Make a Model of Your Community

First Grade  120 minutes

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Your students will be mesmerized with models after this engaging and hands on lesson that gets students up and moving as they explore their community!

Learning Objectives

Students will understand their school’s location and describe the community surrounding their school.

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Materials and Preparation

Materials:

- Small car and animal models
- Large piece of cardboard, about 8-10 feet long
- Construction paper
- Foil
- Coloring materials, like markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Paint
- Paintbrushes
- Popsicle sticks
- Toilet paper rolls
- Kleenex boxes
- Scissors
- Glue
- Tape
- Assorted decorative material

Preparation:

- Ask parents to bring in various materials to use for your model of the community. These materials can include the materials listed above and materials the parents can easily obtain.
- Draw at least one main road in your community and a few other landmarks on the cardboard to give the students a sense of where the school is located.
- Be sure to have all materials ready for use prior to the lesson. Split the materials up onto separate tables to keep organized.
- Send home permission slips if called for by your school.

Key Terms:

- model
Lesson

Introduction (30 minutes)

- Gather the students together.
- Explain to the students that today they will be exploring the community surrounding their school.
- Explain to the students that when they come back inside they will create a 3D model of the community surrounding their school.
- Ask the student what a model is. Pass around the small car and animal models. Explain to the students that a **model** is a 3D representation of something larger, and that a model looks a lot like the actual place or thing.
- Prepare the students to take a walk around the school. The walk should last only about fifteen minutes as the purpose is for the students to recognize important landmarks, roads, and sidewalks around the perimeter of the school.
- Encourage the students to pay attention to the roads, sidewalks, parks, stores, houses, parking lots, and other landmarks they see.

Explicit Instruction/Teacher Modeling (20 minutes)

- When students come back inside, gather them together.
- Ask the students to brainstorm various landmarks they saw.
- Write the landmarks on the white board.
- Ask the students to sit in a circle.
- Bring the large piece of cardboard in the middle of the circle.
- Show the students where you've already marked some locations of local landmarks.
- Ask the students to show you where some additional landmarks they saw would be located.
- Write these landmarks down on the cardboard or put large X’s or sticky notes on the cardboard to help students remember the locations.

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Guided Practice/Interactive Modeling (20 minutes)

- Split the students up into groups.
- Explain to the students that each group will be in charge of creating certain parts of the model. These parts can include people and animals in our community, vehicles in our community, roads and sidewalks in our community, buildings (such as stores and houses) in our community, parks in our community, and nature (including trees, bushes, flowers, lakes, ponds, and oceans) in our community.
- Assign each group to an area in the classroom where they will work together to create the parts.
- Model creating a few things for the students such as a person out of a popsicle stick and markers and a house using tape, scissors, and construction paper. Encourage the students to try to make the items 3D, but also tell students it is okay if the items are not 3D. Reinforce creativity and praise students for their effort.

Independent Working Time (35 minutes)

- Tell the students they may begin working. Work time will be noisy and messy, as students will be working together using many different materials.
- Rotate around the room and help students to come up with ideas.
- As students begin to finish their items, help them place the items in the correct place on the large model. Remember, the purpose of the lesson is for students to think about the community surrounding their school so students may make mistakes with the placement of their items. Encourage students who have an understanding of cardinal directions to help other students as they place the items on the model.

Extend

Differentiation

- **Enrichment:** Students who need a challenge can help with the placement of the finished items on the cardboard.
- **Support:** Students who need help with cutting or coming up with ideas can be paired with a peer who can assist.

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Review

Assessment *(5 minutes)*

- During independent working time, rotate around the classroom and talk to students about what they are creating.

Review and Closing *(10 minutes)*

- Ask the students to put their materials away. Unfinished creations can be stored in an area of the classroom to be finished at a later time.
- Ask the students to gather around the model.
- Discuss the various parts of the model including school location, roads around the school, sidewalks, parks, houses, vehicles, and trees. Ask the students to share their creations and discuss landmarks that are missing or misplaced.
- Ask students who live close to the school to find where their home would be located on the model.
- Explain to the students that during free time and center time they will be able to play with the model and add missing parts!