



Senses, Spaces and Structure

Guide for Curriculum Unit 83.01.01
by Bill Coden

My students are at a crucial time in their lives—adolescence. Their lack of ease with their bodies is matched by their lack of familiarity with spaces and places. Many are bused to school outside their immediate neighborhood. While the strangeness of the new building is short-lived, it is, initially, very real. Thus, space, both personal and environmental, presents a problem.

This unit is designed for seventh-graders. The unit is designed:

to move from the haptic sense to the visual; to conduct an architectural survey of Wooster Square, our school's immediate neighborhood; to help students develop greater ease with their bodies, their personal environments; and to improve, refine reading and discussion skills.

Literature forms the heart of the unit. Poems, short stories, selections from novels and a full-length play will be read; their connections to architecture, space and time will be explored through discussion and writings. Theatre games and visual arts activities will be used to further explore and define space and structure. In order to accomplish this, I will work closely with the Theatre and Visual Arts teachers in my program.

A valuable end-product of the unit will be a greater ease, on the part of my students, with their changing bodies. They will extend their body spaces into their immediate architectural surroundings. I hope there will be the beginnings of an aesthetic awareness.

(Recommended for English/Language Arts grades 7 and 8)

Key Words

Architecture American New Haven Connecticut Neighborhoods Personal Space

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