LESSON 10

VISUAL ENVIRONMENT—WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR COMMUNITY TO LOOK LIKE

Lesson Objectives
Students examine their community and sketch their plans for redesigning streetscapes or individual buildings to be visually pleasing and consistent with their overall vision for their community.

Procedures

Part I – Sketching Improvements
1. Students select a photo of their community that shows a view of a city block, landscape, or views shed that they would like to “improve” the appearance of. (May use photographs from Lesson 3 – Neighborhood View Teams).

2. Using a copier, enlarge each student’s photo to fit a sheet of 8 ½” x 11” paper.

3. Tape the photocopy against a backlit exterior window, and tape a piece of tracing paper over the photo. (Note: some students may be more comfortable sketching on a desk, which is fine, as long as the detail of the photocopy shows through the tracing paper).

4. Students will trace their picture onto the tracing paper with a #2 lead pencil (not pen!). The students can choose not to sketch in any features of the photo that they would like to 'remove' from the scene, for example architectural features, transmission lines, unattractive signage, etc.

Duration
Two 50-minute class periods.

Materials List
Copy Machine
Tracing Paper
#2 Lead Pencil
Light tables or backlit windows
Scotch or masking tape
Colored pencils

Key Vocabulary
architecture, community, planning, visual landscape, zoning.

Subjects
Language Arts
Social Studies
5. Next, students sketch in features that they would like to ‘add to the scene,’ such as additional windows, landscaping, street furniture, etc.

6. Collect the sketches and photocopy each one before the students proceed to coloring in details.

**Part II – Describing Your Improvements**

7. Upon completion of the sketches, students will write a paragraph explaining what changes they have made and why. Have students respond to some or all of the following questions in their paragraph descriptions of their sketches:
   a) **Why would renovations of this area or structure benefit the neighborhood?**
   b) **What do you like about appearance of this neighborhood? What is unique about this part of the community?**
   c) **Why should someone move to this part of town? What is near here for activities? Are they close to shopping? Schools?**
   d) **Does this area fit the surroundings or is there a way to enhance the structure(s) to better blend in with the neighborhood?**
   e) **What aspects of the overall ‘landscape’ or ‘streetscape’ did you consider in choosing what improvements to make?**

**Assessment**

Evaluate the following aspect of each student’s work:

♦ attention to detail in their tracing;
♦ creativity in designing ‘improvements’ to their streetscape;
♦ well thought-out responses to questions about their sketches;

**Content Standards Addressed**

**Language Arts**

  Standard 3.
  ♦ All students will focus on meaning and communicating as they listen, speak, view, read, and write in personal, social occupational, and civic contexts.