

NEIGHBORHOODS & CITIES: IDENTITY

GRADE: 3-5, Middle School, High School

TIME: 60 MINUTES

Frank Lloyd Wright spent more than 70 years creating iconic designs that would define a uniquely American style architecture. His vision for a modern American way of life even extended to the design of Broadacre City, a community that perfectly exemplified Wright's idea of the ideal modern American way of life. In this lesson, participants will explore the concept of identity and how this can be visually represented. They will also be challenged to answer the question: What makes a community? Afterward, each participant will create an identity map for their local community.

**Pair this lesson with others in the Neighborhoods & Cities series for a more in-depth exploration.*

INTEGRATED SUBJECTS: Visual Art & Social Studies

OBJECTIVES

MATERIALS | RESOURCES

Images of Broadacre City
The Disappearing City, Frank Lloyd Wright
Local maps of cities and neighborhoods
Drawing paper
Color pencils and markers
Magazines
Construction paper
Glue
Scissors
Frank Lloyd Wright Tried to Solve the City,
Morgan Meis, *The New Yorker*

1. Investigate the concepts of identity and community and how this relates to Wright's desire to create a uniquely American style of architecture.
2. Introduce symbolism and the many ways we encounter symbols during our daily lives.
3. Create artwork that reflects our own identity through symbols and other visual elements.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What is identity and how can it be visually represented?
2. What does it mean to be a part of a community? What are ways we identify with a particular community?
3. How does Wright's design legacy represent his identity?

LESSON PROCEDURE

EXPLORE

- Present images of Wright's designs for Broadacre City and ask participants to explain what they see.
- After a few minutes, provide background for the images and introduce Frank Lloyd Wright. (<https://www.teachingbydesign.org/about/frank-lloyd-wright/>)
- Briefly discuss Wright's ideal community for a modern American way of life. Ask: What aspects of Broadacre City do you have in your community? Would Wright's design improve our community? How?

ENGAGE

- Begin directing focus to the local community and have participants begin identifying and describing characteristics of their community.
- Have participants reflect on:
 - Identity: What identifies a community? Is it a physical boundary line? A building like a school? A mascot? Can it be a feeling of belonging?
 - Symbols: What symbols do we use to communicate our identity to others? Why do we choose those visual representations?

DESIGN

- Using available supplies have participants create identity maps, visual representations of what represents their community. Identity maps may be created through drawing, collage, or listing words and phrases.

CRITIQUE & INTERPRET

- Provide time for a short critique so participants can share and evaluate their work.
- Ask participants to consider: What was difficult/easy about choosing symbols that represented you and the community? Do you feel your symbols were successful in visually communicating what you wanted to share? Are there any similarities/differences in the symbols and visual choices that were made in each of the maps? What communities were represented?