



Play on Architecture

Curriculum Unit 93.01.03
by Bill Derry

From the mid-1960s to the present we have attempted to introduce architecture from the standpoint of how buildings are experienced, before worrying about how they are built. We have believed that until we can begin to understand how buildings affect individuals and communities emotionally, how they provide people with a sense of joy, identity, and place, there is no way to distinguish architecture from any everyday act of construction. ¹

Where is architecture taught in traditional school curricula? In the high school industrial arts class? In a visual arts class? The third Thursday of every other month? Never? The fact is that architecture is rarely, if ever, included as part of a planned, sequential program of instruction. In my nineteen years of formal education, I received only a cursory introduction to the world of architecture. Since architecture affects each person daily, from the home in which one lives, to the place in which one works or goes to school, to the community in which one roams, it would be useful to have a language with which to communicate about architecture. This unit has been designed to accomplish two tasks: 1.) describe my journey into the world of architecture, and 2.) provide a blueprint for myself and other teachers who wish to take themselves and their students on a similar journey.

INTRODUCTION/RATIONALE

In the previous two seminars which I have taken, I have entered each with at least a tenuous grasp of the necessary language to begin to discuss the seminar's focus. With this seminar, "The Symbolic Language of Architecture and Public Monuments," I broke "tradition." I purposely selected an area I was not familiar with; partly because I had heard excellent reports from colleagues about previous seminars with Professor Bloomer; and partly due to a personal interest in finding out more about the process and meaning of architecture. This time it was not so easy to get a handle on a theme for my unit. I was attempting to climb a well oiled, branchless, amorphous tree without cleats! I am including the "history" of the process of coming up with a theme for this unit because I believe that my unimplemented ideas have merit, and may be implemented by myself or others in the future.

In the past, even when the tree was oiled, I used my knowledge and interest in drama as cleats to dig in and provide a context for my new information and understandings. My past two units utilized drama as the medium through which the content was taught. This time, since I was on a foray into a new world, I thought I

would communicate through a medium I had not previously used in a Yale Institute unit. I chose computers as this medium, because of my interest in, and knowledge of, computers. I entitled my proposed unit, "ABCs: Architectural Basics for Children on Computer." Computers allow a student to proceed in the direction and at the pace she desires. They also provide motivation to explore a particular subject. I proposed to create an application which would allow students to identify parts of buildings by choosing correct responses from lists of vocabulary. Students could also move parts of buildings around on the screen using a mouse, and "build" known and new buildings. I investigated two major software packages, IBM's "Learning Links," and Asymmetrix' "Multimedia ToolBook." (I selected software for the IBM since every elementary and middle school classroom now has four IBM computers. I would have preferred to use a Macintosh application, "Hypercard," which I am familiar with, but this would not have been practical given the computers available in the schools.) I spent many hours with computer specialists and consultants at Yale, IBM, and Jostens' Computers. They helped me to figure out the benefits of each software application, and to analyze the needs of my project in relation to the abilities of the software and the school system's computer hardware. In both cases the software would not operate on the computers in the schools. In both cases I had created an overly ambitious, if not impossible, project! My journey into the world of architecture started with a one month expedition down a dead end path!

In a desperate moment, I switched my "cleats" (my anchor) from the computer to the video recorder. Being aware of the power of the moving image to communicate, and having some background in video, I knew that I could create a good quality video. Drama began to creep back into the picture as I renamed the proposed unit, "The Language of Architecture" or "Let's Talk Architecture." Now, I would create a thirty minute video focusing on a variety of buildings in New Haven, from some well known buildings to lesser known buildings in the Dixwell neighborhood. Each building would take on a character, and the narration would personify the style(s) and nature of a given building. I also determined to create a set of slides of many of New Haven's buildings which would exemplify a variety of architectural styles and illustrate a number of architectural concepts. Students were going to design their own buildings and have a field trip—all in five, fifty minute sessions! The emphasis was still on vocabulary and the science of architecture. I was uncomfortable, and knew I was not yet on solid ground to begin my work on the unit.

Intuition, and common sense, told me to simplify. I could not decide if focusing on one architectural style would be advantageous. I attempted to look at other subjects to see how they are introduced to beginning students. Is there always a scribble stage? When introducing students to the concept of the arts we attempt to provide multi-arts experiences. Students can experience a variety of arts activities to develop an understanding of the differences and similarities between the various art forms. If introducing students to the concept of trees, one might introduce the maple as a symbol of all trees, but if introducing the concept of life, one would probably need to introduce a variety of life-forms rather than the human, for example. I personally need to create boundaries for a large picture before I focus on the particular. Reading Kent Bloomer's and Charles Moore's book, "Body, Memory, and Architecture," helped me formulate the concept that I have chosen to use as my unit structure. I was intrigued by the in-depth study of the connection between memory, body experience, and architecture. Chapter 7, "Body Movement," especially provided insight on how drama and movement would be practical teaching tools for getting students to experience architecture. The quote selected for the opening of this paper explains my rationale for allowing students to observe, experience, and respond to many pieces of architecture. I want to motivate students to: get pleasure from observing architecture; identify particular pieces of architecture in their community; and be connected to New Haven through particular pieces of architecture. I want to create an introductory unit on architecture with the emphasis on the art of, rather than the science of architecture; the feeling, rather than the thinking that architecture evokes; the senses, rather than the intuition, which architecture involves.

The result of returning to drama as the medium through which to learn about and teach architecture created a new and present title of my unit, "Play on Architecture." Students will create a play about architecture, utilizing the structure designed in this unit. From experience, I know that students learn well when challenged with production, especially when charged with the responsibility to teach and entertain! Of course the title also serves to comment on the fact that the introduction to this new subject will be fun!

DRAMA, MOVEMENT, SYMBOLS, AND ARCHITECTURE

In "Body, Memory, and Architecture " much is written about the relationship of the haptic sense to architecture. "The haptic sense is the sense of touch reconsidered to include the entire body rather than merely the instruments of touch, such as the hands." ² The haptic sense involves individuals' emotional and physical subjective experiences resulting from body sensations created while interacting with the environment. The use of drama and movement serve to engage the haptic sensory system: drama creates a meaningful context by establishing a motivation for improvisation, and structured movement forces attention to the body in relation to its environment. Through drama and movement individuals can recognize that "the body is the source of a personal world which generates many of the meanings by which we experience the whole world." ³ An individual organizes stimuli internally around a centerplace (the heart, abdomen, stomach, etc.), and the individual extends this psychophysical orientation into architecture. By asking students to dramatize a building or to create movements which feel like the building, one is actually asking students to extend their internal psychophysical construct into/over the selected building. Drama and movement serve as the media through which the haptic sensory system can be consciously verbalized, and hopefully expanded. Symbols ("an image that implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning" ⁴) are extremely important in drama, movement, architecture, and education. Symbols have mostly been discarded in education due to their innate nature to provoke questions, rather than provide the divine "right answer." Symbols have been substituted with their lifeless cousins—signs. The point here is that architecture always is symbolic, and sometimes is elaborated with ornament, laden with symbols. Architecture always implies "more than its obvious and immediate meaning." (Which leads me to the realization of why architecture, a symbolic art, does not usually exist in our curriculum!) Through drama, movement, and architecture (as a symbolic language) I see opportunities for people to understand and connect with architecture in new and creative ways.

TIME FRAME OF UNIT/AUDIENCE

My unit will be taught during ten 50 minute classes with 5th grade students. I have tentatively selected a 5th grade class at Wexler elementary school. I have not worked in this school for many years, and would like to work there again. This school also has a good auditorium, and is relatively close to downtown, where we will visit during the unit.

GOALS and OBJECTIVES

The overall goals (I-IV) are broad statements referring to the general desired outcomes of this unit. After experiencing this unit students will:

- I. Better understand the concept of architecture.
- II. Be more observing and critical of architecture in their environment.
- III. Have a vocabulary to better communicate ideas concerning architecture.
- IV. Have a “personal” connection to architecture in New Haven providing an identity with a larger portion of New Haven than their own neighborhood(s).

The following objectives are specific expected outcomes which can be used to measure the effectiveness of the teaching of this unit. After experiencing this unit students will:

1. Describe how buildings effect them emotionally.
2. Recognize and describe at least five components of a particular building as metaphors for parts of the human body [Foot(ing), heart(h), eye (window), door(mouth), face(facade), symmetry (position of windows or trees near front door), front/back].
3. Identify at least 90% of the following parts/concepts in architecture when observed: arch, base, beam, capital, classical architecture, column, dome, doorway, eaves, foundation, keystone, modern architecture, monument, moldings, ornament, plan, porch, roof, tower, wall, window, wing.
4. Identify at least 33% of the following parts/concepts in architecture when observed: abacus, architrave, colonnade, Colonial, corinthian, cornice, courtyard, dentils, doric, dormer, entablature, Federal, flutes, frieze, Georgian, Gothic, Greco-Roman, Greek revival, ionic, niche, neoclassicism, pedestal, pediment, pergola, pilaster, portico, pylon, shaft, Romanesque, Tudor, tympanum, Victorian.
5. Know and be able to give an “architectural” description of at least five buildings in New Haven.

CONTENT

All of the following pieces of architecture will be used in this study (these have been selected from E. M. Brown’s book, “NEW HAVEN: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design”). They have been placed in the order in which they will be visited on the tour. They have been selected for one or more of the following reasons: their proximity to Wexler School, their architectural style, their historic value. Slides of these buildings have been produced for this unit. [See Lesson Plan 1 for the vocabulary which will be introduced with each slide.]

1. M12, page 173. House at 235 Dixwell Ave. c. 1875. "In an area of massive redevelopment this once-important house has been left, giving some historic depth to this bright new scene." This is the Hannah Gray house. It is presently being "renovated" and is directly at the entrance to Wexler school. It will be easy to visit, and hopefully we will get a tour inside. [Slides 1,2,3.]
2. M14, page 173. United Church of Christ at 217 Dixwell Avenue. Built in 1968. Designed by John M. Johansen, New York. "Shaped like a crystal, the centralized form detaches itself from the plaza around it to dominate its own space. This Congregational church is the descendant of New Haven's first black church, founded in 1824 by William Lanson, Prince Duplex, Scipio Augustus, John Lisbon, Bias Stanley, and other black leaders, aided by Simeon Jocelyn, who served as first minister." [Slides 3,4,5.]
3. M15, p. 73. Community Center, 197 Dixwell Avenue, 1967. Herbert B. Newman and Edward E. Cherry, Collaborating Architects. "Like a stage set, there is great dramatic effect with economy of means. Notice the ceremonial power of the piled-up steps, diminishing to a distant point at the top where an imaginary space is suggested beyond." [Slide 6.]
4. M13, page 173 Dixwell Plaza. This is directly across from Wexler school. It has a cold, concrete, modern feel. Part of a 60's program to rebuild the city, the attempt was to "create an image of a brave new world—new streets, new centers of public life, new symbols of community." Included in this complex is a public library (1968, Douglas Orr, deCossy, Winder and Associates) and shopping arcade by the Redevelopment Agency. [Slides 7, 8.]
5. J1, Phelps Gate, 1895. Since this is Yale's "front door" it is an interesting piece of architecture to study in relation to the body. Looks like a Tudor gatehouse and is at the psychological center of Yale. (Heart or brain?) [Slides 9, 10.]
6. J2, Connecticut Hall, 1750. Built by Francis Letort and Thomas Bills. Colonial, the oldest building on campus. McClellan Hall was added to "balance" Conn. Hall in 1925. [Slide 11.]
7. J3 The Old Library, now Dwight Chapel, 1842. Henry Austin. Yale's second oldest building. Gothic Revival. Plaster vaults, wooden pinnacles, federal manner, classical outlines, Tudor towers, slim minarets. Changed to a chapel in 1931. [Slide 12.]
8. I14, p. 108. Trinity Church, 1813-14 Ithiel Town. One of the first Gothic Revival churches in America. Most people had never seen a medieval building up to this point. [Slide 13.]
9. I13, p. 107. First Congregational Church (Center Church), 1812-15 Asher Benjamin. Ithiel Town, Builder. James Dixwell's tombstone stands behind the church. [Slides 14, 15, 16, 17.]
10. I12, p. 107. United Congregational Church (The North Church), 1812-15, Ebenezer Johnson. David Hoadley, Builder. Excellent example of Federal design—"its steeple one of the masterpieces of the period." [Slides 18, 19, 20.]
11. New Haven Free Public Library, 1908. Cass Gilbert, New York. Designed to express the new spirit of the city. "Proclaims the wealth and power of the 20th century (and)...a Colonial Revival sentiment..." In 1976 it was slated to be turned into a juvenile court and detention center, but that did not happen, and the library has been extensively renovated. [Slide 21.]
12. I36, p. 114 New Haven County Courthouse, now State Circuit Court, 1909. William H. Allen and Richard Williams. A mixed Greco-Roman building. Neoclassicism. [Slides 22, 23, 24.]
13. J29, J31 p. 130. Hewitt Quadrangle (Beinecke, Commons, and Memorial Hall.), 1901: J29, Beinecke, 1961. The design, by Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, New York, was "to dramatize the fact the building contains great treasures." J31 Woolsey Hall, Commons, and Memorial Hall, 1901; Flagstaff, 1908: Carrere and Hastings, New York. Colonnade and Cenotaph, 1927: Thomas Hastings with Everett V. Meeks. Commons is described as "the noblest room in the university," has a rotunda in Memorial Hall. [Slides 25, 26, 27, 28.]

14. J24, p. 126. The Gate at Grove Street Cemetery (Cemetery, 1796. Gate, 1845) James Hillhouse was responsible for the cemetery. Henry Austin designed the Egyptian-looking gate. [Slide 29.]
15. K14, Aaron Skinner House, 46 Hillhouse Ave. 1832, Alexander J. Davis. "One of New Haven's most distinguished houses." Greek Revival. [Slides 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.]

DEFINITIONS

I feel it will be important to introduce the following terminology while presenting the slides. (See Lesson Plan 1 for specific information.) If the concepts are presented with illustrations, there is a greater likelihood that they will be remembered. Unless otherwise noted, many of these definitions come from notes taken during seminar meetings.

Abacus: A slab, the uppermost member of a capital.

Arch: A structure supported only at the sides, usually curved, made of wedge-shaped blocks, used to span an opening.

Architrave: The beam which rests on the column; the lowest division of the entablature.

Base: Either the lowest part of a structure or the lower section of a wall, pier of column.

Beam: One of the main horizontal supporting pieces of a building.

Brackets: A projection from a structure, supporting or strengthening a load above it. May be added as an ornament with no other purpose.

Capital: The top or head of a column.

Classical: Classic in Latin meant "superior". Relating to ancient Greece or Rome and/or "adherence to traditional standards (as of simplicity, restraint, and proportion) that are universally and enduringly valid." ⁵

Colonial: Architecture created pre-1776, during the colonial period. Colonnade: A series of

columns placed at regular intervals.

Column: A supporting pillar, consisting of a shaft, base, and capital.

Corinthian: The lightest and most ornate of the Greek orders of architecture, characterized by a bell-shaped capital covered with acanthus leaves.

Cornice: The top, projecting part of the entablature.

Courtyard: An open space or enclosure next to a building or buildings.

Dentils: Small blocks, projecting like teeth, in a series.

Dome: A hemispherical roof placed over a room.

Doorway: The opening or void that a door closes.

Doric: The oldest and simplest Greek architectural order

Dormer: A window projecting out from a sloping roof or the entire roofed structure containing the window.

Eaves: The lower part of a roof which extends beyond the walls.

Entablature: The upper part of an order of architecture that rests upon the columns, consisting of an architrave, frieze, and cornice. This is a classical word for beam.

Facade: The front or face of a building.

Federal: (1790-1820) so called because the architecture appeared at the time of the birth of our nation. Also called Post-Colonial or Adamesque—Federal. ⁶

Flutes: On the column shaft, a series of vertical grooves.

Footing: The enlarged area on which the foundation sits.

Foundation: The masonry or substructure of a building. Sometimes referred to as platform.

Frieze: The central space of the entablature. Also a sculptured or richly ornamented band.

Georgian: Architecture of or related to one of the reigns of one of the Georges of Great Britain.

“George III was in charge when America gained its independence...Technically, in America, a true Georgian house must have been built prior to the establishment of this nation’s independence...”

Use of Palladian doorways and windows, with modillions (projections under the eaves) and quoins.

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Gothic: “Of, relating to, or having the characteristics of a style of architecture developed in northern France and spreading through western Europe from the middle of the 12th century to the early 16th century that is characterized by the converging of weights and strains at isolated points upon slender vertical piers and counterbalancing buttresses and by pointed arches and vaulting.” ⁸

Greco-Roman: Relating to the Greek and Roman styles of architecture.

Greek Revival: A style of building which uses ancient Greek architecture. Although buildings at many times use this style, in the 1820’s, and for thirty years thereafter America was feeling strong and this feeling was expressed architecturally by reviving the spirit of the ancient Greek Republic. ⁹

Hearth: A brick, stone, or cement area in front of a fireplace. “The heart of the house.” ¹⁰

Ionic: An order of architecture characterized by the spiral volutes of its capital.

Keystone: The wedge-shaped piece at the top of the arch which locks the other pieces in place.

Modern Architecture: Involves a break from the past and uses recent technologies and new forms or new combinations of old forms. “Modern architecture has stripped itself of a comfortable vocabulary.” ¹¹

Monument: A stone, sculpture, and/or building erected in remembrance of a person, persons, or event.

Moldings: A decorative recessed or relieved surface used either for ornamentation and/or

finishing.

Neoclassicism: A revival of the classical.

Niche: A recess in a wall for a statue.

Ornament: "A useful accessory; something that lends grace or beauty; a manner or quality that adorns; an embellishment." ¹²

Pedestal: The support or base of a column.

Pediment: The triangular wall section above the entablature.

Pergola: Parallel colonnades usually supporting an open roof.

Pilaster: A decorative column projecting from the wall not serving to hold up the building.

Plan: A diagram drawn to show the shape of a building and the arrangement of its parts.

Porch: A covered entrance to a building, usually with a separate roof.

Portico: A colonnade at the entrance of a building.

Pylon: The monumental gateway of an Egyptian temple.

Romanesque: "The Romanesque style is characterized by rounded arches, squat columns and massive, crudely cut (rusticated) blocks of stone." ¹³

Roof: The cover of a building.

Shaft: The part of a column between the capital and the base.

Tower: "A building or structure typically higher than its diameter and high relative to its surroundings that may stand apart (as a campanile), or be attached (as a church belfry) to a larger structure, and that may be fully walled in or of skeleton framework (as an observation or transmission tower.)" ¹⁴

Tudor: Architecture related to the period in English history when the royal house of Tudor ruled from 1485 to 1603.

Tympanum: The recessed space within a pediment, between the upper and lower cornices.

Victorian: Relating to the time during which Queen Victoria of Great Britain reigned (1837-1901).

Wall: A material layer enclosing space.

Window: An opening in a building which can be capable of being open and shut.

Wing: An addition or extension to a building.

STRATEGIES/LESSON PLANS

In order to meet the diverse learning styles of the students, I will use a variety of teaching techniques: drama/movement activities, lecture to whole group with slides, work with small groups on individual drama activities, and field trips. In order to illustrate each of these techniques I will provide some sample lesson plans. ¹⁵

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN #1

TEACHING MODES: *Drama; lecture to whole group.*

PURPOSE

To understand some of the concepts of architecture which relate to the human body. (See Goal 1, and Objective 2.)

To introduce the 55 vocabulary words dealing with architecture. (See Goal 3 and Objectives 3 and 4.)

To introduce students to the 15 locations and/or buildings selected for this project through the prepared slide show. (See Goals 2 and 4, and Objectives 1 and 5.)

ACTIVITIES

After introductions and a brief discussion on architecture, students will gather in groups of six. This will be a drama “warmup” activity called, for the purposes of this unit, “Body Building.” Talk briefly about how a building is like a body. Where are the heart, brain, emotional center, feet, front, back, eyes, ears, head, clothes, skeleton, and face? Does the building have any symmetry? Four students in each group will be asked to create a variety of buildings within a 30 second time frame: house 1, house 2, house 3, school, library, church, community center. The two remaining students will then provide a “tour” of the building using as much body terminology as possible. (Instructor can introduce this terminology.) Each new building will have a different grouping of four students improvising and two students providing the tour.

Explain to students that we will be visiting fifteen different locations and/or buildings to study how architecture makes us feel and how we can learn words to better discuss architecture. We will go on a field trip to see these buildings and we will make up plays and/or dances to go with them. In ten weeks we will present a play about architecture to other students in the school. Ask the students if they are interested in this project. If they are not, then something has not been done correctly, and more time must be spent on motivation and reintroduction of the topic.

Show the slides and introduce (or reintroduce) the following vocabulary with each slide. (Use the definitions and content section provided in this unit for more information to use during the lecture.) Take three or four responses from students on each building to the following question: How does this building make you feel?

1. Hannah Gray House: Dentils, Doorway, Eaves, Foundation, Molding, Ornament, Porch, Victorian.
2. Hannah Gray House: Brackets, Dormer, Roof, Tower, Windows.
3. (Transition between Victorian and Modern. The slide shows a portion of the Hannah Gray House, built in 1875, and the United Church of Christ, built in 1968.)
4. United Church of Christ: Courtyard, Doorway, Facade, Foundation, Modern Architecture, Monument (Although technically not a monument, it has that feel, and the concept could be introduced here), Portico, Roof (where is it?), Wall, Window (where are they?).
5. United Church of Christ: Looks like a castle with a waterless moat around it. Two bridges can be seen going over the moat.
6. Dixwell Community Center or "Q" House: Modern architecture.
7. Dixwell Plaza; Stetson Library: Column, Modern architecture, Portico.
8. Dixwell Plaza: Eaves, Modern Architecture.
9. Phelps Gate (Front): Arch, Classical, Dome, Doorway, Facade, Molding, Tudor.
10. Phelps Gate (Back): Pilaster, Tower.
11. Connecticut Hall: Colonial, Facade, Eaves, Foundation.
12. Dwight Chapel: Doorway, Gothic, Ornament, Towers, Windows.
13. Trinity Church: Column, Eaves, Facade, Footing, Gothic, Ornament, Tower.
14. First Congregational Church (Center Church): Classical, Column, Facade, Federal, Gothic, Ornament, Tower.
15. Center Church: Abacus, Arch, Architrave, Base, Beam, Capital, Cornice, Dentils, Doric, Entablature, Frieze (Note the Ox Skull with garland decoration, either copied from the St. Martin's-In-The Fields in London and/or a symbol of St. Luke16), Ornament, Pedestal, Pediment, Portico.
16. Center Church: Foundation, Pilaster.
17. Center Church: The grave of "J.D.", the only visible gravestone on the Green. Colonel John Dixwell, a regicide judge, is buried here. John Dixwell signed the death warrant of King Charles I, and changed his last name to David. His grave was marked "J.D." so his family would not be found.¹⁷ This has particular relevance to students at Wexler School as the school is on Dixwell Ave., and this information can serve as a memory to anchor this building and create "ownership" for the students.
18. United Congregational Church (The North Church): Arch, Architrave, Column, Cornice, Dentils, Dome, Doorway, Eaves, Entablature, Facade, Federal, Keystone.
19. The North Church: Columns, Ionic.
20. The North Church: Fluting, Pediment.
21. New Haven Free Public Library: Abacus, Arch, Architrave, Classical, Colonial, Columns, Cornice, Dentils, Foundation, Frieze, Keystone, Niche, Pilaster.
22. New Haven State Circuit Court: Column, Facade, Greco-Roman, Monument, Neoclassicism, Portico.
23. New Haven State Circuit Court: Abacus, Architrave, Base, Capital, Classical, Column, Cornice, Entablature, Frieze, Ionic, Monument, Pedestal, Pediment.
24. New Haven State Circuit Court: Frieze, Ornament, Pediment.
25. Hewitt Quadrangle (Beinecke Rare Book Library): Footing, Modern Architecture, Ornament.
26. Beinecke and Commons: (Contrast) Tower, Colonnade, Columns, Entablature.
27. Commons with Monument: Abacus, Architrave, Base, Capital, Classical, Colonnade, Column, Corinthian, Cornice, Courtyard, Dentils, Frieze, Monument, Pedestal, Pilaster, Portico.
28. Memorial Hall: Courtyard, Dome.

29. The Gate at Grove Street Cemetery: Abacus, Architrave, Base, Capital, Column, Cornice, Frieze, Monument, Pedestal, Pylon. (Note the Lotus motif.)
30. Aaron Skinner House: Architrave, Brackets, Capital, Column, Cornice, Entablature, Facade, Flutes, Frieze, Greek Revival, Ionic, Pediment, Portico, Windows.
31. Aaron Skinner House: Eaves, Foundation, Moldings, Portico.
32. Aaron Skinner House: Pergola, Porch, Windows, Wing.
33. Aaron Skinner House: Brackets, Columns, Doorway, Doric, Porch.
34. Aaron Skinner House: Brackets, Columns, Entablature, Fluting, Portico.
35. Aaron Skinner House: Review of above.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN #2

TEACHING MODES

Lecture/Demonstration to whole group. Drama/Movement activities in small groups

PURPOSE

To dramatize and/or choreograph the feelings produced by a piece of architecture. (See Goals I, II, and IV; See Objective 1.)

ACTIVITIES

Rudolph Laban invented a well known movement system. He divided movement into three parts, each with two qualities: speed (slow or quick), direction (indirect or direct), and strength (light or strong). There are eight major movements which combine these three qualities: FLOAT (slow, indirect, light); SLASH (quick, indirect, strong); GLIDE (slow, direct, light); WRING (slow, indirect, strong); DAB (quick, direct, light); THRUST (quick, direct, strong); FLICK (quick, indirect, light); PRESS (slow, direct, strong). [I will demonstrate, then get all students to participate from their “place in space.”] We will attempt to use this system to analyze architecture with body movement. (NOTE: Do not get hung up on this system. The point is not to learn Laban’s system, but to internalize/physicalize qualities of architecture! Laban’s movement system can help guide, but improvised movement with a period of reflection would also work.) The slides will be projected and we will experiment as a whole group, then break into small groups to move to each slide. EXAMPLE 1: Movement to slides 3, 4, 5, United Church of Christ on Dixwell Avenue—my interpretation of the building is a combination of quick, direct, and light movements with quick, direct, and strong movements—therefore, a mixture of dabs and thrusts. EXAMPLE 2: Movement to slide 29, The Gate at Grove Street Cemetery—my interpretation of the building is a combination of slow, direct, and strong, and quick, direct, and strong—therefore a mixture of presses and thrusts.

From these movements I will ask the students to form groups of 4-6 students to develop a dance/story/drama around a particular piece of architecture. Students should imagine the kinds of characters which would move the way they have been moving and create a short story or an overall theme with a title. EXAMPLE 1: Title for story to the United Church of Christ—“The Crystal Goddess”; Story: Born from a volcanic eruption, the crystal goddess and her brothers and sisters, rule the kingdom from a structure built on top of the volcano. They spend their days dabbing and thrusting there way through the universe to help people in need or turning bad people into crystals. EXAMPLE 2: Theme for Gate at Grove Street Cemetery: “A Machine”; The story/dance: locked in a machine destined to continue the same press and thrust movements forever. The machine makes thick, papyrus pizza.

The session concludes by observing and discussing each group’s work.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN #3

TEACHING MODES

Lecture to whole group. Field Trip. Worksheet.

PURPOSE

To take students on two field trips to achieve the goals and objectives of this unit. (See Goals I-IV and Objectives 1-5.) [The first field trip will cover slides 1-8, since these buildings are at the entrance to Wexler school; the second field trip will use a bus, and cover slides 9-35. Plan one hour or less for the first field trip and two hours for the second field trip.]

ACTIVITIES

We will visit each site. Students will be responsible for filling out a worksheet on only four or five of the selected sites. Students will know in advance which buildings or sites they will be dramatizing in the final performance. The worksheet is included at the end of this unit. A final “test” to determine the success of this unit will use these same worksheets and the slides. Students will be asked to respond to five slides shown.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN #4

TEACHING MODES

Drama

PURPOSE:

To provide a medium through which students can demonstrate their learning to themselves and others. (See Goals I-IV, and Objectives 1-5.)

To provide a culminating event for the unit.

ACTIVITIES:

A final production, “Play on Architecture,” will be produced by the students. There will be 15 different dances and/or stories to go with each of the buildings/locations studied. The following “script” is an outline which will be further developed by the students in response to the selected pieces of architecture. It is designed as a way to get started, and can be scrapped in favor of a more relevant idea.

OPENING: [(A) narrator(s), (possibly a Greek chorus). Some students will act out parts of the narration. Slides of Wexler school will be projected to illustrate many points made during the narration.]

NARRATOR: We have been learning about architecture. Architecture is the art or science of building. We are surrounded by architecture. Architecture makes us feel something. It can make us feel cold, excited, happy, alone, connected, angry, or surprised. Buildings are like our bodies.

They have a front and a back, a face or facade, a foundation or footing, a heart or hearth, a place to keep our memories (the attic or library), a place to store old things (the basement), a place like the brain (in the school it would be the central office),...We have journeyed through New Haven to determine how architecture makes us feel, how it moves us, how it is like an extension of our bodies. These are imaginary scenes that we have created in response to several buildings.

[Slides will be projected on screens, students will then dance and/or perform a scene for each piece of architecture.]

NARRATOR: Our journey is complete. We have studied the art of architecture. We have also learned something of the science of architecture. We have added the following words to our vocabulary:

[The vocabulary listed in OBJECTIVES 3 and 4, will be illustrated with slides, and with appropriate movement by students.]

NARRATOR: We end our journey. We have learned that architecture is an art and a science. Architecture's relationship to the human body is very important. Buildings are extensions of the human body. Although each piece of architecture has something in common with other pieces of architecture, each is a unique creation because of its special place in space, and its particular time of creation. Most importantly, architecture makes us feel. It can make us feel centered or off center, happy or sad, close or far away, content or discontent, part of "it" or separate from "it", open to communication or closed to communication. We hope that our play has had an impact on you.

NAME: _____

PLAY ON ARCHITECTURE WORKSHEET

NAME OF THIS BUILDING, LOCATION, AND/OR MONUMENT: _____

THIS BUILDING MAKES ME FEEL: (Circle all that apply.)

Happy Sad Angry Excited Lonely Welcome Greedy
Proud Good Small Big Surprised Unwelcome Frightened

OTHER FEELINGS: _____

STYLE OF THIS BUILDING: (Circle all that apply.)

COLONIAL CLASSICAL FEDERAL GEORGIAN GOTHIC
GRECO-ROMAN GREEK REVIVAL MODERN ROMANESQUE TUTOR
VICTORIAN

I OBSERVED THE FOLLOWING: (Circle all that apply.)

ABACUS	ARCH	ARCHITRAVE	BASE	BEAM
CAPITAL	COLONNADE	COLUMN: CORINTHIAN, DORIC, IONIC		
CORNICE	COURTYARD	DENTILS	DOME	DOORWAY
DORMER	EAVES	ENTABLATURE	FACADE	FLUTES
FOOTING	FOUNDATION	FRIEZE	HEARTH	KEystone
MONUMENT	MOLDINGS	NICHE	PEDESTAL	PEDIMENT
PERGOLA	PILASTER	PORCH	PORTICO	PYLON

NOTES: (Continue on the back.) _____

SKETCH THE FACADE OF THIS BUILDING ON THE ATTACHED PIECE OF PAPER

Notes

1. Kent Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, "Body, Memory, and Architecture, ix.
2. Ibid., 34.
3. Ibid., 43.
4. Jung, Carl G., ed., "Man and His Symbols, 20.
5. "Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "classic, classical, classicism."
6. Harry Devlin, "To Grandfather's House We Go: A Roadside Tour of American Homes, 9."
7. Ibid., 7.
8. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "gothic."
9. Ibid., 11-13.
10. Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, "Body, Memory, and Architecture," 2.
11. Kent Bloomer, "Seminar: 'The Symbolic Language of Architecture and Public Monuments,'" June 10 1993.
12. "Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "tower."
13. Harry Devlin, 41.
14. "Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. "tower."
15. For suggested drama activities which can easily be adapted to this unit, and for some background information on movement and drama in education, refer to the collection of units from the 1990 seminar on "Contemporary Drama: Scripts and Performance," led by Thomas R. Whitaker. My Unit "Melting Pot Theater," and the other units will provide teachers with a plethora of drama and movement activities.
16. Bernard Heinz, "Center Church on the Green," 3.
17. Ibid., 15.

ANNOTATED STUDENTS

Adler, Irving and Ruth. "Houses. New York: The John Day Co., 1964. A brief history of the house with illustrations and photographs.

Bergere, Thea and Richard. "From Stones to Skyscrapers: A Book About Architecture." New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1960. Over 100 excellent drawings by artist Richard Bergere illustrate the history of architecture. Written simply and clearly. Yale's Harkness Memorial is included in the book.

Brown, Elizabeth Mills. "NEW HAVEN: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design." New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976. (See annotation under Brown in Teacher Bibliography.)

Devlin, Harry. "To Grandfather's House We Go: A Roadside Tour of American Homes." New York: Parents' Magazine Press, 1970. Twenty-one styles of architecture are described and illustrated. Vocabulary is sophisticated; pictures are excellent.

Devlin, Harry. "What Kind of a House is That?" New York: Parents' Magazine Press, 1969. Similar in format to the book above. Describes 22 houses and provides illustrations. Focuses on types of houses rather than styles.

Giblin, James Cross. "Let There Be Light: A Book About Windows." New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1988. A history of windows from their invention to the present day. Well illustrated with photographs and prints.

Downer, Marion. "Roofs Over America." New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., Inc., 1967. Short, well-illustrated (with photographs and illustrations); covers roofs from Colonial days to the present.

Issacson, Philip M. "Round Buildings, Square Buildings, & Buildings That Wiggle Like a Fish." New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988. Begins with a brief look at the similarities and differences of the Taj Mahal, Chartres Cathedral, and the Parthenon. Explores the concept of beauty and harmony in architecture. Studies materials, color, light, function and design in a variety of architecture throughout the world.

Leacroft, Helen and Richard. "The Buildings of Ancient Greece." New York: William R. Scott, Inc., 1966. A well illustrated, short introduction to Greek architecture.

Myller, Rolf. "From Idea Into House." New York: Atheneum, 1974. A story of the Kummerfeld family's process of getting a new house, from the idea of needing a house, through purchasing the property, to hiring an architect, and having the house completely built. Excellent illustrations of architectural plans (detail drawings with electrical, plumbing, and heating plans).

Paine, Roberta M. "Looking At Architecture." New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co., 1974. An introduction to the world of architecture which examines many of the great architectural wonders of the world, from the pyramids of Egypt to modern day buildings. Has a useful "Glossary of Building Materials."

Weiss, Harey. "Model Buildings & How to Make Them." New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1979. Although model making is not part of this unit, some students may wish to pursue this activity. This book describes the basic kinds of building materials and tools needed, as well as demonstrating (through diagrams and photographs) methods for construction.

TEACHERS

Abercrombie, Stanley. "Architecture As Art: An Esthetic Analysis." New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1984. A study of the esthetic nature of architecture. The entire book is based on the concept that "Architecture is building raised to the level of art."

Bloomer, Kent C. and Charles W. Moore. "Body, Memory, and Architecture." New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977. Designed by our seminar leader and another to teach the fundamentals of architectural design to first-year professional students at the Yale School of Architecture. Chapter 7, "Body Movement" written by Robert J. Yudell provided some additional useful information for this study.

Brown, Elizabeth Mills. "NEW HAVEN: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design." New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976. Provides a history of the town plan; historical and architectural background; 15 mapped areas with a photo and description of many buildings in each area; and an index of architects, builders, planners, and artists. Useful for the teacher, and students!

Downing, A.J. "The Architecture of Country Houses." New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969. Downing (1815-1852) was America's first important landscape architect, who offered low-priced, well-styled houses with many features usually found only in mansions. This book is a republication of the work originally published by D. Appleton & Co. in 1850.

Heinz, Bernard. "Center Church On-the-Green." New Haven: A Bicentennial Publication of The First Church of Christ, 1976.

Jung, C. G., editor. "Man and His Symbols." London: Aldus Books, 1964. A "popular culture" overview of the psychologist Carl Jung's prolific work.

Suzanne H. Crowhurst. "Explorations in the Meaning of Architecture." Woodstock, NY: Gondolier Press, 1979. The author looks at architecture designed by well-known authors. She illustrates how various elements of each author/architects' houses embody an aspect of the designer's inner world. Authors selected are: Carl G. Jung, Mark Twain, Sir Walter Scott, Jack London, Edith Wharton, Robinson Jeffers, Washington Irving, Eugene O'Neill, Malcolm Lowry, and Horace Walpole.

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