



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1983 Volume I: Elements of Architecture

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## **Experiencing Architecture: A Sensory and Creative Approach**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 83.01.06  
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This unit is designed to be implemented within a visual arts curriculum, but can be used elsewhere. The rationale and strategy explores the serious nature of Architecture in our lives. It addresses the necessity for an awareness of how we perceive three-dimensional space. The approach emphasizes values and affective associations. The aim is to provide a contemporary view of architecture. The “Note on History”, although it stresses architectural matters, does not explore traditional concepts related to this topic. Though this may seem to suggest a requirement of a previous knowledge about architecture the discourse on the sensory encounter of space is simple and straightforward. It includes a description of an imaginary building that applies to and illustrates the concepts mentioned in the text. An explanation of the activities’ connections with this text is provided along with a sample building tour that utilizes the understanding acquired from earlier exercises.

The activities are numerous and are primarily designed to stimulate interest in architecture and to develop formative skills in drawing and three-dimensional model-making. The emphasis is on awakening the child’s imagination and motivating creativity. Though they do not represent a formula or recipe that dictates a child’s response or productivity, they are fun. Although the course is not designed to comply with social science or technical drawing, these activities may be combined with or adapted to traditional exercises in these courses to rejuvenate both teacher and student.

The listings under “Other Activities” represent a developmental progression from the conceptual models and motor skills that have been acquired through the earlier personal encounter with space. They provide a rudimentary discussion or spatial organization and building elements and functions. The activities illustrate and support these primary investigations into what might seem like difficult concepts.

The bibliography is organized to correspond with sections in the text. It is extensive and partially annotated.

The essay begins with “I want my students to enjoy architecture” and ends with the words “Let your imagination wander.” If sophisticated design and providing students with choices is your goal this is where to start.

(Recommended for Visual Arts and Social Science Grades 7 through 10)

### ***Key Words***

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