



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1993 Volume I: The Symbolic Language of Architecture and Public Monuments

The Domestic House

Guide for Curriculum Unit 93.01.05
by Roberta Mazzucco

This unit is designed as an introductory study that can be used to enhance the fourth-grade social studies curriculum. Architecture offers a unique and interesting way to capture the interest and attention of students while giving them a link with which to understand themselves and other cultures. The unit begins with the notion that children have a familiarity with and liking for building. Consideration is first given to the building children are most familiar with—their home. By utilizing body-image theory students are introduced to the unique relationship between the “self” and that structure they call home. The topic is then widened to include a study of the basic characteristics of Classical Architecture. This includes the five orders: Tuscan, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite. These and other elements form a basic “language” which students can apply to structures around them. The unit also covers the use of ornamentation (color, pattern, symbolism) in various types of architecture. Throughout the unit it is suggested that the students do hands on tasks such as pattern making, designing a bookcover, and building with available building blocks, legos, etc. As a final project students are given the task to design and build houses utilizing classical elements and their own original ornamentation.

(Recommended for Social Studies, Grades 4-6)

Key Words

Domestic Architecture

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