband Alexander Troup, to found and publish *The Union*, a newspaper dedicated to labor and union issues. Throughout her later life, Augusta Troup encouraged education among immigrant families in New Haven and spent her days involved in socially conscious projects for the poor. The original school was restructured in 1989 as the Troup Magnet Academy of Sciences. The magnet school model was developed with the expressed purpose of reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation all notions that Augusta Lewis Troup would have promoted. The majority of our students are African American and Hispanic. In addition to open admissions, we actively seek to engage in urban/suburban exchange programs. It seems appropriate to develop a unit on “sense of place” for students whose school reflects so strongly the impact of people on the landscape.

Rationale

Why landscapes and ‘sense of place’?

Anne Spirn in her book *The Language of Landscape*, says that landscape is “scene of life, cultivated construction, carrier of meaning. It is language.” She talks about reading the landscape and using its meanings to perceive pasts that we cannot experience and to use the insights to anticipate, envision and shape the future. Using the language of landscape to look at American history does not divide the study into categories of biography or economics, or politics or cause and effect. The conversation opens up. “A person literate in landscape sees significance where an illiterate person notes nothing.”

The study of cultural landscapes isn’t new. In the 19th century, the geographer Alexander von Humboldt coined the term ‘cultural landscape’ saying, “The earth and its inhabitants stand in the closest reciprocal relations, and one cannot be truly presented ... without the other. Hence history and geography must always remain inseparable. Land affects the inhabitants and the inhabitants the land.” Cultural landscape is “a way of seeing landscapes that emphasizes the interaction between human beings and nature over time.”

Cultural landscapes are not just the artifacts of man’s ‘collision’ with the environment, the affect of land on inhabitant and vice versa; cultural landscapes are what the viewer understands when he really looks at what the artifacts reveal. So, for example, my students can visit Plimouth Plantation and observe fences made of branches, and tiny cabins, and marsh grasses and sandy terrain and come home with a mind’s eye postcard of the early colonists, but more so, the students can think about how it felt on a winter day to live and work there – and ask how did the people survive? And they can wonder why would people travel to such a rocky

and windswept place and how did the tools and utensils they needed get there and what were they used for? And they might also ponder what kind of a community would shape a cabin, a farm plot, a village in this way and what does its organization say about their society and its rules and order? And how can I find out??

The students will need to use primary sources to research the places of the past. If they want to 'find out' the story of a cultural landscape, they'll need to find the words that narrate it. What exactly are these words? What language will we try to explore in our unit?

Language and landscape do not precede nor create the other. "Language comes into its own as language not insofar as it either passively records or actively creates..., but insofar as it fittingly brings forth and holds for thought the essential features of the environment." Living in the environment over time, creates memories and a sense of place; the language that describes that environment includes the functions and subtleties of the location as well. An example from the southwest is the Grand Canyon: Samuel Cozzens described traveling through the canyon in the 1800s as "the Journey of Death" where "the walls are perpendicular, a blood-red color,...inextricable confusion..." Yet we think of the Canyon today as a national wonder, a place to visit. Cape Cod, and the New England shore in summertime is a retreat for vacationing city dwellers, yet that same coast for William Bradford in the 1600s was a "hideous and desolate wilderness".

Studying 'place' will force my students (and me) to read the record, investigate the sites, look at the artifacts with as much objectivity as possible. We will be looking at 'where' things happened in the American past, remembering that "where is never a there, a region over against us, isolated and objective. Where is always part of us and we part of it. It mingles with our being, so much that place and human being are enmeshed, forming a fabric that is particular, concrete and dense."

Spirn made it clear to me that the language of landscape is the expression of 'sense of place'; the expression coming from those concrete and particular details of an individual landscape. I know that my students should be able to discern what 'sense of place' means in an immediate personal way. With effort and investigation, it might be possible to help them express that 'feeling' with the language of landscape. The unit then, forms a circle. It begins with the world the students know which opens a connection to the past, and then the focus returns to the present. Perhaps the students will have become more observant of the environment and more open to its differences.

Spirn urges us to "cultivate the power of landscape expression" by seeing and describing what is *functional, sustainable, meaningful, and artful*. So, to answer the question why use *landscape* to study American history, I have three explanations: students can begin with what they know (their own sense of place) to understand the language of landscape, learning to recognize, appreciate, connect, differentiate, describe, and infer; next, they can be aware of that language to shape their research and readings about the past, not only through the written text but through the study of places (public and private), and other "languages of landscape"; and lastly, they can begin to celebrate diversity: recognize the dialogs of a place, appreciate other stories, distinguish conversations, and "join the conversation". Through this last endeavor, students hopefully will learn that "nothing stays the same and change shapes the present and the future." In other words, students will learn that the landscape of their own world is in their hands, and they should accept the responsibility to care about it and shape it -they can "join the conversation" as active citizens.

Goals

The unit reflects a constructivist approach to student learning as well as a social history approach. “Social studies from a reflective inquiry orientation is grounded in the belief that people must interact with ideas and things in order to make knowledge for themselves, thus the knower and the known are closely intertwined.” Instead of working forward from distant events preserved in the pages of the textbook, we will examine what remains today from the past, and look at a variety of cultural landscapes: historic landscapes, designed historic landscapes, and vernacular landscapes.

A historic site might be the Alamo or Gettysburg National Battlefield, or Mark Twain’s home or the Tenement Museum in New York: “these special places reveal aspects of our country’s origins and development through their form and features and the way they were used.” A designed historic landscape did not just emerge from function and use it was consciously created. Examples can include Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts, Central Park, Grove Street Cemetery, and the monuments and landmarks we erect to capture memory. A vernacular landscape is shaped by people and it reflects the everyday physical, cultural, traditional, functional activities of those people. Examples could include the Kennecott Copper Mines in Alaska or the rural Hanalei Valley of Hawaii; a vernacular landscape might be the Lakota Reservation or a working class neighborhood in a hundred cities. These landscapes can be contemporary communities or heritage sites. They reflect life.

The lines between these ‘definitions’ are blurred. The distinctions are set only to encourage the students to see value in a variety of public and private spaces, either contemporary or historic. A history class that focuses only on the great plantations of the South or famous Revolutionary meeting halls, or the well-worn trails of western expansion, might miss life in the alleyways of 18th century Philadelphia or in the carriage factories of New Haven. We will look at smaller less familiar settings: a fort, a harbor, a main street, a town green?

I’d like to develop the theme of landscape and human/environmental interaction not only by considering the geographic definitions, but by looking into social history: how did the people living the history – building the towns, mapping the frontier, moving to the cities – feel about what was going on? Social Studies should help students understand connections, especially cause and effect and influences over time. Again Spirn explains it so well: “speaking and reading landscapes are by-products of living – of moving, mating, eating and strategies of survival creating refuge, providing prospect, growing food.” The language of landscape is the language of people and the places they touch. Using the American Memory collection at the Library of Congress as an example, I know it is possible to find the primary documents that will speak to us about the past.

Studying the Columbian Exchange, the Colonial Period, the Federal Period, and other topics will be more meaningful to the students if they appreciate that history ‘happens’ to real people. We will learn from these ‘real’ people by reading from journals, travel diaries, letters, documents, and newspapers. We know from our own lives that the places we live in, work in, grow up in, have an affect on us. I’d like to begin at this same point with my students and help them refine their perceptions of their own world, so that when we move backwards through time, they can be successful in our goal to explore and appreciate the ‘world’ of others.

Components of the Unit

Strategies

The unit will ask students to reflect on who they are in the real-time world that surrounds them – urging them to become careful observers of their own environment and to reflect on the meaning of the spaces they occupy. I will ask students to consider the meaning that a particular space and place holds and creates for them. And then, as a class, we will move on and examine the places of other people, the places that Puritans and colonists, and homesteaders and gold miners have experienced as America grows into a nation with a global outlook. We might wonder if we can ever really understand a sense of place from the past or do we need to experience it?

The unit, *Building understanding by exploring American landscapes*, will begin with student explorations of their own spaces and places, in descriptive, narrative and evocative poetry and in short narratives that are concrete and detailed. Students will compare their own ‘language’ about New Haven with descriptions of New Haven written by contemporaries (such as in tourist information guides or in newspaper stories). We will read about New Haven from the view of its early founders and make some comparisons. In this way, students should be able to understand that perceptions of the landscape change over time, as the use of the landscape changes.

Students will locate their neighborhoods on a map and move from the local to the larger context up to a national map. We will use the map work to review some basic geographic concepts and terminology. We will generate a class list of ‘landscapes’ that are familiar to the students from their own experience; every time a ‘place’ comes into the conversation, we will record it. This discussion will allow us to talk about the meaning of a ‘cultural landscape’. We will return to the words on the class lists throughout the year – to sort them, define them, connect them and explore them and to see how and if, their sense of place has changed or developed

Students will explore ‘places’ in American history in a similar approach as we work our way through the year – the ships, towns, town halls, farms and plantations, trails and factories of landmark locations, and less familiar locations, will be mapped and then investigated with a context, growing away from isolated meanings as vocabulary terms, to an implicit link to the cultural landscape of a place. Students will attempt to discover through primary sources how people felt about the spaces they lived in and experienced, and vocabulary terms will gain conceptual and perhaps evocative meaning.

Students will express their understanding in a yearlong journal of ‘place’ narratives and poetry. Aside from explorations of the sites themselves, either physically, online, or through resources, students will read poems of place, will examine diary entries and personal letters, and will look at images from the National Gallery of Art, and other online and local museum collections, to uncover feelings about a locale captured in paint or watercolor or words.

Continuing our project with archaeologists from the Pequot museum, I hope that this approach to learning about cultural landscapes will make our fieldwork at the Pequot fort site more meaningful. At our last visit, students dug at the site and some found tool flakes, charcoal, and burned nuts. The questions the archaeologists had for the students were basic: what do these artifacts indicate about life at the site? And yet, such a basic question opened up Native American life and social history in the 17th century. The question remains though, will students be able to reach into the past and really understand a sense of place as

experienced by Americans and Native Americans in the 1800s and earlier? Will they be able to develop questions about what they read and see in order to unbury a sense of the past, and a sense of place relevant to that past? What does 'sense of place' mean after all?

It is hard to come up with a definition for 'sense of place'; I can put my finger on its meaning in my mind, but could not explain it to a student other than to say 'you know what I mean', which of course, they may not at least not consciously. So how can I have my students work on a 'sense of place' unit if I cannot define the term? Understanding a sense of place, someone else's place, means leaving your own biases behind, and this is not an easy task for 8th graders – nor for any of us really.

We will develop a classroom concept map that will reflect our growing understanding of 'sense of place'. Just as the word lists will note concrete locations, this concept map will show students how they are learning to think about an idea in a new way. It will be a metacognitive exercise for the students.

The method I want to introduce into the classroom will require students to 'make meaning' out of the places we investigate. We saw how the students wouldn't just visit Plimouth Plantation, but they would *see it* as a cultural landscape. The study becomes inquiry-based as students make a connection between a problem or issue in their own life with the topic they are studying. I would organize the investigations of the 'cultural landscapes' around themes in order to make the inquiry more manageable for the students. The visit to Plimouth might focus on "survival" asking perhaps, how the site shows the way the community survived? Students might think about the interaction of man and environment with this theme in mind. Another theme might be "conflict", or "innovation/invention" or "governance/social order". These topics make it easier to create essential questions.

What if we traveled to the Lowell Mills in Massachusetts north of Boston on another trip (and if not on a bus, at least online) what would we learn about the cultural landscape of the factory site if our theme remained one of 'survival'? And if we move closer to home, and look at the Augusta Lewis Troup School, built in 1926, what can we learn of the neighborhood and the community that built it, what values are preserved in it? Can we learn more about the people who are connected with the school (past and present) and its Edgewood neighborhood if we approach the site with the theme of survival in mind?

Lesson objectives

Each student will create and maintain a journal for reflection, journaling, poetry and self-evaluation. Each student will spend a great part of all activities reading, researching and writing either individually or in small cooperative groups.

- 1 Each student will recall five geographic 'places' and be able to define these terms with examples from an American history context. (Note: the numbers and details for all objectives can change depending on how the unit is specifically structured. This is level one Bloom recollection of facts; the objectives should carry the student through the levels of Bloom's revised taxonomy)
- 2 Each student will organize the places we have studied, classifying them as examples of any of the four themes of exploration, conflict, governance, and invention.
- 3 Each student will apply one of the themes to answer an essential question in the form of an essay elaborating the study of a cultural landscape.
- 4 Each student will evaluate a cultural landscape through a role-playing performance task
- 5 Each student will create a persuasive response to a current issue where a present day cultural

landscape becomes the focus of a controversy- preservation or progress? (Students could explore the recent eminent domain ruling of the Supreme Court in the case *Kelo v. New London*)

Range of Topics

I am including the 'places' I would focus on in order to cover the four themes. The places are selected to cover certain topics in the American history survey but to investigate them from a 'sense of place' and cultural landscape perspective. If I were following the regular survey framework, much of the same material would be covered, but more chronologically rather than thematically. I could use all four themes and have the students spend the entire year exploring these landscapes; I could also follow my regular survey and select only one 'cultural landscape' to study for each block of time, or 9 week period. This unit really develops a method rather than a particular set of lesson plans and activities. What I have learned from the seminar is a social history approach that can be as flexible as possible.

Anchoring the students in the vocabulary of place will keep that flexibility from becoming too open-ended. In other words, the students need to be looking for common threads regardless of the landscapes they explore. They need to look for building plans and maps, structural designs, location and function of a place; they should be aware of the surroundings of a building or a location, the topography and the land-use. Students should become observers, and to that end it is important to look at photographs and prints and maps and images.

Theme of Exploration: bridge and harbor

We will explore the landscapes created around a bridge and around a harbor. We will begin by defining a bridge in our own words and then expand our definition to thinking of bridge as metaphor. We will examine some famous and familiar bridges, such as the Q bridge in New Haven (including the days of fishing for blue fish or unloading the circus trains) and the George Washington bridge in NYC. We might read the story *The Little Red Lighthouse and the Big Grey Bridge* by Hildegard Swift, because it shows the landscape of the river and how it changed with the arrival of the new bridge.

We will look at maps and records about the land bridge in Beringia and talk about the landscape created by early migrations. We can read some entries translated from Jose de Acosta about the early theory of the land bridge. We will also pay heed to alternative explanations offered by Native American 'ways of knowing' and talk about origin stories as explanations for the populating of the North American continent.

Using the idea of bridge as a metaphor, we will expand and look at ships that 'bridged' Europe with the new world. This approach will allow us to study the Columbian exchange - seeing the 'landscapes' on either side of the Atlantic and perhaps examining (through sailor's and ship's journals) the life created on board the ships of early explorers.

Investigating 'harbors' will begin with Amsterdam in the 17th century the Golden Age of Dutch trade when the city opened its arms to the persecuted from around the world, not only the Puritans from England. After

reviewing the geography of Europe, the connection of harbor and trade and an economy, and reading about the religious problems that drove the English to the Dutch shores; we can look at the harbors at Jamestown and Plymouth and explore the differences. The use of harbor will lead us to a discussion of colonies, and here we can look into the cultural landscapes of historical Plymouth and Jamestown. We can look at the expansion of settlement in the Americas at the harbor sites of Boston, Philadelphia and Charleston and explore the stories that appear.

Theme of Conflict: forts and trails

The Inca built massive forts of stone slabs, still extant in the mountains of the Andes; the survey approach to this great civilization often studies it as a 'victim' rather than viewing the world of the Inca in its own sense. We will study the landscape of the Inca before the arrival of the Europeans and then, through the story of Guaman Poma, we might have an insight into the 'sense of place' experienced by this native Andean writing to King Phillip III. We can study the recently excavated fort at Jamestown Colony and explore the archaeological and written record to understand the purpose and function of a fort and its role in conflict. In Connecticut we can visit Fort Trumbull in New London (interestingly the Supreme Court case mentioned above revolves around homes and a private development in this same area). Other forts for all time periods abound - in fact, concentrating only on a study of forts could take the class through a survey of American history from the early days to the current war in Iraq and soldier training at Fort Bragg, Kentucky.

Exploring trails of exploration and expansion will naturally lead to 'conflict' with those whose lands the trails cross, including the disputes over territories claimed by rival explorers as in the case of the French and Spanish along the Mississippi River. Students can investigate the Lewis and Clark journals, Oregon Trail diaries, exploits of Daniel Boone and the opening of the Wilderness Roads in Kentucky. What towns were built up along these trails? The Trail of Tears is another example of cultural conflict leading to an example of the destruction of a cultural landscape in the name of 'progress'.

Theme of Governance: settlements (a hierarchy)

All settlements from the smallest to the largest exhibit some form of social organization. We can look at the Iroquois League through Native American village structure or the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut by studying early Hartford or Wethersfield history. We can examine early colonial life by visiting the Plymouth Plantation or explore the landscape of revolution by examining the activities that inform the social world of Boston or Philadelphia in the 1700s. Life in a mining town says something about social order and governance, and its rich cultural landscape will be recorded in journals of early gold miners.

Theme of Invention and Technology: cities and transportation centers

The theme of invention and technology develops around transportation and the growth of the cities. Students can explore life along the national road, the Chicago Rail hub, Independence Missouri and the Conestoga Wagon trains heading west. Movement into the cities will follow the invention of the steam engine and its application in industry, moving into urbanization and the industrial rise of America. So many landscapes to explore - the guiding question is to see how lives shaped cities and cities shaped lives, and neighborhoods.

Classroom Activities

I am including examples of activities that show the range of possibilities for this unit. One activity falls under a

geography heading. Students will need to understand basic geographic terms to be able to express what they observe about landscapes in greater detail. The second activity will fall into the research project category, and the last activity reaches into the personal expression-poetry category.

Activity One: Introducing Elevation

Grades : Grades 7-9

Guiding Question: How can maps show the topography of the land?

Performance Task: Students will create an elevation map based on a simulated site and will then observe and describe elevation at the current school site.

Social Studies Performance standard: Demonstrate understanding through written, verbal, visual, and/or technological formats

Objectives:

Students will recall vocabulary: topography, elevation, sea level, relief map Students will evaluate a map with elevation.

Materials:

Clay, wire, wire, colored pencils, cardboard, scissors, ruler, camera and printer; elevation maps of New Haven;

Resources :

<http://curriculum.calstatela.edu/courses/builders/lessons/less/les2/pyramids.html>

Schedule: Two 50 minute class periods

Procedure:

Begin the project by asking students how they think a flat map can show the elevation of a mountain? If they respond 'with a map key' ask how the key is made and the measurement determined.

Pair the students and give each team a large ball of clay, cardboard with graph paper marked NSEW in appropriate locations on edge, colored pencils, a marker, a ruler, wire, scissors. Students will make an elevated shape on the cardboard, measuring its height so that it can be divided into at least four (or more) half inch sections. When finished, students should use the marker to put a dot in the center of the top and draw lines from the dot to the base corresponding to the four directions.

Use the ruler to measure half inch intervals from the base and using the wire, slice laterally through the clay structure creating slices. Using the digital camera, take a picture of the structure from the side. Using a new graph paper marked with a center and the four locations, disassemble the clay structure by moving the first

slice and tracing it on the paper lining up the directional lines. Continue until all slices have been traced. Reassemble the clay on the original cardboard.

Color the different parts of the traced image and create a key for the 'map'. Compare maps and structures with another team.

Assessment:

Print out the picture of the clay form in grayscale, and use the colored pencils to create a map key. How will your team color the photograph? Students should be able to explain their final product in a written paragraph.

Extension:

Look at elevation maps for New Haven and identify familiar locations and their elevations. Use the key.

Activity Two: Visit an online historical landscape - Creating categories of landscape elements through observation

Grades: Grades 7-9

Guiding Question: How do primary sources reveal elements of life in a landscape?

Performance Task: Students will explore the Lowell Mills website and create a chart of landscape topics that they observe by viewing photos, primary documents, and reading background material.

Social Studies Performance standard: Demonstrate understanding through written, verbal, visual, and/or technological formats

Objectives:

Students will read for understanding Students will observe and infer from evidence. Students will classify and organize evidence

Materials:

Computer with Internet connection; word processor

Resources :

These three sites can be used as resources for this exploratory introduction to investigating the Lowell Mills as a cultural landscape. http://web.bryant.edu/~history/h364proj/fall_99/kroner/page3.htm

<http://oldweb.uwp.edu/academic/history/hist314/vmtdl/lowell.htm>

<http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/21boott/21boott.htm>

Schedule: Two 50 minute class periods

Procedure:

Begin the project by asking students if the producers of History Channel were to knock on their door and ask to do a historical study of their lives, what elements of their life should the investigators research? What items are important in the lives of the students in the shaping of who they are - what makes up their history?

Using the same thinking, students will be asked to visit the Lowell sites to find out about the Lowell girls. Since they are unfamiliar with the history of the mill girls, the students' first job as investigators is to find out what kind of topics they should investigate. Today's task is to look for areas to research in depth in order to gain an understanding of the Lowell Mill girls from THEIR perspective. Ask the students if it is possible to uncover the 'sense of place' that the Lowell girls might have for their life in the mills?

Students should use a word processor running in the background (or pencil and paper if they prefer) to create an expanding list of items to pay attention to when researching the Lowell Mills. This is a random unordered list at this point; students are recording observations. Students may work independently or with a partner. Student observations should be as detailed as possible as students might focus on the size of a boarding house bedroom, the layout of the factory, the proximity of noisy engines and looms to the workers themselves. What kind of a place surrounded the mill girls?

The class will meet as a group and share their lists; students may add or subtract to their own lists at this point. Next, working in pairs, the students must devise a way to organize the list of items into topics: they may develop as many or as few topics as they like as long as they can justify their decisions.

Assessment:

Students must write a reflection paragraph describing what new ideas and topics they uncovered for research by reading through and observing materials at the websites for the Lowell Mills.

Activity Three: Poems of Home

Grades : Grades 7-9

Guiding Question: How does memory shape our feelings about home?

Performance Task: Students will create an original poem about their own homes.

Language Arts Performance standard: Demonstrate understanding through written, verbal, visual, and/or technological formats

Objectives:

Students will recall vocabulary and use a thesaurus Students will create a personal response poem.

Materials:

Word lists, thesaurus, dictionary; you may want to read some poetry about 'home' to the students, either before or after or during work on their own poems. Some suggestions are: Elizabeth Bishop's *Sestina* , Anne Bronte's *Home* , Wilfrid Gibson's *Home*, Edgar Guest's *Home* , *The Path to Home* , *Back Home* , John Howard Payne's *Home Sweet Home* , Ella Wheeler Wilcox's *My Home*.

Schedule: Two 50 minute class periods

Procedure: Begin the project by asking students to complete a concept map centered around 'home'. This class activity will create categories of words to inspire students when working on their poems. What items MUST be in a home, what items are SOMETIMES in a home, what items are NEVER found in a home. Using the generated vocabulary, can students come up with a sentence definition of a home?

Ask students to create a list of at least 12 verbs drawn from the ideas in the concept map; students should use a thesaurus to expand each verb into a collection of verbs. Using the verb list as a 'grab-bag' for vocabulary, students should write a poem responding to the questions "What are ten strong memories of home?" Write-peer review-edit-rewrite.

Assessment: Hand in the poem including first and second drafts.

Appendix I

Definitions of "Sense of Place" developed by Mark Hinline

1. A set of personal, family, and community narratives that include features of place. Taken together, these narratives constitute an attachment to place.
2. The attribution of non-material characteristics to a place. The "soul" of a place; its *genius loci* .
3. Tacit knowledge of a place. This would include the ability to describe a plant or an outcropping of rock without being able to put a name to either. It would entail the tendency to have embodied skills for route finding, but neither the linguistic nor the visual memory needed to draw a map. A sense of place, in this meaning, would include the notion of "being oriented." To lack a sense of place is to be "disoriented." In modern industrial societies, such a sense of place is relative to mode of transport. One may have a sense of place when walking, for instance, but become utterly disoriented when in an automobile.
4. A synthetic but unsystematized body of knowledge about a place. In this meaning, systematic knowledge of place is embedded in an unarticulated system of a higher order: *knowledge* about parts but a *sense* of the whole.

Appendix II

Suggestions for finding photographs, maps and building plans

The American Memory Collection at the Library of Congress has a startling number of photographs, maps and prints that can be accessed and searched online. I am listing a few of the collection titles and have included verbatim the descriptions of the collection content. I have also added some sites that are outside the Library of Congress, merely to illustrate the ease of finding images online for almost any 'historical landscape'.

Another way to locate images is to start with the Google image search page and follow the images that turn up back to the original website cited by Google. Remember that your students should put a copyright notice under any picture they are using for a digital presentation; using Google as a source is not correct, so make sure they have followed the Google lead to the source.

1. *American landscape and Architectural Design 1850-1920*

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/mhsdhtml/aladhome.html>

"This collection of approximately 2,800 lantern slides represents an historical view of American buildings and landscapes built during the period 1850-1920. It represents the work of Harvard faculty, such as Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., Bremer W. Pond, and James Sturgis Pray, as well as that of prominent landscape architects throughout the country. The collection offers views of cities, specific buildings, parks, estates and gardens, including a complete history of Boston's Park System. In addition to photographs, views of locations around the country include plans, maps, and models. Hundreds of private estates from all over the United States are represented in the collection through contemporary views of their houses and gardens (including features such as formal gardens, terraces, and arbors)."

2. The Northern Great Plains 1820-1990

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/ndfahtml/ngphome.html>

<http://www.lib.ndsu.nodak.edu/ndirs/collections/photography/Holdings.htm>

"These collections from the Institute for Regional Studies at North Dakota State University contain 900 photographs of rural and small town life at the turn of the century. Highlights include images of sod homes and the people who built them; images of farms and the machinery that made them prosper; and images of one-room schools and the children that were educated in them."

3. Small town America 1850-1920

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/nyplhtml/dennhome.html>

"12,000 photographs of the Mid-Atlantic states New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut from the 1850s to the 1910s, from the Robert N. Dennis Collection of Stereoscopic Views at the New York Public Library. The views show buildings and street scenes in cities, towns, and villages as well as natural landscapes. They also depict agriculture, industry, transportation, homes, businesses, local celebrations, natural disasters, people, and costumes."

4. Rio Grande Historical Collections

<http://archives.nmsu.edu/rghc/photo/collections.html>

A collection of searchable photographs documenting life in the American southwest, especially in New Mexico and along the Rio Grande. Searchable New Mexico

5. Tacoma Public Library's Photography Archive of Washington and the Pacific Northwest

<http://search.tpl.lib.wa.us/images/>

"The Tacoma Public Library's extensive photograph collection conveys a rich sense of Northwest history by documenting the social, industrial, commercial, and agricultural growth and development of Washington and the Pacific Northwest."

6. Panoramic Photographs Taking the Long View, 1851-1991

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/panoramic_photo/

"The Panoramic Photograph Collection contains approximately four thousand images featuring American cityscapes, landscapes, and group portraits. These panoramas offer an overview of the nation, its enterprises and its interests, with a focus on the start of the twentieth century when the panoramic photo format was at the height of its popularity. Subject strengths include: agricultural life; beauty contests; disasters; engineering work such as bridges, canals and dams; fairs and expositions; military and naval activities, especially during World War I; the oil industry; schools and college campuses, sports, and transportation. The images date from 1851 to 1991 and depict scenes in all fifty states and the District of Columbia. More than twenty foreign countries and a few U.S. territories are also represented."

Appendix III

The unit supports the common NHPS 8th Grade Performance standards requiring students to "explain causes and effects of various events", "demonstrate understanding through written, verbal...formats", and "formulate questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives using multiple sources." In addition, students will develop critical thinking skills especially in the analysis of cause and effect and the interpretation of primary sources.

New Haven Social Studies Curriculum Standards (Grade 8)

Content Standard 1.0

Read, view and listen to multiple sources that reflect the diversity of culture.

Compare and contrast the beliefs, ideas, and customs of the old and new worlds

Content Standard 2.0

Read, view and listen to multiple sources concerning civics and government. Investigate the goals and

struggles of minority groups in America

Content Standard 3.0

Analyze the geographic landscape of the United States before and after the development of the Constitution.

Content Standard 4.0

Identify the impact of technology of the time that helped navigation and exploration. Analyze the impact of technological inventions on the growth of cities

Content Standard 5.0

Analyze the political, social, and cultural progress from 1865 to 1915 Read, view and listen to multiple sources concerning history

Appendix IV Concept Worksheet

The concept used in the worksheet can be changed as the topics change. You can create this map on an overhead or on a board in front of the class; it can be easily reproduced for individual handouts (usually in landscape format). At the end of the day, it's a nice idea to create a large 'concept map' using ideas from all of the classes involved in the lesson. The 'map' can then be posted up in the room as a more complex entry for a 'word wall'.

Must be present to be a home | Is sometimes present in a home

Home

Never present in a home | Examples of a home

| Non-examples of a home

Using ideas from all categories, please write a short description of a home:

References

Teacher Materials

Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in Encyclopedia of Educational Technology. Available online at <http://coe.sdsu.edu/eet/Articles/bloomrev/index.htm>. (June 14, 2005). There are many references to the revised Bloom taxonomy online. This site gave a clear explanation and showed the application of the taxonomy to writing objectives.

Duncan, James and David Ley. *Place, Culture, Representation*. London & New York: Routledge, 1993. These essays give examples of

studies of 'cultural landscapes' that show how places really do contain special meaning and carry historical as well as cultural messages.

Hineline, Mark L. *Sense of Place* . Available at <http://helix.ucsd.edu/> (May 25, 2005). The definitions for 'sense of place' listed in Appendix I were taken from this University of San Diego site within the Department of Science.

Nash, Gary, Julie Jeffrey, Howe, Frederick, Davis & Winkler. *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society*. 6th Ed. New York: Longman, 2003. This survey, now in its 6th edition, approaches American history as social. The companion website is full of resources and ideas for teachers. http://ocawlonline.pearsoned.com/bookbind/pubbooks/nash5e_awl/

Seamon, David and Robert Mugerauer. *Dwelling, Place & Environment: towards a phenomenology of person and the world* . Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company, 2000. This collection of essays shares the theme of thinking about 'man' and the environment as a relationship that reaches into 'doing' and 'being'. Some of the essays shaped my understanding of the meaning of 'language of landscape'.

Spirn, Anne Whiston. *The Language of Landscape* . New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998. Anne Spirn's ideas about landscape as a language helped me see that this approach would help students be more aware of other points of view as well as their own responsibility in preserving the landscapes they care about.

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*. New York: The New Press, 1997. This is an excellent social history of the United States.

Classroom Materials

The resources included below are only a small sample of what is available for all the topics mentioned. I list them as examples of model websites for students to access.

Jamestown Rediscovery . Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. Available at <http://www.apva.org/jr.html> (July 1, 2005). The recent archaeological finds as well as background history for Jamestown colony are available at this site, including some good photographs.

Kagan, Myrna. *Vision in the Sky: New Haven's Early Years 1638 - 1783* . Hamden: Linnet Books, 1989. A very readable book about early New Haven.

National Historic Landmarks Program . Available at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/>. (July 2, 2005). Students can search this site for a variety of historic landscapes.

Osterweis, Rollin G. *Three Centuries of New Haven: 1638 - 1938* . New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953. Several anecdotal stories of New Haven over the centuries with ideas about where to look for more topics.

Guaman Poma Available at <http://www.kb.dk/elib/mss/poma/> (July 3, 2005). Transcription of the 1615 Illustrated manuscript. Spanish students can attempt to read some of the material but all students can use the illustrations and resources to gather new insight into life in the Andean world with the arrival of the Spanish.

History Videos and Website at PBS. Available at <http://www.pbs.org/history/>. (July 4, 2005) The PBS materials are wide-ranging from interactive websites to specific DVDs that capture a 'feel' for a particular time period in history. I would recommend *Frontier House* , *Colonial House* and the accompanying web activities to students.

Ingerson, Alice. "What are Cultural Landscapes?" at *Institute for Cultural Landscape Studies* . Available at

<http://www.icls.harvard.edu/language/whatare.html> (May 28, 2005). The site has several definitions of historic landscape types-good for discussion-as well as some definitions that may be helpful for students.

American Memory from the Library of Congress. Available at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/>. (June 23, 2005). Over 7 million documents, photos, maps, recordings available for searching. The site includes Kid's and Teacher pages as well as special collections and the search page for the collection. We could limit our unit to use of this resource and find excellent primary source materials for almost any topic.

Notes

1. <http://www.pequotmuseum.org/Home/ResearchCollections/WhatsNewInResearch.htm> Core ideas for the archaeological pathways project are listed at this site.
2. <http://coe.sdsu.edu/eet/Articles/bloomrev/index.htm>. Lorin Anderson, a student of Bloom worked to revise the taxonomy in 2001 to clarify the process of learning and revise the matrix with clearer verbs to guide teachers in designing their instructional objectives.
3. Spirn, *The Language of Landscape*, 15.
4. Spirn, 25.
5. Spirn, 16.
6. Humboldt quoted in Alice Ingerson, "What are cultural landscapes?" Institute for Cultural Landscape Studies. <http://www.icls.harvard.edu/language/whatare.html>. June 2000.
7. Ingerson, "What are cultural landscapes?"
8. Robert Mugerauer in "Language and Environment", *Dwelling, Place and Environment*, 59.
9. Cozzens in Mugerauer, 53.
10. Bradford in Mugerauer , 61. Mugerauer points out the contrast between Cozzens and the Puritans and gives other examples of how the same landscape can carry quite different meanings and memories.
11. Joseph Grange in "Place, Body, Situation", *Dwelling, Place and Environment*, 71.
12. Spirn, 25.
13. Sue Gibson and Roberta McKay, "What Constructivist Theory And Brain Research May Offer Social Studies" Available at http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/css/Css_35_4/ARconstructionist_theory.htm (May 24, 2005).
14. The Cultural Landscape Foundation: Cultural Landscapes defined. Available at <http://www.tclf.org/whatis.htm>. (May 21, 2005).
15. http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/hli/hli_p.htm
16. Spirn, 15. See Appendix I for some definitions of 'sense of place'. I think the concepts we list on this map will help students write their poems at the end of class because they will be able to think in a wider field.

17. Helping students think about how they are thinking lets them work out their own strategies for learning.
18. Appendix III contains some suggestions for online image resources.
19. <http://www.nps.gov/bela/> National Parks site for the Bering Land Bridge.
20. www.kb.dk/elib/mss/poma/ The transcription of this amazing illustrated 1615 document is now online.
21. Mark Hinelin, "Meanings of sense of place". Available at <http://helix.ucsd.edu/~hineline/IDENTITY/sense.html> (May 20, 2005). See also "Sense of Place". Available at <http://envstudies.brown.edu/thesis/2001/james/senseofplace.html> (July 25, 2005)

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

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