

FLATLANDS

STUDY GUIDE | ELEMENTARY



MCAD

MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY
ART & DESIGN

DE LA SALLE-
COLLEGE
OF SAINT
BENILDE

Provenance

Amie Siegel



PRE-VISIT

Where did it come from?

- Have an exercise on tracing the provenance of objects. Have them bring one or two items to class while you prepare a world map that can occupy one large table.
- Make two columns on the board. Have your students write down in one column where the item was made and on the other column where it came from/where they got it (it may have come from a place different from where it was made).
- Using the map on the table, trace the distance of the place of manufacture and the place of origin. Ask students about the journey of the item. You can ask the following questions:
 - How long do you think it took for the product to get from the place of manufacture to the place of origin?
 - What kind of transportation was used to move the product from one place to another?
 - Are there any countries/cities in common where the products were manufactured? What are they?
 - Are there any countries/cities in common where the products were bought from? What are they?
 - Why do you think there are similar countries where the products are manufactured, and likewise the same countries where the objects are purchased from?
- This can be a start off point to discuss trade routes as well as their influence. Let your students research as well on the most notable trade routes throughout history and the items that passed through these trade routes. Take note of the routes' starting and finishing point. Are they the same courses as the ones explored in the activity? Why or why not?

VISIT

Explore the Exhibit

- Let the students draw their favorite pieces of furniture shown in the film. They can draw as many as they want and then compile them into a scrapbook. Let the students group themselves in twos or threes and share their drawings with one another. Let them discuss why those particular pieces are their favorites or even why the others didn't catch their attention. Ask them how much they would be willing to buy the object for or sell it for. Compare the prices they stated with the prices these objects go for in auctions. Discuss value and cost.
- Remind them that the work has three components - the video that traces the journey of the furniture, proof of the page in the catalogue with details of the video, and the video of the auction. Discuss how objects are exhibited — is there an attempt to create a desire for the object through lighting, placement, etc. Discuss also how exhibiting the work in a museum is part of the cycle of the distribution of the object. You can ask them to draw the chain of distribution.



Let's Sit and Talk

An example of modern furniture, Chandigarh furniture's minimalism can be said to echo the principles of architecture of the modern period which American architect Philip Johnson stated in *Objects 1900 and Today: An Exhibition of Decorative and Useful Objects Contrasting Two Periods of Design* "Today industrial design is functionally motivated and follows the same principles as modern architecture: machine-like simplicity, smoothness of surface, avoidance of ornament" Let the students write their answers to the following questions. Once done, have a sharing of the class' responses:

- Does the venue affect the function of the furniture? Why or why not?
- How do the different placements and arrangements affect your views of furniture? Has it expanded to more than its functionality? How so?
- Do the Chandigarh furniture look out of place in its surroundings? Why or why not?
- How do the design principles mentioned above help in configuring how an interior space would look like and function? Are these principles present in the exhibit? Why or why not?
- How do the qualities mentioned and exemplified by the Chandigarh furniture make it easier or harder to move the furniture across cultures?

POST-VISIT

Tracing Our Steps

In the film, there is a return to Chandigarh where the furniture came from. You can do the following activities in tracing the origin of various objects:

- Ask companies to have a lecture-demo on the gadgets or apps they use to track and identify objects.
- You can also visit museums and look into how they keep track of their collection. Look into how they indicate the provenance of the objects on display.
- Invite representatives of agencies mandated to oversee the care and protection of these heritage to discuss the measures they have undertaken to prevent such theft, and what citizens can do to help them do so.

Preserving Our Heritage

Have the students read <http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/how-chandigarh-lost-its-furniture-to-the-world/469397.html> (or similar articles). Let the students write a reflection based on the following questions:

- Looking at the country's vast and rich cultural heritage and artistry, what are you most proud of and why?
- How would you feel if our local heritage and artistry are put into a different context, or perhaps appropriated to benefit a foreign entity? Why do you think this form of neo-colonialism still exists?
- How would you preserve and protect our national identity? Would it be possible to have a cultural exchange with foreign units whilst maintaining our sense of nationalism? Why or why not?

istory

Hrair Sarkissian



PRE-VISIT

Library Off-Limits

- Show snippets of movies, television shows, or documentaries where the characters go to the library and/or archives. From this, have the children figure out the similarities in these videos. You can ask them the following questions to guide them:
 - Which section of the library and/or archives did the characters go to?
 - Were they able to go to all the sections or did they keep going back to certain sections? Why or why not?
 - Why were they in these sections?
 - What books were in these sections?
- Arrange a visit to your library's history section and archives (if any). You can also task the students to visit various public libraries. Have them ask/interview the librarian if there are parts of the library and/or archives that is off-limits. Why is this so? What are the books usually found there? From this, let them jot down the answers and, at the same time, write down what they feel about not being able to have access to the off-limits section. Do they feel curious? Excited? Indifferent?

VISIT

Explore the Exhibit

- The photos are of libraries in the Topkapi Palace, Ataturk Library in Tasim, Ottoman Archives and Garanti Bank's Ottoman Bank Archives. Have the students look at the photographs' composition and lighting as used by the artist. Let them write a reflection based on the following questions:
 - Do the archives look inviting? Why or why not?
 - Does it seem that the materials in the archives have been used before and/or during the time photos were taken in 2010? Why or why not?
 - Do you see yourself spending time in these libraries? Why? If yes, what are the factors that made you want to stay there? If not, what are the elements that you'd like to improve/change to make you stay there?

Draw Your Ideal Library

- Let the students re-create their favorite photograph in the exhibit through a sketch or drawing. If he/she likes how the libraries/archives are depicted in the picture, let him/her highlight his/her favorite part of the library and/or archive otherwise, have him/her create his/her ideal library.

POST-VISIT

Library vs. Archive

- Invite a librarian and an archivist to give a talk in your class on the difference between an archive and a library, and their importance. Let the discussion go into how they are history keepers and how they keep history alive and relevant.
- Once the discussions are over, have the students create a Venn Diagram highlighting the similarities and differences between a library and an archive. Ask them if there is an event in the past that they would like to know more about and discuss how they can go about getting more information on this event and what to do if they come across some barriers in accessing information.

Licola Pop Up

Eugenio Tibaldi



PRE-VISIT

Amenities in Cities

- Have them play SIM City or games similar to it (CitiesXL, Cities in Motion, Anno 2070 and Towns). They can work as a group on listing down the amenities the city has, what it should have and why.
- From their experience of playing the games, have the students write a reflection based on the following questions/ideas:
 - How do amenities help draw people to a place?
 - What is the relation between amenities and character of a place?
 - How would they describe the character of the city? Do amenities enhance or negate character? Why? How?
 - What if the city's amenities were eradicated?
- In groups, have the class draw their ideal city with all the amenities they like to include in it. Have a class presentation showing the groups' work as well as explaining the reasons behind their chosen facilities.

VISIT

Explore the Exhibit

- The work is both painting and sculpture. Compare and contrast how the space is delineated in the painting and in the sculpture. Let the student make a Venn Diagram depicting these.
- Show photos of Licola and the pop-ups of famous buildings. Discuss the differences in the representations of the places.
- From this, have the students create sketches/drawings depicting the balance of nature's beauty as well as the modernization and technology of contemporary buildings. In small groups, let them present each other's drawings and share their ideas on nature and innovation.

POST-VISIT

Library vs. Archive

- One of the contrasts the artist wishes to show in his work is between the splendor of nature and the havoc caused by humans. Have them bring before-and-after photos of a place they know or have heard of. Is the 'before' always of the splendor of nature and the 'after' the destruction caused by humans?
- Show examples where the splendor of nature was enhanced by human efforts.
- From this, have the students come up with suggestions on how this can be done. They can make a list, a simple role play, a "How To" handbook, or perhaps a poem or essay.

Negative Space:

A Scenario Generator for Clandestine Building

James Beckett



PRE-VISIT

Understanding Space

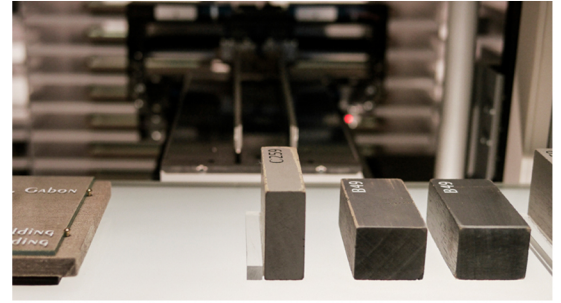
- Play a game of Tetris or games similar to it such as Columns, Cultris II, Slydris, etc.
- Another option is to let the students play with Legos or Tangrams. Divide the class into small groups and have them follow and figure out how to build structures with the toys. Post examples or pictures of Lego or Tangram formations, and let the pupils work together to recreate it.
- From this, let the groups list down the difficulties they have encountered while playing the games/toys and at the same time, write down the strategies they utilized to overcome them. Have a class sharing of each group's answers and insights.
- Let the class research on spatial awareness and spatial ability. What are they? Why are they important? How does spatial awareness and ability apply in our everyday lives? From this, have a class sharing of the students' researches. What are the similarities and differences of the information they found? Summarize the findings and create the class' own definition and concept of spatial awareness and ability.

VISIT

Explore the Exhibit

- Have the students take note or list down the kind of structure built. Focus on the following features when writing down the answers:
 - Material/s the structure is made of
 - Number of rows and columns seen in the edifice
 - How much space the structure occupies in the gallery
 - Placement in the exhibit
- Working in pairs, let the students share what they have listed down/observed while they were exploring the exhibit. Have them answer together the following questions:
 - What is negative space?
 - Which part of the installation is negative space?
 - How large or small is the negative space?
 - What is done with the negative space? How is this done?
 - Why is it done in this manner?

The work presents suggestions on how to use the spaces indicated. What is the end goal of the suggested use/s of the space? Why? Can these suggestions be used for other kinds of structures? Why or why not? Have the class present other suggestions they may have for the use of these spaces.



POST-VISIT

Clandestine Structures

- One reason why the building scenario is clandestine is because it is illegal. What are some of the clandestine building activities that have recently been brought to light? Have the class search for news articles regarding the rise of clandestine buildings. They can focus on the following places for their research:
 - Panatag Shoal
 - Benham Rise
 - Palestine
- Let the students bring their news articles and share them with the class. Take note of similarities and differences found in the articles/clippings. Focus on the following:
 - People responsible for building the clandestine structures
 - Kinds of clandestine buildings made
 - Reasons why the clandestine building is constructed
 - Method of constructing the buildings
 - The local community's reaction/reception of these buildings
 - Public's reaction/reception of these buildings
 - Significance of these structures
- Based on the points and insights the students learned in the class sharing, let them write a reflection on these clandestine structures. Are they in favor of it? Why or Why not?

7 December 2017 - 4 March 2018

FLATLANDS

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Acknowledgement

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David Laboy
Kaye Pauline dela Rosa
Julieanne Ng
JC Barcelon
Eunice Clemente
Samantha Flores
Jia Czarina Ignacio
Rae Giorem Mammud
Frances Nicole Villanueva
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MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday
Sunday

10.00am - 6.00pm
10.00am - 2.00pm

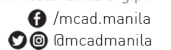
MCAD is closed during holidays.

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