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## **A Neighborhood Curriculum for Kindergarten and First Grades**

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**A Neighborhood Curriculum for Kindergarten and First Grades**

**By**

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**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
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**Abstract: Neighborhood Curriculum for Kindergarten and First Grades  
by Kathy L. Rubin**

This paper is a curriculum study of a school neighborhood designed for children ages 5 through 7. The goal of this study is to provide an opportunity for students, who at this age are beginning to expand outward from the roots of their homes and families, to understand their next immediate neighborhood (their school). They will have a chance to meet people who work in the neighborhood, learn about how we get around and from where things come. And then, from that vantage point the students can begin to broaden their perspective and view of their world.

This study is experientially based on a teacher's own research in the school neighborhood as well as a contrasting neighborhood, going into stores and services and meeting and talking to members of the community. From that process this neighborhood study was constructed as a series of trips where the results of the study will be largely developed through the children's own exploration and reflection. Trips are woven throughout this year-long curriculum that also includes pre-trip and post-trip classroom activities designed in tandem with the goals of each trip. These activities and discussions cross all curriculum areas including science, math, art, music/movement, cooking, and language arts. During this entire study the students investigate and continually build on their own individual and collective experiences.

This curriculum study includes an extensive Annotated Bibliography of children's literature and teacher resources (reference books and websites), letters to parents, recipes, instructions for classroom activities, schedules and trip sheets, all designed to help teacher's in planning their own neighborhood study.

*With gratitude and thanks, I dedicate this paper to--*

- ❖ My loving and supportive family, and
- ❖ Sal Vascellaro who has been my coach, teacher and inspiration since my first day at Bank Street.

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## **The Social Studies Curriculum**

This thesis presents a social studies curriculum for children ranging in age from five to seven, and focuses on the school neighborhood. This study begins with an exploration of the Upper Eastside of Manhattan and then branches to other parts of Manhattan as well as an in-depth look at a similar yet unique neighborhood in Astoria, Queens. The study is based on certain fundamental beliefs about social studies and its role in a child's education and development, as detailed below, and will hopefully serve as a prototype to other educators seeking to provide similar educative experiences.

Social Studies are deeply rooted in children's cultural backgrounds and personal experiences and are embedded within the context of children's family, school and neighborhood (Seefeldt, 2001, p. 14). This social studies curriculum is built on the foundation that the purpose of Social Studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world (National Council for the Social Studies, 1998, cited in Seefeldt, 2001, p.1).

When thinking about children as students, it is essential to first understand what is meaningful to them and to build curriculum from that vantage point. John Dewey suggested that learning from one's own experience is to be an active participant, gaining knowledge by actually experiencing the social and physical world. He proposed that an experientially-based program allowing for contact with phenomena is the key to stimulating a child's inquiring mind. Consequently, this inquiring mind would provide the momentum to seek out further learning, making connections and building a repertoire of knowledge. Dewey advocated an education that acknowledges and celebrates the

individual nature and style of each student and provides an organic connection between what the student previously experienced and is newly experiencing. Each experience cumulatively builds on former experiences and is then integrated by the child into a new understanding. His educational philosophy aims to create and nurture the desire to go on learning. By using the child (and all she or he is) as the launch pad for learning, Dewey believed that growth and learning would take place on a deeply internalized level. Among other things, by teaching our children to seek out knowledge on their own without imposing it on them, and by providing a flexible curriculum under an overarching theme that instills democratic values, Dewey believed that ultimately, everyone could be a part of a greater and more wonderful 'whole'—a society that truly embraces and lives democratic ideas. To Dewey it was critically important to develop democracy across the entire society by teaching children to imagine the consequences of their behavior on others. In order for this goal to be realized, Dewey believed that teachers must offer opportunities for educative experiences from which children could learn and progress on this critical path. Dewey saw this education in democracy as a tool to enable the citizen to integrate his or her culture and vocation usefully and the school as the lab in which this process unraveled (Dewey, 1938, p.34). This study is mindful of Dewey's challenge and it recognizes that education is a social process and a part of the larger world. In this study children will expand outward from their own spheres and social arenas, and hopefully develop an awareness of the working world around them and the chain of interdependencies that sustains them in their neighborhoods. Through the actual experience of this study, the children will be able to develop a sense that this intricate network is real and concrete.

This Neighborhood Study is based on the “here and now curriculum” proposed by Lucy Sprague Mitchell (1934/1991) and is intended to be integrated, activity-oriented, and full of choices, allowing children to experience things for themselves. The focus of study is on what interests children and to what they are drawn. It is my goal to provide first hand sensory experiences, connect facts/experiences/ideas, make learning useful to the current lives of the children, and incorporate many opportunities for play. According to Mitchell, since children’s experiences begin in the immediate community in which they are brought up and since these communities are functioning in terms of the present day culture, it is the school’s job to begin with the child’s own environment whatever or wherever it may be. The complications of the surrounding culture, instead of making this attack important, make it imperative. So much of the world is hidden for the child because of the layers of complexity inherent in the adult world. By studying the child’s own environment and unraveling this first layer, we are trying to make the child’s world more manageable and comprehensible.

Jean Piaget encouraged teachers to let children construct their own knowledge by interacting with the environment and materials over the course of time. Many social experiences are included in this curriculum because, as Lev Vygotsky (cited in Forman and Cazdan, 1987) pointed out, these experiences are also profoundly important for cognitive development. Furthermore, Dewey and Mitchell also believed that education is a critical social process—one that can lead to a moral end (social consciousness, for one). The child-adult interactions laced throughout the activities will provide many opportunities for teaching to each child’s zone of proximal development.



This Neighborhood Study is a year-long curriculum and includes the following topics:

- ❖ **What is a Neighborhood?** During this unit we will discover what we know and would like to know about neighborhoods, walk around and observe the neighborhood, talk about the physical buildings, and compare city neighborhoods and a city and country neighborhood. We'll take a few trips across the East River to Astoria, Queens and get a taste of another neighborhood that shares many similarities but also provides many rich and fascinating contrasts with our school neighborhood.
- ❖ **Needs.** During this unit we will focus on the things we need and want, and how our neighborhood satisfies those needs.
- ❖ **Work and Workers of the Neighborhood.** We'll take '5 Senses Tours' of the Neighborhood (restaurants, bakeries, markets [neighborhood and the Farmer's Market at Union Square], museums, stores, Church of the Heavenly Rest). We'll tour markets, restaurants, and bakeries, see what kind of food is sold and where it comes from, and try a little cooking of our own. We'll get to know some of the people who work in our community and visit them where they work—vendors, pharmacists, firefighters and postal workers. We'll explore other community services in our neighborhood and find a meaningful way to give back to the neighborhood.
- ❖ **Transportation.** During our trips around the neighborhood, we'll get to know various street signs and modes of transportation. We'll also talk about different types of transportation that take us around the city and bring things to us in our neighborhoods. The Arts for Transit Program has provided an individual identity to many subway stations, and we will explore some of this artistic vitality. New York City Transit has

204 local and 31 express bus routes in the five boroughs alone and we'll learn more about this mode of travel, and where and how buses are serviced.

❖ **Central Park.** Since Central Park is virtually across the street from us, we'll spend time exploring what's in Central Park, see what it's used for and who protects it.

We'll discover the places in which the students are most interested and visit this haven of nature.

❖ **Creating our Perfect Neighborhoods.** With all that we will have learned about the neighborhood, we'll recreate our neighborhoods. We'll culminate our learning with a "block party" with the parents.

## Context

This Neighborhood Study, while based in a specific geographical location, is in actuality a model for any neighborhood study. I offer the story of my learning and thinking process as a framework for other educators. The idea of a neighborhood study is especially appealing for children between five and seven because it is an extension of their daily spheres and provides potentially enlightening experiences for which they are ready (emotionally, socially, physically and cognitively). Children, whether on the Upper Eastside of Manhattan, or in locations near and far, have similar needs in terms of what education can and should provide for them. I used the school in which I work and what I know about the children that I teach to guide me in developing this study. I am providing the details for the reader to give this study a three-dimensional slant and a sense of reality for my school neighborhood. The process I describe is the story of my process as I explored and investigated this particular neighborhood. In order to create this curriculum, I had to do my own research and create my own learning experiences so that I could then, in turn, provide the most meaningful experiences for my students. From neighborhood to neighborhood the details will change, but the overarching themes, goals and learning experiences will parallel.

This Neighborhood Study is designed for an academically heterogeneous class, in either Kindergarten or First Grade or a mixed Kindergarten-First Grade class, who attend an independent school on the Upper Eastside of Manhattan. It assumes a class size of approximately 15-20 children. The age range is 5 to 7; the Kindergarten children are all 5 years old (by September 1st), and the First Graders are 6 years old (by September 1<sup>st</sup>).

Their social, emotional and cognitive levels of development vary greatly from child to child.

**The Student Body—Developmental Aspects of Five to Seven Year Olds.** The children in this school are a melange of personality, energy and intrigue. Although, many of the children in this school and other independent schools are fortunate to enjoy many comforts and enrichments in school that other children, perhaps, do not, these Kindergartners and First Graders share social, emotional, physical, and cognitive characteristics that are pervasive throughout this age group. They show a natural curiosity about things at hand and the world at large. At times, individual children in the group can be nurturing and protective. However, many tend to get into some very sharp and aggressive battles with each other. Conflict arises out of frequent teasing and increasingly rough physical interactions. Sitting still and paying attention are not the strong suits of this group, which is fairly typical of kindergarten-age children in particular. Although they can verbalize adult edicts and morality, they behave as their feelings dictate (Cohen, 1972). When their feelings are hurt or they are feeling vulnerable, all of the 'rules of conduct' are pushed aside in favor of lashing out. Even in spite of these tendencies, they are beginning to form friendships and cliques.

Fives are hungry for friends. The need for friendship at age five represents a high peak in a developmental progress of social awareness (Cohen, 1972). Their desire for acceptance and friendship is palpable. During this stage there is a definite shift from the influence of home toward the greater influence of peers. They gradually become more and more independent. Through the process of identification, children are beginning to

acquire a social and personal identity. During this same process, they are learning which behavior society considers good and bad.

According to Piaget, the mind of the child is qualitatively different from that of older children and adults and the aim of education should be not only to instruct but to provide a formative milieu for the child in which to learn (DeVries, Kohlberg, 1987). It is critical to understand each child and be alert to spontaneous interests in order to create the optimal learning environment.

The young end of this age spectrum, the five year olds, have a very personal, egocentric view of what is important, ask good and even unanswerable questions, and know reality as what has personal meaning for them--what they can see, touch, smell, hear, taste. They need a continuing expansion of experiences on which they can sharpen their perceptions (Cohen, 1972).

This curriculum spans two of Piaget's stages of development—preoperations and concrete operations, with the shift usually happening between the ages of five and seven. Typically, five and six year old children are at the end of Piaget's pre-operational stage. The thinking processes of these children are very much in the "here and now". Most kindergarten children are egocentric, unable to consider another's viewpoint. They have a perceptual orientation in which they make judgements based solely on the way the world looks to them. Often they engage in collective monologues—talking at rather than with another. Children in this age group have difficulty taking a listener's knowledge into account in order to communicate effectively (i.e., don't provide the necessary background information to make sense). They are, however, capable of good, sound thinking and are responsive to ideas and reasoning (Cohen, 1972). They can represent reality to

themselves through the use of symbols, including mental images, words and gestures. Throughout this study, they will be asked to do so through writing, speaking, dramatic play, music, and art.

The core of a child's being at this age is his or her physicality as the demands of the body for movement carry greater force than do the mind and logic (Cohen, 1972). The inclination for these children is to respond with action and movement. Cohen says that is the underpinning of mental health that they experience their bodies and bodily senses with competency and not be diverted to the adult modes of sitting and listening prematurely. Mastery of the small and large motor skills builds a sense of competence and confidence that is a critical developmental foundation for young children. Throughout this curriculum, the children will be out and about, up and down, and required to engage all of their senses. Children between the ages of birth and 6 are sensorial explorers. True learning takes place when children have opportunities to make sense of their own experiences, link existing ideas and past experiences, and change their ideas to fit the new evidence better (Harlen & Jelly, 1989). Children in this age group can be remarkable learners and this learning can be accomplished through manipulation of materials, personal observations, and active interactions with others. This study was designed based on their senses and the understanding that children learn best by doing, tasting, smelling, hearing and feeling for themselves.

During the next stage of development, concrete operations, the physical world becomes more predictable because children come to understand that certain physical aspects of objects, such as size, density, length and number, remain the same even when other aspects of their appearances have changed (Cole, 1996). Thinking becomes more

organized and flexible and now children can engage in thinking about alternatives when they try to solve problems. There is growth in the power of logical thinking, conceptualization, and use of symbolism that is closer to the adult's than to a young child's in style (Cohen, 1972). They still cannot think objectively about what does not directly have an impact on them. Seeking out facts becomes increasingly interesting as they discover how and why things occur. Connotative learning begins with proximal experiences. According to Elkind, children will learn more connotatively from a trip to a bakery than from hearing about a trip to the moon (Elkind, 1976, p. 124), and since the most meaningful experiences children have are those which they can experience first hand, it's best to start learning about what is right outside their door. Their thirst seems unquenchable when it comes to learning and exploring almost any *engaging* topics. (The mission, therefore, is to engage their minds and imaginations.)

**Why This Study for These Kindergarteners and First Graders?** In order for learning to take place, the curriculum must provide meaningful experiences that are related to the children's lives, needs, interests and cognitive maturity. The subject matter (the neighborhood) is part and parcel of the immediate and concrete life of this age group. It focuses on the here and now and is a reality that has personal meaning for them.

Branching out from an awareness of self, this study allows them to connect that awareness to a social setting. It can provide them with a way to investigate concrete aspects of their everyday lives and help them make sense of their immediate world as they find their place in that world. At this age they are beginning to develop cooperative relationships which will be utilized throughout this study. The study will allow them to explore and

strengthen their interpersonal relationships. By sharing in the social experiences of this study, the children will begin to move past their egocentrism.

Why a focus on the neighborhood? Rooted in their families, five to seven year old children are beginning to expand outward and the neighborhood is the natural extension of the family and an extension that allows them to not only profile but capture the uniqueness of their school neighborhood. This age group would benefit from a neighborhood study as they have the physical energy and interest to explore the area. It caters to their need for movement. They display a lot of curiosity about the “whys” and “hows” of the world, instead of just accepting things on face value. Through learning about the neighborhood, who works there, how we get around, and from where things come, this group can expand to a more multi-dimensional view of their world. It will give them a chance to get a deep look at their immediate environment and then compare and contrast it with a nearby neighborhood that has its own distinctive tapestry of culture and excitement.

The breadth (rather than particular depth) of this curriculum is geared toward a class of five to seven year olds whose interest cover an amazingly broad scope but seldom pursue an interest in great depth (Cohen, 1972).

Duckworth (1996) provided much inspiration for me in creating this curriculum when I read her words:

*The more we help children to have their wonderful ideas and to feel good about themselves for having them, the more likely it is that they will some day happen upon wonderful ideas that no one else has happened upon before. (p. 14)*



**The School Neighborhood.** There are many independent schools in this neighborhood, all unique in many aspects but many sharing certain qualities. The intimate setting of these schools often suit the sensibilities of the cultures of the families that make up the community. The neighborhood is residential and fairly affluent and at times stereotyped as elite and even 'snobbish'. Through this study, the children will have an opportunity to see a broader and deeper profile of the area, highlighting its nuance, charm, and much that is affirming to young children. There are many town houses and upscale high rises, trees, window boxes and an overall sense of refined architecture. The area is culturally rich, near both the Guggenheim and Cooper Hewitt Museums. One can hear the buzz of many different languages as tourists with cameras and street maps travel on these streets. The neighborhood is heavily populated with private schools that contribute to the bustle of children and their parents to and from school each day. Joggers and runners speed by the school on their way to Central Park. Other than the ubiquitous NYC construction improvements, the street is quiet. Public transportation is conveniently located—the subway is a few blocks away and the Madison and Fifth Avenue buses are a few steps away. The neighborhood is characterized by small businesses such as high-end children's clothing stores, boutiques, upscale food markets, and restaurants. These small businesses (not big and anonymous) compliment the school's own lively sense of community and individualization. The proximity to Central Park provides an opportunity to study one of New York City's treasures.

**The School.** The atmosphere is both academic and nurturing. Although the school's mission is to educate each student for academic excellence, it seems that the school's

primary focus is on supporting the strengths of the individual child while building a community with an awareness of the world surrounding the school. Intellectual pursuits are valued, but not beyond the well being of each child and of the group. Competition and pressure are discouraged and the joy of learning actively pursued.

The racial and ethnic data for this independent school shows that it lacks a diversified tapestry of students. The percentage of families from lower socio-economic levels is small. The tuition is steep but comparable to most independent schools in Manhattan. In spite of its wealthy surroundings and parent body, the school does not have a large endowment from which to finance scholarships and its budget cannot support much beyond regular expenses for the daily running of the school. The school is directly dependent on its immediate community of parents and fundraisers and in turn is very responsive to the community. The socio-economic makeup of the, mostly white, population of the school reflects the wealth and privilege of the neighborhood. Many languages other than English are spoken at home and many families are bilingual, if not multi-lingual. Although there is some diversity in ethnicity, it is limited. The diversity is, therefore, seen in the curriculum, exposing children to a wide range of cultures, ideas and topics.

The curriculum at this school is structured but not overly so, allowing for child-initiated areas of exploration. Developing a sense of community and a sense of self are goals of paramount importance during Kindergarten and then continuing in First Grade where there is a greater emphasis on academics. The children are exposed to a wide range of areas of study, including Social Studies, Math (using manipulatives and rods), Reading

(shared, guided and independent), Science, French & Spanish, Art, Physical Education,  
Gymnastics, Handwriting, and Music and Movement.

## **How to Use This Curriculum Study**

In this section are notes, observations, explanations, and advice about how to use this curriculum study, itself, as well as how to use it as a framework for developing a similar type of study and set of experiences in any neighborhood. These are guidelines, not a blueprint, for planning. In the paragraphs below, I've tried to document and anticipate the potentials and cautions when designing a neighborhood curriculum.

**Applicability from this School Context to Others.** This curriculum was developed very specifically for an independent school with a small class size located on the Upper Eastside of Manhattan but is, nevertheless, applicable to other schools—public or private, urban or suburban, with slight modifications. Starting in the children's school neighborhood, exploring and discovering, and then branching out to compare and contrast with another neighborhood transcends the boundaries of the Upper Eastside. Although all children are unique, they do have similar needs in terms of learning, and this curriculum is also intended to serve as a model for other schools and communities.

**Sequence.** The 'Units' of this study are interrelated and, although, presented in a sequential order, it is not imperative to adhere to the order presented. The curriculum is meant to be fluid and interactive, therefore the children will have an impact on the study. For example, the Community Service Unit is outlined toward the end of this paper but can certainly begin at any point during the Study. If the children's questions or interests are peaked in a direction earlier, the curriculum should stay in sync with the children and the order of the Units should be switched or accelerated. Furthermore, the Units can and

should overlap; one can start before the prior one ends and each Unit can be stretched over a longer elapsed time than suggested. See Appendix A for timing suggestions and overlap of this Study.

**Literature and The Library Corner.** Each Unit contains a **Library Corner** from which I will choose books to read and discuss at various times throughout the day (e.g., morning meeting, before rest time, end of the day meeting) to further the neighborhood experience. Refer to the Bibliography for highlights of each book. We do a lot of reading and story discussion in our class. Our library will be enhanced with books from the Bibliography.

**Trips.** Before every trip, I will orient the students by providing a neighborhood map. At age five, children can begin to use simple maps in connection with their experiences. These maps will show the school, the destination, landmarks along the way and then together we will use a red marker to sketch the route we will travel. When we leave the school, we will begin by looking at our maps, placing ourselves on the map, and then proceeding on the trip. Throughout each trip, we will refer back to the maps to stay on course and anchor ourselves to our environment.

Most all trips will have a trip sheet to use during the visit in order to help balance focusing on important items and being free to make individual discoveries. Before each trip, the class and I will create these trip sheets and interview questions. After every trip, if there was a specific person helping at the location, the children will compose a thank you note along with a special memory of the trip (e.g., illustrations, poems) that I will send off. The trip follow up will include a number of activities, as highlighted throughout

this paper, but at the very least will result in a trip book (ranging from simple to more complex) that documents the trip with words, illustrations or photographs. These trip books will be shared among classmates, and with parents during the culminating event. Because these are descriptions of shared experiences, with repetition and familiarity, these trip books will provide an excellent early reading material for many children.

For all trips requiring additional adult supervision, I will make a notice and post it along with a sign-up sheet outside the classroom.

**Parent Volunteer Preparation Before Trips.** Before each trip, it's important to communicate to the parent volunteers exactly what their role will be. Depending on the type of trip and the number of adults accompanying the group, each adult will be responsible for a few children, including his or her own child. The guidelines for taking charge of a group can be communicated as follows:

- Please keep your group with you at all times. You are responsible for the children in your group.
- Do not let the children go to the bathroom alone. An adult must wait right outside of the door for the child.
- We want this to be a fun, community building experience. In the interest of fairness, please treat your child as a member of the group. We do not want the children whose parents did not come to feel left out, therefore we ask you to please not give your child special treatment, snacks or souvenirs. Nor should special treats be purchased for individual groups. The teachers will decide what they will buy for their classes to enjoy back at school.

- Please make sure your small group stays together and follows directions to the whole class.
- Stay close to the children when crossing the street.
- Help the children to complete the trip sheet, pointing out places of interest (as indicated by the teacher), and taking brief dictation (where necessary.)
- Please comfort a child in your group who might need some special attention. (For example, if a child is sad that his or her parent is not on the trip or just out of sorts for the day, he or she might benefit from a little extra care.)
- In case of emergency, the teachers may rely on you to direct the group while they manage the crisis.

**Behavioral Expectations for Children.** The behavioral expectations teachers have for children on field trips should be shared with the volunteers, and might include:

- Children are asked to hold hands when crossing streets.
- When in a public place (e.g., museum), children are expected to be respectful of their surroundings and to only touch objects when permitted.
- When children are inside (including a bus) they should use 'inside' voices.

**Blocks.** Throughout this Study and most especially following field trips, Kindergarten children (and First Grades that provide blocks for the students) will have ample opportunity to explore and experiment through blocks, and this can be a means for children to express their experiences as well as offer a setting for dramatic play. The

block play will be encouraged but not planned and scheduled by me. I will make suggestions, based on the Unit of Study, but I will not overly structure their block work.

**Kindergarten or First Grade.** This curriculum is flexible for a wide range of skills in all academic areas. For those students who are not yet readers or writers, adults will be more involved in documenting the children's words and the children will have more opportunity to represent their thoughts through drawings. On field trips with First Graders, if possible, the children can do more of their own writing, and on field trips with Kindergartners, the adults can help the children read the trip sheet and document observations. **Since the focus is mainly on observation, the writing required for the trip sheets should be minimal.**

**Why Contrast Neighborhoods?** It's so very interesting to learn about where we live but it's also important to extend our learning to what's nearby and how neighborhoods share many qualities but differ in flavor and culture. This is the beginning of a Social Studies program which will in later school years gradually extend to societies farther away in time and space. This foundation, focusing on the relationship of things in two different neighborhoods, will highlight a similar web of interdependency between neighborhoods. This early focus in contrasts provides a groundwork for celebrating diversity, an essential component in early childhood education.

**Guest Presenters.** Throughout this curriculum, I will look to invite guests to the classroom to speak, share experiences and lead activities (e.g., cooking, crafts, songs).



The guest list will, of course, depend on availability and the specific interests generated by the children. In some cases, parents will be able to provide introductions to their own cultures and share information about their particularly relevant professions. Other community resources might include local charity organizations (e.g., Director of the Yorkville Common Pantry--an organization that provides meals for hundreds of individuals in the community who would otherwise go hungry, Red Cross Volunteer) and or people who have an expertise or passion that might enhance the curriculum (e.g., baker of Greek pastries).

**Teacher's Research.** This study is a product of my first-hand investigation and interviewing. It opened my eyes to many possibilities and stimulated my interest in creating and then doing the curriculum with my students. By actually taking these trips and talking to the people in advance, I learned a lot and was able to determine the way I wanted to do the study with the group. Doing this research was critical on many levels and alerted me to a myriad of issues and many cautions I might not have been prepared for otherwise. For example, I became aware of issues that I need to consider, such as safety (e.g., getting to and from a location, equipment that could be dangerous), logistics and space (e.g., stores that were extremely small and couldn't hold more than a few children at a time, store hours, rules of operation), and vendor characteristics (i.e., If a vendor speaks softly or with a heavy accent, I will be able to discuss it ahead of time with the children so that they can be prepared to focus and listen carefully.)

This thesis is not a template, rather an invitation for teachers to discover the people and places, intimately and personally, of their own neighborhoods. This process helped

me feel more connected to the community in which I teach, to recognize and be recognized by those people who comprise the neighborhood. By steeping oneself in the neighborhood and getting to know many of its citizens, one becomes a thread in the neighborhood fabric.

From Mitchell (1934/1991) I learned that it becomes the first task of a teacher who would base her program with young children on an exploration of the environment to explore the environment herself. She does not gather information to become an encyclopedia or a peripatetic textbook, rather to place the children in strategic positions for making explorations, and to plan trips which lead to significant discoveries, in short in order to use her environment as a laboratory.

**Role of Concepts and Ideas.** In the next section, I've detailed the concepts and ideas that provide the backbone of this study. When beginning the development of any curriculum, one must start here—what is it that we want the children to take away from the study. These underpinnings drive the curriculum development as well as its implementation. Although flexibility is imperative when working with children, the goals of the study will remain in tact. Checking back on these goals on a regular basis will help keep the teacher focused in the direction that was originally planned.

**Planning.** Planning is critical when doing any study, and especially so when a teacher is expecting to take many field trips. Long and short term planning using a framework of concepts and ideas as one's guide is a good starting point. Revisiting the work done to date in tandem with the future goals, on a frequent and ongoing basis, is helpful in

staying on course and adjusting the study based on children's interests and discoveries as well as external demands. Short term planning allows for the interactive nature of the study and for what the children bring to the discussion that can then ultimately alter some of the activities and plans.

**Accommodating a Variety of Learning Styles.** There is a wide range of individual differences among children with respect to how they learn. It is imperative that the teacher thinks about each child and how she or he optimally learns, when developing any type of curriculum. All children in the class must be considered and accounted for as the lessons are planned. The activities must challenge students and fit their needs, learning styles, and capabilities (Michaelis, 1988). Children vary in their intellectual maturity and development from child to child, and within each child by subject area. Some are verbally or mathematically advanced, some have highly developed motor skills, some have been reading since the age of three while others have not yet mastered certain skills. Not only will there be divergent skill levels within any given classroom but also children all have learning styles that are different. While some children work best in a group, others need more individualized instruction; some children are visual learners while others are auditory learners; some children work and learn quickly while others are slow, taking more time to process information; some children are artistic while others are more comfortable representing their thoughts through oral communication; and some children are mainly extremely analytic while others are creatively expressive. There are many ways to express underlying feelings (e.g., orally, in writing, through drawings, dramatics) There is no one way right way to learn.

In order for a teacher to be able to individualize the curriculum, she or he must know each child—background, achievements, interest, level of mental maturity, language power, and related abilities—to make adequate provisions for individual differences (Michaelis, 1988).

This Neighborhood Study incorporates a variety of learning activities to address all individual students. In addition to incorporating a cross curriculum approach to this study, children will be allotted the time they need to complete their work. They will all be encouraged to take initiative and to participate. Throughout the study, I've included a range of activities with a range of challenges. For those who are ready for certain challenges, there are opportunities to explore graphing, mapping, and independent writing. The assignments are broken into manageable components so as not to overwhelm the students. Consideration for visual and auditory learners is reflected in each Unit. Moreover, the children are encouraged to explore with all five senses. Furthermore, for those who thrive in smaller groups, there are opportunities to do so (e.g., trips, cooking). As well, there are numerous larger group activities including discussions, presentations, and trips.

Independent work (books, computer, blocks) provide variety to meet special needs as well. Too frequently some students do a single activity over and over because they are good at it. Students may miss other opportunities if a wide range of engaging experiences is not provided. My goal was to include a plethora of possibilities from which the most appropriate (for each student) would be used. Hopefully, throughout this study, every child in the class will have his or her chance to shine and grow.

## Curriculum Overview

Unit	Trips/Events	Curriculum Connections
Unit 1: What is a Neighborhood	2 impression walks	<u>Language</u> : reading, discussion, writing word wall, <u>Art</u> : illustrations <u>Science</u> : 5 senses <u>Music/Movement</u> : people to people
Unit 2: Needs and Wants		<u>Language</u> : reading, writing, discussion, word wall
Unit 3: Work and Workers in the Neighborhood	<u>Markets</u> : D'Agostino, Union Square Farmer's Market <u>Bakery</u> : Ecce Panis <u>Bagel Shop</u> : The Bagelry <u>Shoe Store</u> : Great Feet <u>Dry Cleaners</u> : Milton Cleaners <u>Pharmacy</u> : 90 <sup>th</sup> St Pharmacy <u>Butcher</u> : Schatzie's Prime Meats  Yorkville Post Office Fire Station	<u>Language</u> : reading, writing, discussion, word wall, poetry, interviewing, adaptation of Worksong <u>Math/Science</u> : cooking (bread, vegetable soup, pretzels) <u>Math</u> : sorting, counting, mapping (spatial relationships) <u>Science</u> : connect back to study of seeds and plants from earlier in the year <u>Art</u> : illustrations, papier mache, collage, making a fire hydrant, making stamps <u>Music/Movement</u> : city sounds, percussion instruments
Unit 4: Transportation	Arts in Transit in subway stations Bus Depot Transportation exhibition for other classes	<u>Language</u> : reading, writing, discussion, word wall <u>Math</u> : graphing, sorting <u>Science</u> : making boats, floating and sinking <u>Art</u> : , mural for a subway station, transportation models
Unit 5: Different Neighbor- Hoods	Country vs. City Another City Neighborhood: Astoria, Queens—markets; a view of Manhattan, Socrates Sculpture Park, Museum of the Moving Image	<u>Language</u> : reading, writing, discussion, word wall, <u>Art</u> : puppets, illustrations, watercolor, sculpture <u>Dramatic play</u> : puppet show <u>Cooking</u> : Greek dishes
Unit 6: NYC Buildings	Investigate home apartment building with family	<u>Language</u> : reading, writing, discussion, word wall

<p>Unit 7: Central Park</p>	<p>Picnic at Sheep Meadow Wildlife Center and Delacorte Clock Belvedere Castle and Nature Observatory Interview Urban Park Ranger Conservatory Garden</p>	<p><u>Language:</u> reading, writing, discussion, word wall, interviewing <u>Art:</u> illustrations, mural, watercolor <u>Music/Movement:</u> re-enact the Delacorte Clock</p>
<p>Unit 8: Community Service</p>	<p>Depending on students' interest and ideas possible trips to Yorkville Common Pantry.</p>	<p><u>Language:</u> reading, writing, discussion, word wall, fairy tale <u>Art:</u> illustrations <u>Extensions:</u> honor community helpers, make a community pledge</p>
<p>Unit 9: Culminating</p>	<p>Block Party with families Neighborhood Exhibit</p>	<p><u>Art:</u> neighborhood block from construction, mural, book binding</p>

## **Concepts and Organizing Ideas and Skills**

This curriculum is organized around the following **concepts and organizing ideas**.

Hilda Taba's question--what do you hope the students will remember after they have forgotten many of the specifics they are now learning (1971, p. 27)-- was carefully considered in formulating the underpinnings of this study:

### **Needs and Wants**

- *There are many basic needs and wants that we each have that, when satisfied, help us survive.*
- *Our neighborhood helps us meet those needs and wants.*

### **Interdependence**

- *Everyone in a neighborhood is dependent on others for fulfillment of his or her needs.*
- *Behavior of the individuals in a neighborhood has an impact on others.*
- *Community workers depend on each other for many goods and services.*
- *We depend on other people in other parts of the country and world for some goods.*  
*Products come to our neighborhood from all over the country and world.*
- *There are many ways to travel around a neighborhood.*

### **Cooperation**

- *When people work together, they can solve problems.*
- *We need to cooperate with others to make the community work.*
- *It takes many people, working together to make the neighborhood work.*

## **Responsibility**

- *Each member of a neighborhood has a role in that neighborhood and a responsibility to it.*

## **Differences/Similarities**

- *People are alike and different.*
- *Community workers are real people with real lives and families.*
- *Neighborhoods are made up of many different people.*
- *Neighborhoods are alike and different.*
- *Neighborhoods have distinctive qualities.*

## **Skills**

From this study, the students will have an opportunity to cultivate these skills:

**Observation**—Through observation, facts are gathered that can then be processed to form concepts and generalizations. This is the starting point for forming patterns and then validating the concepts and generalizations that were formed. Observations can be direct or indirect. For the most part, all of the observations in this study will be direct observations made by the children themselves. Some, however, will be vicarious, through other children in the class as they report back on what they learned on one of their field trips. We will use all five senses to help us gather information and understand the world around us. Observation will bring the children closer to their own world and provide facts needed for information processing. Developing their powers of observation is useful for their future academic studies and life in general.



**Communication**—Communication skills have a central role in learning. Receptive skills are used as students read and listen to learn. Expressive skills are used as students communicate ideas in oral and in written form. A guiding principle for this study is to integrate reading, listening, speaking and writing across the curriculum, thereby applying and improving skills developed in the language arts program and enhancing learning in each subject (Michaelis, 1988). Listening skills are used to participate in discussion, follow directions, clarify concepts, and hear tone of expression of others. With ample opportunity to express themselves orally, the students will be able to develop their abilities to convey their thoughts and feelings in group and one-on-one settings. The speakers will benefit by having the opportunity to hone their communication skills while feeling a sense of pride and accomplishment; other children will be able to hear a classmate's thinking and reasoning which will either confirm their own or challenge them to rethink their own position, and the teacher will get a chance to get more perspective on a child's thinking and growth. Having to articulate one's ideas, helps to bring order and clarity to those ideas. Another goal of discussion is to share individual experiences that result from a common experience, showcasing the uniqueness of each experience that then when shared, enlarges everyone's experience. The opportunity to do this strengthens not only the ego but the sense of narrative sequence that is indispensable to following the details of a story through the maze of print one later reads oneself (Cohen, 1972). Writing activities will serve to improve learning and thinking. This will mostly take place in the form of dictation from student to teacher. Drawing, painting, movement and block building will be avenues through which the students will represent their ideas. We will enhance the

writing program by including a word wall, and writing poetry, stories, books, captions, and letters.

**Hypothesizing**—Children will be asked to predict (and explain) what they will see on each trip, what will happen when different ingredients are added in a cooking project, and what they think might happen during different investigations. This skill provides the foundation for interpreting results; they will actively participate in the process by engaging at the outset.

**Analytical (Classification, Sorting, Comparing, Summarizing)**—We will attempt to cultivate the ability to discern so that similarities and differences become apparent and can be easily accessed in their thought processes. Dealing with similarities and differences will continue in each area of this study. Activities will be geared toward grouping like things, parsing out different things and articulating the characteristics of each category. For example, how is the Upper Eastside of Manhattan similar to and different from Astoria, Queens? Also, what do our homes have in common and how are they different (e.g., exterior surface of the building, number of floors, number of apartments on each floor)? On an elementary level, we will explore the “whys” behind what we do, see, hear, smell, touch and taste. Children will be challenged to think and articulate those analytic thoughts and draw conclusions.

**Representation**—At various points throughout the study, it is important to ask students to represent their learning—often through an illustration (with pencils, colored pencils,

markers or paints). Making a drawing requires the student to choose what to draw and consequently what not to draw. The choices can be enlightening for a teacher. This task will encourage students to become astute observers as well as give a teacher insight into the degree of sophistication the children are developing with respect to observation. The drawings can serve as a focal point for comparing information for a whole class. There are children in this age group, however, who will not yet have advanced to a representational level, and or will be resistant or uncomfortable when asked to draw. In those situations, I will not push them but take their dictation as they tell me what they would like to represent.

**Social**—Since a primary focus for the Kindergarten and First Grade is to create an environment that allows children to develop their social skills—empathy, working with others in small and large groups, and sharing—this study will give the children a chance to experiment in these areas and mature as social beings, as recommended by Vygotsky, Dewey and Mitchell.

## **Beginning the Neighborhood Study**

Before the actual neighborhood study begins, I will send a *letter home* (Appendix B) to the parents, discussing the curriculum and concepts to be covered. Parents will be asked to continue conversations at home with their children about the neighborhood, and send in materials that are of particular interest to the child and relevant to the study (e.g., maps).

To begin the study, I will tell the children that for the next couple of months, they will be studying their neighborhood and give them an idea of some of the topics they will explore (e.g., local businesses, Central Park). Then we will take the first impressionistic walk with the children, stopping and noticing as much as possible. The walk begins east on a side street and continues around the block, where the children can look carefully at all the different buildings (height, color, surface material), the sidewalk, the gratings, the awnings, the other school across the street (the similarities and differences in buildings), street signs, the number of cars on the street, and the type of people that pass by. We'll make a left onto Madison and walk up, noticing the many, many small shops--what they sell and who is shopping there. The children talk about the difference between Madison Avenue and the side street on which the school is located. Walking west on another side street will give the children a whole other side-street perspective. Midway down the block, they'll pass the entrance to the school, observing the differences in the buildings. The back of the Cooper Hewitt museum is another focal point. The museum itself, the ornate gate around it and the landscaping are all interesting topics for discussion. Turn south on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and enter the Church of the Heavenly Rest (actually connected to and

utilized by the School). Most likely the magnificence of the nave, with its elaborate and breathtaking stained-glass windows will be awe inspiring for the class. This would be a good place to sit and regroup, talking about the wide range of sights they've just seen. From the church, we'll continue down on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and return to school.

The next day, I will gather the students together and ask a series of questions. The answers will be posted on an experience chart titled *What We Find Interesting About Our Neighborhood*. This chart can be hung on a wall near the meeting area for easy reference. This discussion will also provide an opportunity for the students to become personally involved from the outset. For example, I might ask:

- *What did you see?*
- *What did you find interesting?*
- *Was there anything you saw that surprised you? Was there anything you noticed on our walk that you hadn't noticed before?*
- *What makes up our school neighborhood?*

Children could discuss their ideas with a partner for a few minutes and then share ideas for posting.

I will then read *A Perfect Neighborhood* (by Leah Komaiko) because it highlights many of the types of places and experiences the children will have had on our walk. As I hold up the book so the students can see the front cover, I will ask them to guess where the story takes place (a city neighborhood), and then ask the students to identify the things on the front cover that tell them the story happens in a city neighborhood. After reading the book aloud, we'll talk about the neighborhood in the story. I'll ask the students to tell which sights are make-believe and which might actually be found in a neighborhood. The

children should be encouraged to discuss what they enjoyed most in the book and how that neighborhood relates to their own. How are they the same and how are they different? For example, students may say that there are restaurants and stores in the story just like where they live. The next question could be “what would you put in your perfect neighborhood?” Responses will be recorded on an experience chart during the brainstorming session. Some children might say candy on all of the trees, pink streets, and dinosaurs on the corner! After everyone has had a chance to add to the attribute list, each child can draw his/her own version of a perfect neighborhood and I can display the drawings on a bulletin board.

In another discussion, a day or so later, in order to reinforce what we’ve experienced and discussed, I will provide the children with an opportunity to talk about neighborhoods, calling up their previous knowledge and their fresh impressions from the walk. Likely responses to ‘what makes up a neighborhood’ may include: libraries, schools, things close to our house, buildings, families, houses, parks, the street, dogs, people, cars, restaurants, roofs, buses, sports teams, etc. The children might respond by saying:

- ◆ It’s streets that are around your house.
- ◆ Something you can see outside your window that’s close to you.
- ◆ People around the city.
- ◆ A place where there are lots of buildings.

The introductory discussion, book reading and subsequent activities will serve to engage the children by giving them a chance to talk about something with which they are familiar and by having some fun. A low-key, subtle introduction will help us ease into a

new topic safely and on a positive note. Being able to use their creative juices and construct their own make-believe neighborhoods will help to solicit ideas and promote sharing of ideas.

## Unit 1: What is a Neighborhood?

Neighborhood can mean many different things to people. For some it's an area where they live, for others it's a feeling and a spirit. Whatever it may mean to the teacher and each child for this study, it is the environment in which we go to school every day. Connecting to that place, idea, and or feeling is important and meaningful. Children already have some impressions and notions about their neighborhood; it is something with which they are familiar. These individual foundations will help to provide the foundation for the entire study.

After the first impression walk and discussions, I can introduce a wealth of literature (as a part of our of daily story readings) to help provide vocabulary and act as a catalyst for ideas about neighborhoods. Another trip should be planned a few days later.

### ~ Library Corner ~

- My Five Senses—Aliko
- My Perfect Neighborhood—Leah Komaiko
- Nothing Ever Happens on 90<sup>th</sup> Street—Roni Schotter
- Once Around the Block—Kevin Henkes
- One Afternoon—Yumi Heo
- Roxaboxen—Alice McLerran
- Sweet Dream Pie—Audrey Wood and Mark Teague

### Literature

During this Unit, there are a number of wonderful picture books to share with the class, all of which highlight different aspects of neighborhood life and can be the starting points for some rich discussion. I'll read *Nothing Ever Happens on 90<sup>th</sup> Street* (by Roni Schotter), because the children might find it amusing that our school is on 89<sup>th</sup> Street and



the story takes place nearby on 90<sup>th</sup> Street, during a story time and encourage children to talk about how their experiences relate to the main character in the story.

## **Trips**

The cornerstone of this entire curriculum is neighborhood exploration. Field trips serve many purposes, but primarily they are concrete opportunities to see and experience. Each trip and person we meet can help the children better understand the world from a new perspective. The trips are designed to meet the children's growth needs in experiences (physical, social, emotional dimensions as described above in the section covering developmental aspects of the five to seven year old), not necessarily just with reference to the logical development of factual content (cognitive) (1934/1991). Throughout the study, the class will take many, many trips to have a multitude of actual hands-on, bodies-on experiences from which to draw and on which to build.

**Preparation:** I'll send a schedule (Appendix C) home to families about upcoming trips and time commitments. Sign-up sheets will be posted outside of the classroom for parent volunteers.

Before every trip I will talk to the parents about their role on a trip. For a detailed account of parent volunteer's responsibilities, please see "How to Use This Curriculum Study" section. In brief, each parent will:

- ◆ Be responsible for approximately two children (depending on the number of parent volunteers we have) in addition to their own.
- ◆ Help the children complete the trip sheet, pointing out places of interest (as indicated), and taking brief dictation (where necessary).

- ◆ Remind the children to stay together.
- ◆ Stay close to the children when crossing the street.
- ◆ Comfort a child that might need some special attention.
- ◆ Remind the children to be mindful of the teacher's instructions.

During the first week of the study, we will take two neighborhood trips. The children will be separated into groups of three while traveling around the neighborhood; the adults should continue to point things out to sharpen the children's awareness and observation skills. For example, construction sites, museums, stop sign (and other signs), traffic lights, bakery, butcher. The adults could ask or comment:

- *What color are the buildings on this street?*
- *What are the buildings made of?*
- *What types of shops do you notice?*
- *There seems to be a lot of people on the street today.*
- *What does this street sign (e.g., Stop, Yield, One Way, No Parking,*

*Construction) say?*

- *Who do you see on the streets? What type of jobs are they doing?*
- *[Questions about the logic and order of the work being done on the streets, depending, of course, on what is happening at the time of the walk. For example, why is that construction worker carrying a beam? What is a cement mixer and why is it needed? Why does that sanitation or construction truck make that beeping sound when going in reverse?]*

• *What's different about 89<sup>th</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue? Which street has more traffic?*

• *How tall are the buildings?*

These initial impression tours should encourage the children to observe everything they can about the buildings, the streets, the people, the businesses, and the general feel on the street. The adults should make notations of the children's comments and observations.

After the first trip we'll start to compile a chart of *What We Saw on Our Trip*, and then add to the list after the second trip.

<b>What We Saw in the Neighborhood</b>
Church
Apartment Buildings
Central Park
Bank
(To be continued after next trip)

Then we'll talk about how the school neighborhood is similar and different to the one in which they live.

### **Art**

The day after both impression walks of the neighborhood, the children will draw a picture of something they saw, found interesting, surprising or never saw before. The teachers will write down the words that correspond to each child's drawing. These pictures (and all others done throughout the study) will be included in a book to be compiled at the end of the study. Each child will bind his or her own book—*My Impressions of the Neighborhood*—as one of the culminating activities.

## Science

To maximize the field trips, we need to use each of our five senses. To prepare for that type of observation, we will study our five senses as part of the Science curriculum. I'll read Aliko's *My Five Senses* to the class after asking the class if they know what the five senses are. Many will have an idea of at least one or two. We'll start an experience chart, *Our Five Senses* with the suggestions offered by the class. After reading the book, we'll complete the top row, listing each sense. Ask children to give specific examples of things they can do with each sense. Some examples might include:

### Our Five Senses

We See	We Hear	We Taste	We Smell	We Touch
Sun	Airplane	Ice Cream	Soup	Feather
Book	Drum	Apple	Skunk	Ice Cube
Door	Bell	Lemon	Flower	Sand

Assign each child to illustrate one of the boxes and post the chart on the science wall. Throughout the science portion we will do investigations with all of our senses. The neighborhood trips will serve as the 'lab' for some of these lessons. (Refer to the Bibliography, for reference books about the five senses.)

## Music/Movement

*People to People.* Standing in a circle holding hands, we'll all sing "people to people and hands to hands" with hands held, keeping the 'electricity' going from person to person through hand holding. Then each child, one at a time, will select a different body part that everyone touches to each neighbor, singing, for example "finger to finger to

finger to finger”, or “head to head to head to head”. The purpose of the activity is to create a connection among the students as another way to build a sense of community.

### **Language/Word Wall**

During the first few days of the study, I will start a Neighborhood Word Wall to which words should be added as they come up. Possible sources for words are picture books and observations while on neighborhood walks. Some initial ideas are--street, building, block, store, and neighborhood. This word wall can be used to work on letter-sound correspondence during writing activities as well.

## **Unit 2: Needs and Wants**

Neighborhoods can fulfill our needs. During this unit, we have an opportunity to explore just what our needs are and how the neighborhood does (or doesn't) satisfy those needs. The children will be encouraged to think about what they need to survive and the places in the neighborhood where they might be able to find the things they need. This Unit can be integrated and taught in parallel with the subsequent Unit—Five Senses Exploration of the Neighborhood.

### **Discussion**

By this time, the children will be somewhat oriented to the school neighborhood. To add another dimension to this study, I will begin an exploration of our needs by saying:

*We all have certain needs and wants. Needs are things that we must have to survive; wants are our desires to make life even better. Let's make a list of all of our needs and then we'll think about where in the neighborhood we can go to satisfy those needs.*

Responses should be posted on an experience chart (the **Where Our Needs Can Be Met** column should be filled in after the **Our Needs** column) and might include the following:

OUR NEEDS	WHERE OUR NEEDS CAN BE MET
Food	Markets
Money	Banks
Toys	Stores
God	Everywhere, Church
Candy	Markets
Clothes	Shops

I'll tell the children that we are about to start exploring some of these places on our list. Some places we will visit together as a class and some will be in smaller groups who will then report back to the class about their learnings.

## **Unit 3: Work and Workers of the Neighborhood**

By this time, the stage has been set. The children have started their immersion into the neighborhood, have an idea about their own individual needs and how the neighborhood can meet those needs, and have cultivated an understanding of each of their five senses to help them develop more three-dimensional observations. During this Unit, we will take many field trips (some whole group and some smaller groups) to validate our understandings and exercise our observation skills. During the trips, I will ask the children to stop, close their eyes and listen to the sounds buzzing about the streets, and then we will talk about what they heard. The adults on the trip should be mindful to call on sight, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting when appropriate.

### **Library Corner**

- A Busy Day at Mr. Kang's Grocery Store
- Anna's Garden Songs—Mary Q. Steele
- City Sounds—Craig Brown
- Citybook—Shelley Rotner and Ken Kreisler
- Growing Vegetable Soup—Lois Ehlert
- Markets—Pamela Chanko & Samantha Berger
- Neighborhood Odes—Gary Soto
- Night on Neighborhood—Eloise Greenfield and Jan Spivey Gilchrist
- Noisy Book Series—Margaret Wise Brown
- The Sleeping Bread—Stefan Czernecki & Timothy Rhodes
- Tony's Bread—Tomie De Paola

The children have met many people in the neighborhood and will now begin to focus on some of the community workers, what, how, when, why, where they do their work, and even more importantly who they are. This Unit could take many directions including—firefighters, postal workers, police officers, sanitation workers, librarians, etc. During this study we will narrow our focus to vendors, pharmacists, firefighters and postal workers.



### Library Corner

- All About Things People Do—Melanie & Chris Rice
- Firefighters—Norma Simon
- Firefighters A to Z—Jean Johnson
- In My Neighborhood: Firefighters—Paulette Bourgeois and Kim LaFave
- The Night Ones—Patricia Grossman
- People Working—Douglas Florian
- The Post Office book—Mail and How it Moves—Gail Gibbons
- Worksong—Gary Wright

### Literature/Language

I'll read *City Sounds* (by Craig Brown) so the children start thinking about all of the sounds that they hear. Then we'll talk about other sounds and noises and ask the children to replicate them. Some possibilities include:

- *Alarm clock*
- *Drip of a faucet*
- *Chirping bird*
- *Snoring*

We'll write a poem together about sounds.

### Simple Maps and Beginning Mapping

To begin a study of maps and mapping, we'll look at published maps of Central Park to help discover what is there and where things are. Barnes and Noble offers a wonderful poster-size map that can provide a good orientation to maps. I'll ask children to bring in other maps they might have at home and have a discussion:

- *What are maps?*

- *What are they used for?*
- *What does it mean when a map has a key?*
- *What do the symbols on the map stand for?*

We'll look at a variety of maps to get a feel for what they are. Before each trip that we take, we will be using a hand-made neighborhood map to orient ourselves as we walk so the children will now have a basic familiarity about using maps to get to a specific destination. The lift-the-flap book *My Town* by Rebecca Treays provides some quick map-orientation activities for the students. Although children at this age aren't ready to read or create sophisticated maps, they may be ready to deal with the spatial relations and artistic skills involved in simple map making. As Lucy Sprague Mitchell (1934/1991) said map-making as a science is a difficult, accurate technique which can be practiced only by trained professionals. Map-making as an art is a creative activity, growing out of many widespread interests, which is practiced almost spontaneously by children and readily acquired by the lay grown-up who is in a propitious mental attitude.

To begin to understand and create maps, children need to understand symbols and what they are used for. Their block schemes and creations can be looked at as maps, as well. We can do this by having the children use models, pictures, and blocks to stand for real things on table or floor maps. Then show aerial photographs to help students visualize a bird's eye view. Have students describe relative size of objects as larger or smaller, compare the size of models, photographs and drawings with the large objects they represent to introduce the concept of scale.

**Table Mapping.** I'll set up 3 different tables with various items in different places. When providing a demo about how to map a set of objects on a table, I'll describe what is

being represented and how the pictures differ from what they stand for. After modeling how to map a table in front of the class, I'll give each student the opportunity to map the tables in the room, and have a group share at the end of the activity. (Worksheet—Appendix D)

### **Trips-I: Getting Ready and Going on the Trips**

**Preparation.** The class will meet as a group and review the schedule of upcoming trips. I will remind them about our safety rules, listening, staying with their partners and with the teacher. Children will be assigned two small group trips in addition to the trips to D'Agostino and the Union Square Farmer's Market.

**Trip 1: D'Agostino (Lexington Avenue between 84<sup>th</sup> and 85<sup>th</sup> Streets).** The manager, Bobby, will be waiting and eager to first answer our questions, introduce us to all of the department managers and take us on a tour of the store. When I visited the store, we didn't have a lot of time together because his shift was ending but I did get the sense that he would pay full attention to the class when we would arrive. Bobby swears by the quality of the food and products at his store. The produce and meat are fresh, deliveries are received constantly throughout the day, the store is kept clean and orderly, and the staff is friendly and accommodating. D'Agostino is a family-owned business. Bobby has worked there for years and feels indebted to them for the training and career opportunities with which he has been provided. I would have liked to have more time to explore precisely where the meat, poultry, fish, and produce are delivered from and would definitely re-visit the store one more time before my actual class trip.

To prepare the class for this supermarket trip, I will lead a discussion referring back to the Needs Chart. From this chart, the students could refresh their memories that one of their basic needs is food and that need can be met at various markets, D'Agostino being one of many types.

Markets are places where some people sell things and others buy things. There are open-air markets, like the many farmer's markets around the country (one of which we will visit at the end of this week). Some markets are very small, others take up several city blocks. There are specialty markets that sell only one thing, like a bakery, and markets that sell almost everything, like a supermarket. As a group, the class can make a list of **What We Know About Markets and What We'd Like to Find Out**. From this list I would prepare a trip sheet (Appendix E) that each child will bring on a clipboard to complete on the visit. The adult in each group will help the children read the directions and write down each child's words. Before we go, we'll make a shopping list of some items we'll need for upcoming cooking projects.

**Tips on what to notice on the trip:** different departments (produce, bakery, deli), different workers (cashier, stock person, counter person), tools (scales, cash register, slicing machine), and signs (in each aisle, over a display).

**Follow Up.** A thank-you note will be composed by the entire group and signed by the children. The information gathered on the trip will be turned into a trip book. The children can decide on the title. Some suggestions include:

- *What We Learned at D'Agostino*
- *What They Sell at D'Agostino*
- *Using our Five Senses at D'Agostino*

Using children's illustrations, words, and actual photographs, I will work with the students to create and publish this (and all subsequent) trip book(s). The book should be read aloud by the teacher. A question and answer period will follow.

*Trips 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7:* I will meet with the small group (5 per trip) of children to prepare for the trip and design a trip sheet (which is a combination of what they already know, what they are interested in seeing and what I'd like for them to see), who knows why we're going and interview questions. I'll follow the process set forth above. Each child in the class will choose or be selected to go on 2 of the 6 trips outlined below.

*Ecce Panis Bakery (Madison Avenue between 90<sup>th</sup> and 91<sup>st</sup> Streets).* The aroma when you open the door is enticing enough to take this trip. Herbert, who's worked there for over a year, was very accommodating. Ecce Panis has six locations throughout the City with the Rockefeller Center store being the biggest. This space is small and artfully designed. They sell over 30 different kinds of bread, each and every looking more delicious. Some of the choices included—pane rustico, light sourdough, olive bread, Sunday raisin, potato dill, tomato focaccia, pumpernickel, and chocolate bread! Herbert told me that the bread is actually made in their factory in Carlstadt, NJ [(201) 939-1616] and suggested a trip there (all Ecce Panis employees get a chance to go there and it's supposed to be fascinating) to watch the hand rolling of the dough. At this location on Madison Avenue, they only bake the smaller items like pastries and cookies. Ecce Panis has a wholesale division and trucks their breads all the way to Maine. We can also look for their products on the shelves at Food Emporium as well. Although we couldn't watch

the bread being baked at this location, Herbert did say that we could watch and help with the cookies and other items. No more than 5 children could fit comfortably there but Herbert was open to the idea of a class trip, allowing them time to sit there and draw what they see after the baking is done.

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can the children count the different types of bread? Can they identify some of the ingredients in the cookies? (Trip Sheet- Appendix F)

**Tips on what to notice on the trip:** variety of bread, aroma, baking equipment, how breads are displayed.

*Milton Cleaners (Madison Avenue between 91<sup>st</sup> and 92<sup>nd</sup> Streets).* Kim emigrated from Korea, learned about dry cleaning from her family and opened this dry cleaning business 12 years ago. In addition to dry cleaning, they provide tailoring and free pick up and delivery services. Kim knows her customers well and they know her. All of the cleaning is actually done on the premises. The children will be able to watch the dry cleaning process, with its machinery and labor, and talk to the tailor.

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can the children find out what it means to dry clean, as opposed to wash, a garment? Can they draw the machinery or the tailor's spools of thread next to the sewing machine? Can they find Korea on the globe when they return to the classroom? (Trip Sheet—Appendix G)

**Tips on what to notice on the trip:** machines used to dry clean clothes, sewing machine, variety of threads, rack on which clothes are hung and stored.

*90<sup>th</sup> Street Pharmacy (Madison Avenue between 90<sup>th</sup> and 91<sup>st</sup> Streets).* Here we'll find an authentic, old-fashioned neighborhood business. The pharmacist and owner, Chris Bassolino, couldn't have been more enthusiastic and welcoming for a group of kindergarteners. In fact, many local schools visit him and his pharmacy on a regular basis. This pharmacy has a lot of history; it's been in business for 110 years! Chris, a true people person, has worked there for 30 years (his first and only job) and then purchased the business 4 years ago. The look and feel of this small establishment is turn of the century with its dark wood cabinets and all of the charm that time period conjures up. Chris loves what he does and how he is able to connect to and service the community. Duane Reade is directly across the street but he feels no competition because they 'sell' something very different. The 90<sup>th</sup> Street Pharmacy knows their clients, their problems and issues, each on an individual basis—no one leaves there feeling like a number. This was especially apparent to me when a patron frantically came in because and had to meet with Chris immediately. It was 1:30 P.M. and she needed an obscure medication by 3 P.M. that very same day because she was leaving town; he promised, even though he didn't have the medication in stock, he would get it for her. Not only did he solve the problem but also assuaged her fears and anxiety. The customer made a point to tell me how wonderful and special the 90<sup>th</sup> Street Pharmacy is, a real neighborhood 'find'. Chris talked about other services he believes are essential—caring for shut-ins and the disabled, delivering medicine to them and handling the coordination between the patient and the doctor when necessary. In this world of fast-paced, large drug stores, it was so heartening to happen upon this pharmacy. (I've already switched all of my prescriptions from a big store to this pharmacy!). Chris is a kind-hearted gentleman who genuinely cares about

giving back to the community. He doesn't reside in the area (he commutes in from Wayne, NJ everyday), but he can certainly provide an excellent example of caring and giving to the neighborhood—an excellent role model for the children to meet. The pharmacy is tightly packed with drugs, vitamins, hair accessories, cosmetics, and even stuffed animals. This small business employs 10 people, including but not limited to 3 pharmacists, a cosmetician, and clerks. The best day to visit the 90<sup>th</sup> Street Pharmacy is usually Tuesdays but as long as I schedule ahead of time (so there is another pharmacist on duty), Chris is ready, willing, and able to share with children who are eager to learn.

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can they find out what a pharmacist does? Who else works at a pharmacy? (Trip Sheet—Appendix H)

**Tips on what to notice on the trip:** décor (wood paneling), work area for pharmacist, variety of items sold, how items are organized and arranged in the store.

*Schatzie's Prime Meats (Madison Avenue between 87<sup>th</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> Streets).* Tony Schatzie brings humor and warmth to this neighborhood. Tony has been a butcher since he was a boy and has owned this shop for 25 years. He's another proprietor who believes in servicing his customers. He followed in his father's, grandfather's, and great-grandfather's footsteps. The family butchers were originally from Germany where they not only chopped and sold the meat but also killed the cows themselves. He "had to be a butcher...someone had to do it so his brother and sister could become psychologists!" Tony sells only the best quality meat and feels no competition from the supermarket across the street. As Tony says, "you get what you pay for!" In addition to providing the



best meat for his customers, he proudly sponsors local softball and soccer league teams. Also displayed on the walls, are pictures and thank you notes from the many local school children who had visited the butcher shop. Tony will bring the children into the back area (which is very small so only a few children at a time) to watch him chop meat and cut up a chicken. I asked him if he likes to eat meat or has had enough of it by the end of the day, but Tony likes a good steak or other meat in moderation (a few times a week). The shop opens at 8 A.M. and he would accommodate our class anytime at all.

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can the children find out the different types of meat sold? Can they explain how Tony chops it? (Trip Sheet—Appendix I)

**Tips on what to notice on the trip:** equipment and tools to chop and cut meat, variety of meat sold, pictures on wall, freezer, scale.

***Great Feet (Lexington Avenue between 84<sup>th</sup> Street and 85<sup>th</sup> Streets).*** The children will have a fun and informative visit to this children's shoe store. In addition to the large inventory of shoes, they'll find an environment that is very appealing (great decorations—on the walls and hanging from the ceilings). Gwen, the manager, is a pro at leading class trips—she's a former Kindergarten teacher who decided to go into the same business in which her father had worked (not the same store). During their visit, the children will be able to measure each other's feet, take a tour of the stock room (the back room), and see the tool that Gwen uses to reach the boxes at the very top. The store is roomy, allowing the children ample space to browse and sit and draw. Since the store is extremely busy,

Gwen asked that class trips begin before the store opens; we would need to arrive by 9 A.M so she can open the store at 9:30 A.M.

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can the children discover the different types of shoes and products sold? Can they draw a picture of the instrument used to measure their feet? (Trip Sheet—Appendix J).

**Tips on what to notice on the trip:** tools (to measure feet, to get boxes down from high shelf), variety of items sold (purses, socks, other accessories), décor (displays hanging from ceiling).

*The Bagelry (Lexington Avenue between 88<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> Streets).* When I spoke to the manager, Carlos, he was very amenable to having a group of students come to explore bagel making in the shop. We agreed that mid-morning (between breakfast and lunch) would be the best time. That way, he could chat with us, the store would be less crowded, and we could go in the back and watch bagels being made. He showed me the dough being wrapped into bagels, and the bagels turning around in the oven. In addition to bagels, beverages, muffins and frozen yogurt, they sell a large selection of spreads (e.g., cream cheese, tuna fish, lox spread) and salads.

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can the children count all of the types of bagels sold? Can they draw one part of the bagel making process? (Trip Sheet—Appendix K).

**Tips on what to notice on the trip:** variety of bagels, oven for baking bagels, dough before baked, cash register, price chart.

## **Cooking-Science and Math**

Cooking is a wonderful activity to do with children and it uses math and science skills. Before cooking or baking I'll read one of the stories from the Library Corner (e.g., Tony's Bread or The Sleeping Bread) and talk about the art of bread making. I'll make a list of all the different types of bread they can think of. Then, we'll sort the list by category (e.g., sweet, leavened-unleavened, seeded-seedless).

***Bread.*** Before baking the bread, the recipe will be copied on an experience chart (Appendix L) and reviewed with the class. Each ingredient and the directions will be discussed before starting. I'll review the measurements and show the difference between a cup and a half-cup, a teaspoon and a tablespoon, for example. As each ingredient is added, the children will be asked to predict what will happen. Some possible questions include:

- *What do you think will happen when we add the egg?*
- *What does the batter feel like?*
- *What do you think it will smell like when it's in the oven?*
- *Will the size change when we bake it? Will it get bigger or smaller? Why?*

## **Trips-II: Getting Ready and Going on the Trip**

We'll branch out and continue our explorations outside the immediate neighborhood and visit another type of market. From this trip we'll learn where some of our food comes from, meet farmers, and even make some observations about a neighborhood (a business hub) that is different from ours.

*Farmer's Market.* My trip to the Union Square Farmer's Market was enlightening beyond words. In my former career, I worked one block from the market and neither took advantage of the wonderful products there nor really took the time to 'see' the cornucopia of food, color, greenery, warmth and neighborliness. I was always in a rush to get to or from my office. What an invigorating awakening this was! A trip to a farmer's market can help children better understand where food comes from and how it is procured, rather than what is pre-packaged on a supermarket shelf, and give them an opportunity to meet some of the actual farmers and farm workers.

This greenmarket began in 1976 and is open on a lot at 130 East 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday every week, rain or shine. Derrick, the security guard was so forthcoming with information. He's worked there for 11 years and is, himself, entranced by the environment. Children from schools all over the city frequently visit the market and the management is more than willing to start the class off with a tour of the various booths and a lesson about organic products. On the day I visited I saw everything from pretzels, vegetables, cinnamon rolls, maple syrup, jams (that are all available for tasting!), breads and cookies to plants. Everything there is natural and most things come directly from the earth. We are guaranteed that fruits and vegetables are freshly harvested and well cared for, assuring high-quality produce. All items displayed (with a few exceptions) must be grown, raised or produced by the grocer. All of the farmers were willing and excited to talk to me (and potentially my students) about their trade. Mohammed, the Manager of the Farmer's Market, suggested that the children ask questions like:

- ◆ **How long it takes the farmer to grow his or her product?**

- ◆ **When are the seeds are planted?**
- ◆ **How are potatoes (for example) dug up from the ground without bruising?**

When taking the trip, I'll let the children know that Mohammed thought those were good questions to ask. Although the market has much to offer at all times of the year, Mohammed agreed that the Spring would be the optimal time to visit. Then, all of the flowers and a wider variety of fruits and vegetables are available—a true kaleidoscope of color. I realized that this market and these products could provide a rich learning experience for the children (even a curriculum all by itself). Our study, however, will serve to introduce the children to real-live farmers, a farmer's market and organic farming, meeting one of our basic needs—food. The trip sheet is geared to covering a broad spectrum of products, rather than honing in on one area in particular. This way the children will get a breadth of experiences and see the wide variety of foods, plants, and natural products. Shortly before we take the actual trip, I would revisit the market to scope out which farmer's and products will be there so that I could plan a rich and comprehensive trip for my students.

After speaking with Mohammed, I walked from booth to booth and stopped first to speak with Ken Barber and his wife. They come from the Finger Lakes (leaving at 11:30 P.M. on Thursday and returning Saturday night) so they can sell their luscious baked goods on Friday and Saturday. Some of their selections are strawberry bread, oatmeal raisin cookies, blondies, sugarless carrot cake (which they began making for their diabetic niece). (Of course, I couldn't resist a few purchases of my own!) All of the baking is done in their home. Monday through Wednesday, they bake cookies and then

Wednesday afternoon they mix dough and batter for the breads, and bake them on Thursday. Ken would love to talk to my class; he really enjoys sharing his time and skill with children. He promised that he would give us a jug of homemade grape juice (after he jokes with the kids and tells them he 'stomps on the grapes with his feet to mash them'!) for the children to enjoy. Can they guess how the grape juice is really made? Can they count the number of baked goods available to buy?

Migliorelli Farms from upstate NY sells all natural vegetables. The drivers leave the farm at 2:30 A.M. to get to the farmer's market. I watched as a class from the Brick Church School carefully investigated the Japanese turnips, beets, bok choy, dill, fennel, celery, kale, mustard, radishes and French radishes. So many different colors!

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can the children identify the vegetables? Can they draw what they see? Can they find out how the vegetables are grown?

**Trip Preparation.** I'll ask the students if they have ever been to a farmer's market, and then lead a discussion with questions that include:

- *What is a farmer's market?*
- *What do you think could be sold at a farmer's market?*
- *What is organic farming?*
- *What would you like to ask the farmers about a farmer's market?*

This discussion will continue after the trip as well. Each child will have a copy of the trip sheet (Trip Sheet--Appendix M) and be assigned to a small group for the trip. Before we leave the classroom, we will review all of the questions on the trip sheet and

talk about how they will go about finding out the information. I will let them know that their observations and having a good time are key to a successful trip and that completing every last question on the trip sheet is secondary. For some children, the assignment might be a little daunting even though I've tried to develop an assignment that is manageable for the majority of students in the class. Since I don't want any child to feel anxious about the process, I want to reinforce the point that being alert and capturing their observations in their minds while on the trip is equally acceptable to writing and drawing all of the details. When they need help reading or writing, the adult with their group will provide support. It's important to keep the groups small so the children will have clear visibility, be able to hear the farmer and get the adult help they'll need to complete the trip sheet. Once we arrive at the market, we will again meet as a group to review what we're going to do and make sure there are no questions. I will point out various areas such as the flower and plant section, baked goods, vegetables and the management area. Then each group, consisting of one adult and a few children, will walk around the market to get a sense of what is there. Once the adult in charge feels that the group is ready to engage on a deeper level, they will begin to hunt for the answers for the trip sheet by gathering information from the various vendors and exploring all that is out at the Union Square market. Adults should help the children to investigate with all five senses as they cover the entire market.

**Tips on what to notice on the trip:** flowers, plants, farmers, vegetables, crafts, baked goods, trucks.

- **Trip Follow-Up.** Review findings; share and compare. Each child will make a torn-paper collage that represents what they found most interesting at the Farmer's

Market. We can also compare and contrast the Farmer's Market to Food Emporium. I'll ask them specifically how is it different from and similar to the Food Emporium?

### **Music**

I'll choose a number of songs (preferably those the ones about the vegetables you saw and discussed on your visits to the markets—potato, tomato, cabbage, beets) from *Anna's Garden Songs* by Mary Q. Steele, post them on chart paper for everyone to read ensemble. The children will tap out the beat of the rhythms using a variety of percussion instruments.

### **Cooking/Science/Math**

While at the farmer's market, we'll purchase an assortment of (see recipe for vegetable soup). The children will sort the vegetables by categories they choose (e.g., color, size, shape). Then they will count the vegetables in each category.

We'll review the recipe for vegetable soup (Appendix N) and make a batch together (in small groups). We'll discuss ingredients and make predictions. They will slice, dice, and stir the soup, and then we will all enjoy our creation. We'll also use these seeds to continue our Science study of seeds and planting.

On another day, we can bake soft pretzels like they sell at the market (Appendix O). The children can shape the pretzels into a number or the first letter of their names.



## **Dramatic Play/Blocks/Art**

I'll ask for volunteers to build a stand like they saw at the farmer's market. All other students can choose different items (e.g., vegetables, flowers, muffins) from the farmer's market to create in papier-mache that will then be painted with tempera paints. The children can then recreate buying and selling products at a market.

## **Trips III: Getting Ready and Going on the Trips**

### **Literature/Movement**

I'll read *In My Neighborhood: Firefighters* by Paulette Bourgeois and Kim LaFave to begin a discussion about firefighters.

The following poem will be written on a large chart. The students will do the actions as we read the poem together.

*Ten brave firemen,  
Sleeping in a row,  
Ding goes the bell,  
Down the pole they go.  
Off on the engine,  
Oh, oh, oh.  
This is the fire engine,  
This is the hose,  
The firemen work very fast,  
When the siren blows.  
Up goes the ladder  
Out goes the hose,  
The fire is out,  
And that's the way it goes? (Author Unknown)*

We'll discuss what the children know about firefighters and post their responses on a chart.

### **Science Investigation**

**Extinguishing a Fire.** Using the directions in Attachment P, I'll demonstrate how to fight a fire. (Before doing this experiment, check to be sure that burning a candle is not against the school's fire safety code.)

### **Literature**

I'll read **The Post Office Book: Mail and How it Moves** by Gail Gibbons, and then we'll discuss what they know about postal workers and how the postal system works. Post responses on a chart. During this portion of the Unit, I'll hang a chart highlighting interesting facts about mail carriers and the postal system, and add to it each day at morning meeting. This will be done prior to actually visiting the local Post Office.

#### **Did You Know.....About the Postal System?**

- ✓ Reindeer used to carry mail in Alaska.
- ✓ Camels carried mail during the Civil War.
- ✓ Stamp collecting is the most popular hobby in the world.

### **Trips--III**

**Preparation.** For the two upcoming trips, I'll follow the same pre-trip procedures outlined previously in the study.

of Worksong (see Bibliography for highlights). Each child will add a page about some type of special community worker and illustrate.

*Trip: Fire Station (East 85th Street between Lexington and Third Avenues).* I originally took this trip before the events of September 11, 2001 changed the world and when a trip to the local fire station was interesting yet slightly perfunctory. The emphasis and focus of the trip and questions will probably be more poignant than I had originally planned.

Lt. Wolfe is a pro at giving a tour of the Fire Station to local school children as was evidenced by all of the thank you notes and posters hanging on the walls from local school children. Although he couldn't guarantee he and the other fire fighters would be there when we arrive for our scheduled appointment (they can't wait around if duty calls!), we agreed that Friday would be a good day of the week to visit. His typical agenda with the children begins with a quick review of fire safety rules (e.g., how to prevent fires and how important fire drills are) and then he's off to the fire trucks. Luckily, Lt. Wolfe is willing to let all of the children actually climb on board the trucks. I imagine this will delight them beyond imagination. Then the children will look at and then try on some of the fireproof clothing the fire fighters must wear for protection, such as boots, coat, and air mask. They'll be surprised at how heavy these things actually are! Lt. Wolfe will explain that the water to put out the fires comes from a fire hydrant and we'll look at one on the street. He'll review other equipment such as ladders and fire extinguishers, and, of course, answer any questions the children have about fire fighters, the Fire Station, or preventing fire.

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can the children draw a fire truck or fire hydrant? Can they identify what the fire fighters wear for protection? (Trip Sheet—Attachment Q)

**Tips on what to notice on this trip:** fire truck, fire hose, safety uniform, thank you notes from children who visited the fire station.

***Trip: Post Office (Yorkville Station--Third Avenue between 90<sup>th</sup> and 91<sup>st</sup> Streets).***

My visit to the Post Office was remarkable. I met three lovely people (truck driver, cashier and mail carrier), so willing to talk to me and share information (spending one hour with me). This location and the Gracie Station at 85<sup>th</sup> between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues are both busy giving tours to children every day. The mail carrier, Elliott, I talked with has been working at the Post Office for 35 years and will retire just as soon as his youngest son (of 3) finishes college. Yorkville and Gracie Stations are both annexes of the larger NYC Post Offices (GPO at 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Morgan at 27<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue). All of the mail is delivered to the major Post Offices and then sent to the annexes. The machinery and postmarking is done at the main locations, not at the individual annexes. A postal driver delivers the mail between an annex and the main office. Outgoing mail is collected from the neighborhood mailboxes and taken by an annex driver to the main office. At the Yorkville annex, the workers do manual sorting and one worker has 'light duties', one of which is giving tours for school children. The Yorkville location very recently moved to its new location because they needed more space. Now they have a retail section, with special stamps and stationary and a separate cashier. Typically the school children find the trucks the most interesting part of the tour, so they are invited to sit inside. The Post Office is actually in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Elliott suggested that we arrive before 11 A.M. because the carriers leave after that and we

wouldn't want the children to miss seeing the sorting and the trucks. We'll use this opportunity to actually mail our thank-you letter to Lt. Wolfe at the Fire Station.

**Leading questions for the teacher that are covered on the trip sheet.** Can the children identify some of the basic postal services? Can they draw some of the stamps that are displayed in the retail section or the carriers actually sorting the mail? Can they explain why we need the Post Office? (Trip Sheet—Attachment R)

Before going on this trip, I'll refer back to our School Study from earlier in the year and review what we learned about how mail is handled at our school. When we return from the trip to the Post Office, we'll revisit our mailroom and make comparisons of similarities and differences.

**Tips on what to notice on this trip:** mail truck, post office boxes, different merchandise sold, stamp vending machine, clerks, displays of new stamps, bins of mail.

### **Art/Blocks/Dramatic Play**

**Make Stamps.** I'll give children paper with boxes drawn (indicating the shape and size of stamps) and ask them to design a variety of stamps to be used in the classroom post office. They can then write letters to other class members as well as children in other classes. They'll make envelopes, insert letters and glue on stamps. I'll assign children to the role of school mail carrier.

### **Literature**

I'll read **Worksong** by Ruth Wright Paulsen, a book that beautifully illustrates a wide range of workers, and have the class do group writing to create their own adaptation

## Unit 4: Transportation

Our neighborhood walks will give the children a chance to see various types of transportation on the street and in the air. Many of the children ride buses to school, drive in a car to their country homes, and have flown in airplanes to vacation spots. They know that transportation takes them and other people from one place to another—as close as from one neighborhood to another and as far as from one planet to another. As a result, the children have had good exposure to different modes of transportation. In addition, from our interviews of all of the people we've met so far, we learned that the products in the stores and markets were brought there either on trucks, boats, and/or airplanes, to name a few. Children will solidify their learning that transportation can unite neighborhoods and people; transportation facilitates interdependence.

### Discussion

I'll read *Richard Scarry's Cars and Trucks and Things That Go* (by Richard Scarry) to kick off the discussion about transportation, and then ask the class:

- *What is transportation?*
- *Why do we need it?*

Together the class will fill in a chart that asks them to identify air, land, and water transportation and sort them into the appropriate column.

### Types of Transportation

Air	Water	Land
Airplane	Canoe	Car
Space ship	Submarine	Bus
Helicopter	Ship	Truck

## **Math**

**Graphing.** We'll make a graph of how everyone gets to school. I'll create a felt board with the following categories: walk, car, taxi, bus, subway, school bus. Each child can make his or her own felt strip with his or her name and then place it in the appropriate column. We'll count the totals and discuss the findings. (The children in my school come to school in a variety of ways (see above) and the mode of transportation can change from day to day.) This can become part of the morning ritual.

## **Trips**

**Bus Depot (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue at 126<sup>th</sup> Street).** I spoke with Cornell Rogers (212-360-0434) about the prospect of bringing my students to the depot and he said that although they are currently under heightened security (as a result of September 11<sup>th</sup>), with ample warning, we could visit the depot. He promised to call me back after checking with the Depot Manager (John Kennedy) and he did with a full agenda for our visit. After taking the M15 bus (up 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue) to the last stop on its route, we'll:

- visit the training room where equipment and personnel will be introduced and questions will be answered;
- enter a bus and each have a chance to sit behind the wheel;
- operate the wheelchair lift;
- meet the Dispatch Supervisor and make announcements over the loud speaker on the bus;



- tour the maintenance department, learn where the engine is and see a bus being serviced;
- watch the money being vacuumed into a vault, showing us that no human hands touch the money;
- sit on a bus as it goes through a bus wash; and
- learn about the differences between a regular and an articulated bus.

Before we go on this trip, I'll provide some facts for my students. Even though children in this age group do not comprehend the reality of these numbers, there are many children who are excited by the statistics and enjoy hearing about them.

#### **Did you know?**

- ✓ NYC buses don't accept paper money, because coins and tokens are removed from fareboxes by giant vacuum hoses. This process would shred bills.
- ✓ Bus maintenance involves more than 7,000 separate parts.
- ✓ Buses travel about 107 million miles annually—the equivalent of going to Mars and back.
- ✓ Buses are housed, washed and maintained at 18 depots. Buses are painted at the Crosstown and East New York paint shops.
- ✓ The system's 4,373 buses carry 2.2 million people daily and 666 million annually.

We will also prepare a list of what we'd like to learn on this trip and bring these questions with us on the trip to ask when we are in the training room. The staff at the Depot seems prepared and eager for our trip and I anticipate that the students will have fun and learn a lot that would otherwise be hidden (e.g., how the money is removed from the bus). Because of the complexity of the physical space and the need to pay careful attention, we will not take a trip sheet with us on this trip but instead will call on our

powers of observation. When we return to the classroom, we will discuss what we saw, we learned, what surprised us most, and then together compose a thank you note to the staff at the Bus Depot.

***Arts for Transit Trip.*** The MTA has commissioned one of the biggest art galleries in New York. The permanent art that adorns our subway stations adds beauty and a sense of refinement and comfort and establishes a unique identity for each station. Over sixty works are already in place and fifty more are in progress. The MTA is attempting to bring new works into the subway system, like its recent addition at Lexington and 59<sup>th</sup> Street, entitled “Blooming”. Much of the original ceramic and mosaic ornament remains and new works are being added. By looking at the website ([www.nyct.org/mta/aft](http://www.nyct.org/mta/aft)) for samples of the stunning artwork, I will choose with my students which stations to visit and we will then make a trip on the NYC subway system, with camera in hand.

***Post Trip Activity.*** The day after our subway visits, the children will work in small groups (two to three children) to create their own murals that we will display on the walls of our school. We’ll also compose text for signs to accompany the murals. On each sign, we’ll include digital photographs of the original subway artwork to “educate” the audience.

***Other trips--***Depending on interest level, I will consider planning a trip to the East River to look at the various types of boats on the river, cross on a pedestrian bridge over the highway, and talk about water transportation. After discussing what we see on the

River, the children would each draw one boat and we would research the various types of boats when we got back to the classroom.

Another possible trip is *New York's Transit Museum* located in Brooklyn Heights. At the time I am writing this curriculum study the museum is closed for renovation and is not planning to reopen until 2003. During these renovations, the Museum is continuing to organize exhibits and offer programs at their Gallery Annex at Grand Central Terminal in Manhattan. I found their website, [www.nyct.org/museum/general.htm](http://www.nyct.org/museum/general.htm), to be very helpful in providing good background information about the New York City Transit system as well as practical information about the museum.

### **Science Investigations**

**What Floats?** In this activity the children will experiment with what floats and what sinks by placing objects one at a time into water. I'll ask:

- *Why do some things float and some sink?*
- *If you had to use one of these objects as a boat, which would you choose?*

**Materials:** cork, nail, rock, pumice, paper, cardboard, soap, plastic cup, sieve, leaf, straw, sponge, foam, wood, paper cup, yarn, string, thread.

**Preparation:** Fill a tank or large tub with water. Put the collection of objects in a plastic container set out on a towel.

**Make Boats.** Each student will choose a piece of paper and cut it into a square or triangle, then tape it to the toothpick to make a sail. They will stick the toothpick into the piece of wood and put it into the water.

- *Does it float? Why?*
- *In what ways can you make your boat move?*

**Materials:** balsa wood, round toothpicks, craft knife, small pieces of cellophane or colored paper, tape.

**Preparation:** With a craft knife, cut a small piece of balsa wood for each student.

## **Art**

**Transportation Models.** The children will make models of various kinds of transportation, and then we will set up a classroom display and invite other classes to come and see the models we've made.

**Materials:** egg carton, milk cartons, paper towel rolls, tissue boxes, cereal/pasta boxes, foil, construction paper, markers, foam pieces, string, straws.

**Suggestions:** bus, car, train, space ship, sailboat

## **Unit 5: Different Kinds of Neighborhoods**

Now it's time to discuss in more depth different kinds of neighborhoods and environments—city vs. country and different city neighborhoods. Neighborhoods, as most of the children have already observed, are not all alike but share many things in spite of their differences.

We'll first read books and talk about the difference among city, country, and suburban neighborhoods, and then further explore city neighborhoods, venturing to Astoria, Queens. While there we'll focus on what we find in Astoria as well as in our school neighborhood, and what makes each unique.

Astoria is a neighborhood with a diverse ethnic mix. In this neighborhood, the cultures of the East and West co-exist comfortably side by side. There is a sizable Greek community alongside a growing Indian, Bangladeshi, and Korean population. This is the sort of neighborhood first and second generation immigrants typically have settled in and it is densely packed. Astoria was first settled in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by German immigrants. It is located at the edge of Queens, just over the Triborough Bridge. After World War II, Greek immigrants began to settle in Astoria, and for decades this neighborhood has been known as the center of Hellenic culture in the New York area. During the 1980's, Greek Americans represented the largest group of first generation immigrants in Astoria. But in recent years many have moved out of Astoria. Nevertheless, portions of Ditmars Boulevard and 31<sup>st</sup> Street, do reflect the strong Hellenic pride of those Greeks who remain in Astoria.

I chose to explore Astoria for a number of reasons—the multi-cultural community that lives together and shares their traditions and heritages, its proximity to Manhattan

and the view it provides, the museums, and last, but not least, I had never been there and wanted to experience something new, as my students might. I'm focusing on the Greek culture in particular because I had heard how vibrant the culture still is, despite the migration out. Also, years ago I visited Greece so I thought I might find a connection and be able to make it a more meaningful experience by having previously seen Athens, Crete, Rhodes and Santorini first hand. To prepare for an adventure in Queens, I suggest reading Patchwork of Dreams: Voices from the Heart of the New America (Ethnic Diversity Series), by Morty Sklar and Joseph Barbato, which is a collection of stories, poems, essays, dramas, photographs and interviews from Queens. This book is both a celebration of diversity and an acknowledgement that all cultures share many universal truths (e.g., family, home).

#### Library Corner

- Neighborhood Odes—Gary Soto
- Tar Beach—Faith Ringgold
- The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse—Lorinda Bryan Cauley

#### Literature/Language

To begin the discussion of different kinds of neighborhoods and introduce the concepts of urban and rural, I'll read *The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse* (by Lorinda Bryan Cauley), a book that will tell about life in a city and in the country. After reading, we'll talk about the way the mouse felt about the other mouse's home. I'll try to help students understand that neither the city nor the country is a better place to live, yet both mice felt most comfortable in their own homes because they knew what to expect and

enjoy there. Each type of neighborhood had many good things to offer, and each held many dangers as well.

### **Art/Dramatic Play**

***Make puppets and put on a puppet show.*** I'll invite the class to make puppets of the characters in the story and retell the story through a puppet show. They may want to create scenery for the puppet show by drawing pictures that show the country and the city.

### **Literature/Language**

I'll read ***Tar Beach*** by Faith Ringgold and ***Neighborhood Odes*** by Gary Soto to give the children the flavor of other neighborhoods, and ask them to draw their interpretation of either ***Tar Beach*** or one of the poems from ***Neighborhood Odes***. Then they will either write or dictate what is special about the neighborhood in their drawing.

### **Astoria Trips**

***Impressionistic Trip.*** After researching Astoria on the Internet and speaking to an acquaintance who is Greek and lives in Astoria, I made a list of stores, streets and sites to see and set out on my own adventure. As I drove over the Triborough Bridge, I was a little anxious about getting lost but found it very easy to find my way and even park my car on the street! I spent many hours walking, driving and absorbing this neighborhood. Each block seems to have it's own personality and charm. Upon reflection, I decided that the best approach for introducing Astoria to my students would be to 1) share pictures and talk about my trip to Greece to set some cultural context, and then 2) invite my friend

from Astoria to my classroom to speak about her culture and her neighborhood (including why her family chose to live there and what she finds special about Astoria). She loves to bake and said she'd bring in a potpourri of dishes, discussing the ingredients as the children have a chance to sample the food. After our trip, we will try our own cooking.

Then we'll plan our first trip to 31<sup>st</sup> Street where we'll find many of the Greek markets and shops. In addition to getting a feel for another neighborhood, our mission on this trip will be to shop for the ingredients to cook our own Greek feast.

Our school bus will first take us to 31<sup>st</sup> Street and 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue---Titan Market (25-56 31<sup>st</sup> Street), which is the Greek market and has it's own parking lot. The building is painted white with bright blue trim, reminiscent of buildings on Santorini, and is totally Greek inside. All products are imported from Greece, including cheese, beer, juice, and soaps. Titan also sells Greek souvenirs, Greek books and newspapers. After we walk around the store, look at the products and observe the difference between our alphabet and the Greek alphabet, we'll purchase some items on our shopping list. Next the school bus will take us to 31<sup>st</sup> Street and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (because it's a dangerous walk crossing a major highway) where we'll stop in Christos Market (a specialty shop with Greek delicacies, an olive bar with over 20 varieties of olives, cheeses, and crackers. The background music on the radio is Greek. We'll make a few more purchases for our Greek 'feast' at school. Within a few blocks, we'll also be able to visit a fruit and vegetable store (A & B Trading), Astoria Flower Mart and stop for a treat at Lefkos Pirogos Café (an authentic Greek pastry shop). Again using our five senses to experience this neighborhood, the children will most likely notice a number of differences and



similarities to our school neighborhood. We'll end our walking tour, a few blocks down 31<sup>st</sup> Street (at Astoria Boulevard) where we'll meet the bus at Hoyt Playground.

**Things to notice on this trip (and post trip discussion):**

- ***Differences***--overhead subway tracks (versus underground tracks in our school neighborhood), rumble of the subway directly overhead, no high rise buildings, some shops painted colors like buildings on Greek Islands, narrower streets
- ***Similarities***--markets and stores that meet our needs just like in our own neighborhood, certain stores (CVS, Starbucks), families walking on the streets, a playground, many cars.

***Post Trip Activity--Cooking.*** We'll explore the websites [www.eatgreektonight.com](http://www.eatgreektonight.com) and [www.ellada.com](http://www.ellada.com) to find a few Greek recipes we'd like to try out. From these recipes we'll make our shopping list of ingredients that will be purchased during our first trip to Astoria. We'll try to cook an appetizer (e.g., Greek Salad), an entrée (e.g., Cheese Pie), and dessert (e.g., dumplings). Some suggested recipes can be found in Appendix S. In the neighborhood spirit, we'll invite another class to our Greek feast.

***American Museum of the Moving Image.*** This museum is located on the site of the largest and busiest motion picture and television production facility between London and Hollywood. Directly across the street are the Kaufman-Astoria Studios where feature films and TV shows are filmed today. In 1985, the Astoria Motion Picture and Television Foundation was reincorporated as the American Museum of the Moving Image. The Museum is dedicated to educating the public about the art, history,

technique, and technology of film, television, and digital media, and to examining their impact on our culture and society. Here I found an amazing collection of artifacts and exhibits.

Before we take another visit to Astoria, I'll tell my students about this Museum and its history. We'll speculate why this Museum is located on this site and what we might see and learn while there. To find information about hours, location and exhibits, either call the Museum at (718) 784-0077 or visit their website [www.ammi.org](http://www.ammi.org).

The Museum is small and very manageable. There are demonstrations hourly in the animation, film editing, computer-generated imaging and kinoscope sections. The Museum has only three floors but they are packed with fun. On the top floor, we'll find Animation, Film Editing and Computer Generated Imaging. The exhibits are extremely interactive, and with adult help for reading the directions, the children can work the chroma key, layering images (including their own) on a screen (just like the weather reports on television), do a little sound effects editing, pick a scene from a movie (e.g., Babe) and do dialogue replacement so they hear their own voices in the movie, visit the digital animation stand and see how animated films were originally made, learn about video flipbooks and actually make their own, and learn about a zoetrope (a Victorian optical toy). On the second floor there is a photo gallery of movie stars and exhibits of wigs and special effects make up. The children can enter a booth where they can see their own image wearing costumes from famous movies or television shows (e.g., Marilyn Monroe's dress, I Dream of Jeannie's costume). There is a large display of television and movie products and memorabilia (e.g., Shirley Temple doll, Archie Bunker card game, Batman lunchboxes) that might appeal to the nostalgic side of the adults

accompanying us on the trip. On one side of this floor there is a small theater with an Egyptian décor—Tut's Fever—in which they show short, silent films throughout the day. Last but not least, on the first floor, there are a myriad of video games for the children to play (we'll spend our last few minutes there.) Some of the displays might be too 'sophisticated' for the younger children but all in all, I think it's worth the trip, especially if enough adults join us on the adventure to help out.

**Things to notice on this trip:** all of the exhibits and demonstrations, voice dubbing, film editing, Tut's Fever Movie Palace, special effects, making an animated short, all computer-based interactive experiences.

***Socrates Sculpture Park.*** This Park is a 4.5 acre public waterfront sculpture park that is open from 10 a.m. to sunset, daily and is one of the few places in New York City where large-scale, outdoor sculpture can be enjoyed. The selection of work is constantly changing in this multi-media modern art showcase. This Park was a former illegal dumpsite and required a year of work to clear and landscape before the first installation was possible and the first exhibition was in 1986. The space is ideal for children to run, play, touch (they are not restricted from touching the artworks), explore and then enjoy a wonderful view of the Manhattan skyline. On this trip we'll take a picnic lunch, and paper and pencils and watercolors for the children to sketch and paint the scenic view of the city in which our school neighborhood exists. We'll try to identify any buildings that might be familiar and again discuss what we notice about the buildings in Astoria vis a vis the buildings that comprise the Manhattan skyline. We'll take a photograph of each display to use in our post-trip discussion.

**Things to notice on this trip:** sculptures and what they are made of, view of Manhattan, view of Astoria, open space.

*Post Trip Activity—Wire Sculpture.* Using pipe cleaners and coated wires, the children will twist and bend wires to create structures. Some children might choose to use the photographs as a guide to replicate what they saw at Socrates Sculpture Park while others might choose to invent their own design. We'll use either a small piece of clay or styrofoam for a base if a student wants his/her wire to stand up. Some students might prefer to staple the wires to a piece of cardboard or wood and others might choose to make flat wire drawings.

## **Unit 6: Where We Live—Our NYC Buildings**

Now we'll narrow our focus a little bit and take a good look at the buildings in which we live. This Unit will also reinforce the home school connection we've established earlier in the school year. We've spent some time looking at the buildings around the school and in Astoria, noticing the color, size, and adornments so we have a richer vocabulary to use in doing our own observations. This Unit gives children an opportunity to learn more about what they see everyday and to share and compare with the class.

### **Studying our Homes**

I'll explain that the class is going to talk about where each of the students lives. In order to do that, they will be expected to complete a homework assignment with their families (Attachment T). They will have two weeks to complete the work. (The assignment should be given out two weeks before the actual Unit will begin.)

### **Math/Graphing/Counting**

When the homework is returned, the class will compile the results together on a large piece of paper (Attachment U). Each child can report on his or her findings and the entire chart should be filled in. This chart will then serve as the source of data for the following activities.

**Activity 1:** Each child should ‘build’ his or her building with unifix cubes. For example, if his or her apartment building has 18 floors, she or he would count out 18 cubes and connect them to represent the height of the building. These ‘buildings’ can be taped to a chart—*Number of Floors in our NYC Buildings*, with each child writing the number of floors and his or her name atop the building on the chart. I’ll lead a discussion about more and less—

- *Who has the least number of floors in their building? The most?*

**Activity 2:** We’ll graph the number of windows in their living rooms. The graph will show the number of students who have each number of windows; the grid should be prepared ahead of time. Using the big chart as a reference, each child will come up to the front of the group and draw a window (to represent the number of windows in his/her living room) in the appropriate column. I’ll talk about graphs that display 2 types of information, and solicit ideas about why, for example, if there are 15 students in the class, the Number of Students Axis only goes up to 6. (Because it’s the most number of students with a specific number of windows). These are advanced concepts and will serve as a challenge to those children who are eager for an intellectual push. The basic graphing and participation should, however, engage all of them. When the graph is complete, I’ll ask the students to do a drawing of what they see when they look out their windows. For example, do they see other buildings (and what do they look like), trees, the sky, people, the street, birds? The students should write or dictate a description of what they’ve drawn.

## Unit 7: Central Park

A visit to Central Park can be a very pleasant experience. There are so many things and places from which to choose. Since the school is so close to the Park, we must take advantage of what is right outside our door. Although many of the children have been to the Park, mostly to playgrounds, few of them will be aware of the myriad of activities and experiences available right in the middle of New York City. To fully study Central Park, it would require a year-long curriculum which would resonate most deeply with older children, possibly 5<sup>th</sup> graders. This does not mean, however, that there aren't wonderful, rich areas of study for this age group. This curriculum intends to give them an introduction to some of the delights of the Park, other than playgrounds.

### Library Corner

- Central Park—Raymond Carroll (adult resource book)
- My Town—Rebecca Treays

### Discussion

While having a picnic lunch in Central Park, we'll talk about what we know about Central Park:

- *What types of places have you seen in the Park?*
- *What type of things can you do in the Park?*
- *What would we like to learn about the Park?*
- *Who takes care of the Park?*
- *Who works in the Park and what do you think they do?*

## **Computer Tour**

With small groups of children (about 4 at a time), I'll access the website: [www.centralpark.org](http://www.centralpark.org) for a virtual tour of the park. We'll 'visit' Belvedere Castle, the Reservoir, the Zoo, the Carousel, Alice in Wonderland Statue and other places that the children mentioned or the class will be visiting in person. We'll also take a look at various maps on the website.

## **Discussion**

I'll design a basic fact sheet about Central Park to display and add to. During morning meeting, a new highlight of the day can be added. Some ideas include:

### **Did You Know ..... About Central Park?**

- ✓ The park has 22 playgrounds
- ✓ There is a castle in the Park.
- ✓ When the Park was going to be created, 1, 600 people were living on the land that became the Park.
- ✓ The work to build Central Park began over 100 years ago.
- ✓ There is a carousel in the Park.
- ✓ Sheep grazed in the Park until the 1930's.

## **Trips**

**Preparation.** I'll send a letter home (Attachment V) to families notifying them about this Unit and the upcoming trip schedule (Attachment W), and follow the same sign up procedures as described at the beginning of this study.



**Trip 1: Zoo and the Delacorte Clock.** The Central Park Wildlife Center, is a very popular attraction in NYC. With creatures ranging from rain forest denizens such as toucans, piranhas, and monkeys to cooler-climate inhabitants such as pandas, sea lions, polar bears and penguins, the children will be in awe. The children will especially enjoy the sea lions feeding. It's quite a performance! After touring the zoo, the class will stop under the brick arcade between the main zoo area and the Children's Zoo to see and hear the Delacorte musical clock. Every hour and half hour, two bronze monkeys bang their hammers against the great bell. Then to either the tune of "Three Blind Mice" or "The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers", six other bronze animals dance and play their way around the clock. (Trip Sheet—Attachment X)

### **Music/Movement**

The children will re-enact the Delacorte Clock, with each child taking turns miming the various animals, spinning, and humming.

**Trip 2: Belvedere Castle and Nature Observatory.** The castle itself is fascinating and an interesting building to discuss after the class has spent so much time looking at more modern buildings in the school and their home neighborhoods. The castle will serve as an interesting contrast. As the group is walking around, discuss the similarities and differences in the neighborhood buildings and the Belvedere Castle. While standing on one of the terraces, ask the children to draw a picture of their favorite view. After they complete the illustrations, we'll take a tour of the Nature Observatory to see exhibits on wildlife, the turtle tanks, fossil replicas, plant specimen, telescopes and microscopes. The

children will be able to observe nature through the telescopes and microscopes themselves.

**Interview an Urban Park Ranger.** The uniformed park rangers help visitors understand and enjoy the natural resources of the Park, as well as assist with enforcing park rules and regulations. In addition to providing educational programs, they provide tours of the park and operate the nature centers. Their office is located at Belvedere Castle, so an interview with a Ranger can be scheduled at the same time as the Belvedere Castle visit. The children can ask questions about the park, its safety, maintenance, and what it's like to be an Urban Park Ranger! Call (212) 427-4040 to set up an appointment.

(Trip Sheet—Attachment Y)

**Trip 3: Conservatory Garden.** Often referred to as the Crown Jewels of the Park, the Conservatory Garden (5<sup>th</sup> and 106<sup>th</sup> Streets) is a true sensory experience. In addition to the magnificent flowers and trees, the Central Garden has a beautiful fountain around which the children can sit to complete their assignment—a watercolor painting of the garden. I took this trip with the 4's from a New York City Summer Camp and it worked very well. The gardens are a calm haven in the middle of our buzzing city. An adult will then write down what each child notices with each of his or her five senses. Possible responses include:

- ◆ ***Seeing: flowers, lots of color, water shooting out of a fountain***
- ◆ ***Hearing: birds chirping, the wind***
- ◆ ***Feeling: soft grass, flower petals***
- ◆ ***Smelling: the scent of different flowers, perfume***

◆ *Tasting: the air*

(Trip Sheet—Attachment Z)

**Art**

**Mural.** At the end of the Central Park Unit, I'll gather the children together and discuss all that they've learned and seen. Together we'll choose one of the visits and paint a mural that shows their own interpretations of what they saw. We'll discuss in advance what should be included on the mural and I'll assign children as appropriate. They can draw people, vehicles, pets, etc., cut them out and paste them to the mural. For those who aren't drawing representationally, I'll give them an opportunity to work on the background. Each child will have a chance to add to the mural.

Perhaps old buildings have just been replaced or remodeled, or a run-down park was recently landscaped and made beautiful with flowers and trees.

I'll read *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney and discuss how the contributions of one individual can make a difference, explaining that people of all ages and in all parts of the world can do something to make a difference in their community. They might do something for the environment, such as planting flowers and trees. They might do something for others, such as contributing food to a soup kitchen or caring for stray animals.

We'll discuss other ways people can help the community. Kindergartners and First Graders are eager to discover the world of adults and work beyond the bounds of family and school and can be expected to engage independently in self-care, other care, and environmental care activities (Readdick and Douglas, 2000).

I'll ask how we can help those who need help, those without sufficient food or shelter, the elderly who are lonely, or those who are too ill to take care of themselves. The children should start thinking about what we as a class might do for the community. What does it mean to be a member of a community? We'll complete the following chart together (likely responses from children are included):

<b>Ways People Help the Community</b>	<b>Ways People Hurt the Community</b>
Volunteering	Littering
Recycling	Stealing
Visiting the sick and elderly	Being selfish
Donating money	Destroying things
Donating food	Wasting food

## **Art**

**Illustration.** Students will draw themselves doing something to make a difference in the community. The good deed can be something they can do today or when they are adults. They should talk about the end result—the actual contribution, and add their words to the drawing.

## **Language Arts**

**Guided Writing—Once Upon a Time.** As a group we will write a fairy tale about someone who moved into a community and changed that community forever. The story may be set anywhere in the world. I'll first explain the assignment and ask for ideas for the setting, main character, and plot. Each child should add something to the fairy tale.

## **Extension Activities**

**Honor people who help the community.** I'll create a bulletin board to honor those people the children select as deserving of recognition for their help in the community and school (e.g., custodians, any of the people we visited on trips, our postal carrier, the school nurse). Each student should choose someone they feel has truly helped the community in some way, draw a picture of the person and dictate a description of what that person has done to deserve recognition. This project will be completed over a period of time, as each child makes his or her determination.

**Sharing Stories.** I'll encourage students to think about and share stories about helpful things they see being done as well as ways they, themselves, are community helpers. This type of sharing will become part of daily sharing. We'll attempt to invite

Guest Presenters to our classroom to talk about community service. For example, I'd start with the manager of my apartment building who is an active volunteer for the Red Cross and branch out from there. The Director of the Yorkville Common Pantry is a parent in my school and I'd ask her to talk about how the Pantry functions and manages to feed hundreds of people. The Guest Presenters would be able to share their own personal stories about how they became deeply involved in the causes they support.

**Make a community pledge.** Children can really flourish when allowed to enter the world of real work and meaningful actions that surrounds them. Each student will think of one positive action she or he could carry out to improve or contribute to the community in some way; and, a way the class, collectively can do the same. To assist the students in making the individual and group decisions, we'll brainstorm ideas together.

Examples include:

- ◆ *Walk a neighbor's dog*
- ◆ *Rake up leaves*
- ◆ *Sweep sidewalks*
- ◆ *Visit an elderly, sick or lonely friend*
- ◆ *Pick up litter*
- ◆ *Help plant flowers to make a community more beautiful*
- ◆ *Collect cans of food for a soup kitchen (Yorkville Common Pantry is a good local one.)*
- ◆ *Do one kind thing for another person every day*
- ◆ *Donate toys or clothing*

I'll keep a log of individual and group accomplishments and celebrate at the end of the study Block Party.

### **Trips**

I'll plan a trip based on the children's interests and reactions to the idea of community service. Two possibilities include a visit to the Yorkville Common Pantry (go to this soup kitchen, donate food and help with its preparation) or a visit with elderly people (go to a senior citizen's social group and perhaps sing for them). Once I'm able to determine in what they are most interested and eager, I'll take the trip myself, gather pertinent information, make contacts and schedule a trip. I will meet with the class for the pre-trip discussion and trip sheet preparation.

## **Unit 10: Culminating Unit—Block Party**

By the end of this Study, the children will have a lot of work completed. The culminating project—neighborhood display made from construction will require parental support and involvement, both in supplying materials and supervising small construction teams.

To celebrate and showcase all of the completed work, the class will host a block party for families. I'll send an invitation to the families (Attachment AA) for the Block Party, a breakfast celebration from 8:30 A.M. until 9:30 A.M. The room will be set up like a museum exhibit.

### **Art**

**Neighborhood Display.** The children will create the neighborhood; construct the buildings and make a mural. Each child will construct a neighborhood building, either his or her apartment building, our school, one of the museums, or another choice. Using boxes (old cereal boxes, milk cartons, shoe boxes, etc.), we'll construct the buildings, paint with appropriate colors and add adornments (windows, awnings, gates). When all of the buildings are 'ready', we'll paint a skyline mural (evening or daylight depending which the children choose, detailed with sun or stars, airplanes, clouds, birds, whatever!). The mural will be hung in the hallway above the lockers; the buildings will be placed on top of the lockers (about 5 ½ feet off the ground) and against the skyline. The neighborhood in the hallway will provide the entrance to the Kindergarten Neighborhood Exhibit inside the classroom.



**Individual Neighborhood Study Books**—Each child will illustrate a cover and bind

(stitch) all of the following illustrations and write-ups together into a book.

- ❖ Ideal neighborhood drawing
- ❖ Impression walks drawing
- ❖ Different neighborhoods drawing
- ❖ Farmer's Market collage
- ❖ Manhattan skyline watercolor
- ❖ View from Belvedere Castle
- ❖ Conservatory Gardens watercolor
- ❖ Copies of recipes and class poems
- ❖ Community Service Honoree portrait

### **The Exhibition**

**Exhibit #1: Neighborhood Block.** The Block Party will begin in the hallway with our newly constructed neighborhood.

**Exhibit #2: Library of Our Neighborhood Books,** including:

- ❖ Impressions of the Neighborhood Books (one per child)
- ❖ Trip Books
- ❖ Adaptation of Worksong
- ❖ Community Service Fairy Tale

**Exhibit #3: Models and Murals, Charts**

- ❖ Transportation models
- ❖ Fruit and veggies from Farmer's Market
- ❖ Fire extinguishers
- ❖ Subway mural
- ❖ Central Park mural
- ❖ Experience charts
- ❖ City/country puppets

## Bibliography

### Fiction

- Brown, C. (1992). **City sounds**. New York: Greenwillow Books. We hear many city sounds as Farmer Brown has an adventure travelling through the city on his way to pick up a package. Children will enjoy hearing and practicing versions of the various noises—trucks, train whistles, jackhammers. The interesting typeface helps to highlight the sounds on each page; the pastel illustrations add vibrancy to each page. This book will be read during story time before one of our five-senses tours of the neighborhood to get the children thinking about sounds.
- Bryan Cauley, L. (1984). **The town mouse and the country mouse**. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons. This tale is about cousin mice who visited each other—one in the country and one in the city. It provides an interesting contrast of city and country life. The illustrations are detailed and provide an emotional intensity to the story. When we begin to talk about different types of neighborhoods, we will read this story. Following the reading, we will discuss the differences and similarities between country and city neighborhoods.
- Cooney, B. (1982). **Miss Rumphius**. New York: The Viking Press. In this beautifully illustrated story, Cooney talks about the life of a woman who lives by the sea and wanted to travel and see the world. She was taught by her grandfather that it was important give back to the world and make it more beautiful. She passes the same lesson on to her niece. Each illustration is colorful and detailed, helping to add depth to the story and the message. This book will be read during story time when we begin our discussion about community service. This will be our springboard into what we can do.
- Czernecki, S. & Rhodes, T. (1992). **The sleeping bread**. New York: Hyperion Books for Children. This is a fanciful tale about a baker and his concern that his bread will not rise. The story is set in Guatemala and centers around a mysterious beggar. This book should be included in the library during the neighborhood field trips, especially before the trip to the bread bakery.
- DePaola, T. (1989). **Tony's bread**. New York: The Putnam & Grosset Group. This Italian folktale about a baker who dreams of being the most famous baker in all of Italy. It tells the story about the baker, his daughter, and the creation of panettone (a special bread). This book should be read after the field trip to the bakery and before the class bakes bread to whet everyone's appetite!
- DiSalvo-Ryan, D. (1994). **City green**. New York: Morrow Junior Books. This story is a wonderful example of community spirit and what can be done when people pull together. On an empty lot, a little girl Marcy and her friend, Miss Rosa, lease the lot and rally the community together. Their efforts result in a beautiful garden where an

empty, ugly lot once stood. As we start to talk about how we as a class and as individuals can give back to the community, we will read this book.

Grossman, P. (1991). **The night ones**. Orlando, FL.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. In this vibrantly illustrated book, Grossman sheds light on the world of working at night. Through this simple text, the reader learns that some people work at night--'night ones', and a variety of jobs they might hold. The illustrations and text show the contrast between the bustle of the day and the buzz of the night in the city. During our community worker lessons, we will read this story to get a sense of what really happens at night when we are all sleeping!

Florian, D. (1983). **People working**. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell. This book is simple yet covers a wide range of places people work. The illustrations provide the details; the whimsical language provides the momentum.

Galef, D. (1996). **Tracks**. New York: Scholastic Inc. This adorable story is about Albert, a railroad worker, who loses his eyeglasses while building train tracks. When he finds them and puts his broken eyeglasses back on, the whole world is blurry and he goes on to build a zigzagging set of train tracks that will keep the children laughing as you read. When the passengers board, they take a wild ride through the town and Albert ends up with congratulations on his new amusement park!

Greenfield, E. (1991). **Night on neighborhood street**. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers. Greenfield's poetry offers lively depictions and insights into childhood and the nurturing world of family, friends, and neighbors. We learn about strength derived from family and community. Although the neighborhood is different from ours, we'll learn about similar emotions and experiences that translate into all different neighborhoods. During our neighborhood explorations, we'll read various selections from this book and relate it to our own experiences.

Henkes, K. (1987). **Once around the block**. New York: Greenwillow Books. This sweet story is about a girl, Annie, who can't find anything to do. Her mother suggests that she take a walk around the block. Annie does so and meets many friendly neighbors along the way, giving her a slightly different perspective on her neighborhood. On this trip she used her eyes to see who and what was there, her sense of touch to feel the grass under her feet, her ears to hear Miss Potter's rocking chair creaking, her sense of taste to eat a warm chocolate chip cookie, and her sense of smell to smell a beautiful rose. Before we go on our own five senses tours of the neighborhood, we will read and discuss this story.

Heo, Y. (1994). **One afternoon**. New York: Orchard Books. As Minho goes on errands with his mother, we see the sights and hear the sounds of a bustling neighborhood (Chicago). The large, bold illustrations suggest energy and movement. The typeface makes the sounds almost audible. This story will be read and discussed just prior to a neighborhood walk.

- Hillenbrand, W. (1999). **Down by the station**. New York: Scholastic Inc. Follow the travels of this train as it passes animal after animal, providing lively sounds, on its way to a zoo. The book provides a song about 'pufferbellies' (trains) that we can sing during our transportation unit.
- Komaiko, L. (1990). **My perfect neighborhood**. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers. This story is a great way of introducing the concept and concluding the study of a neighborhood. In the story, a young girl describes her own neighborhood, embellishing her view of it to an amusing extent.
- McLerran, A. (1991). **Roxaboxen**. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books. Roxaboxen is a neighborhood created by children. They find a rocky hill, name it Roxaboxen, and begin to build with pebbles and wooden crates. This is their stage for many dramatic play episodes—shops, a town hall, jail (for when you broke the speed limit rules), horses from broomsticks, and wars were all created. This book is a tribute to children and their imaginations. We will read this book during story time when we begin talk about creating our 'perfect' neighborhoods.
- Ringgold, F. (1991). **Tar beach**. New York: Dragonfly Books/Crown Publishers, Inc. This book takes us to the rooftop of an apartment building in Harlem where Cassie Louise Lightfoot dreams herself through an adventure. In this tale, all of a little girl's dreams come true. The illustrations are rich and colorful and will be enticing to children as we read a story about a girl that has a very different life than many of the children in the class. We'll discuss Cassie's neighborhood, family and dreams and our own. This book will be read when we discuss different types of neighborhoods.
- Scarry, R. (1974). **Richard Scarry's cars and trucks and things that go**. New York: Golden Press. This is an adventure where all of the characters see city vehicles for the first time, then have a picnic on a beach while watching the boats. We'll use this story to begin our discussion about different modes of transportation.
- Schotter, R. (1997). **Nothing ever happens on 90<sup>th</sup> street**. New York: Orchard Books. When asked to write about what she knows, Eve solicits input from all of her neighbors on 90<sup>th</sup> Street. From those conversations a wild and wonderful city tale is woven with larger than life characters and events. This story captures many of the magical qualities and fascinating people that live in NYC. We will read this book at the beginning of the study because it gives a good flavor of a neighborhood in general and because the location of the story is so ideal for us! After reading the story, we will discuss different things we have each seen in our neighborhoods.
- Simon, N. (1995). **Firefighters**. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. With Dalmatians as the firefighters, this book reviews what happens once the fire bell rings. The adorable illustrations and clear, concise text provide a great overview of the day in the life of a firefighter, real or Dalmation!

- Soto, G. (1992). **Neighborhood odes**. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. Gary Soto provides a joyful celebration of neighborhood life in a Mexican American neighborhood. We will read this before and after we visit the Latino neighborhoods and refer to examples when we write our own poems.
- Steele, M. (1989). **Anna's garden songs**. New York: Scholastic Inc. In this book, you'll find a song about many different kinds of vegetables. It's a wonderful addition to studying vegetables from various markets. The songs/poems have great rhythm and rhyme to explore. This should be included in the Music curriculum after the market trips.
- Treays, R. (1998). **My town**. New York: Usborne Publishing. This lift the flap books looks at life in a town through the eyes of a young child and introduces some basic concepts of geography. Children will love lifting the flaps to reveal cross sections of building and busy scenes. There are fold out maps to introduce map-reading skills, and questions to encourage children to think about their own environment. The book is bright and friendly and packed with a significant amount of information, some of which is too advanced for Kindergarten and some with a grown up support could be very enlightening. This book will be read in small groups and brought out as a reference when we talk about basic maps.
- Wood, A. & Teague, M. (1998). **Sweet dream pie**. New York: The Blue Sky Press. In this fun story, Ma Brindle bakes an amazing pie—filled with chocolate, jelly beans, licorice sticks, butterscotch and every other sweet thing you can think of. The pie is enormous and all the members of the neighborhood come out to share the delicacy, and all but one eats too much pie! This book is light and will be an addition to our library. We'll read it during story time.
- Wright, G. (1997). **Worksong**. New York: Harcourt, Inc. People at work, doing things that are so essential to us, are beautifully depicted in minimal but elegant verse. The richly textured paintings add sensitivity and show an appreciation for the wonderful people who surround us in our lives. This book will be our entrée into discussion about community workers. We'll read the book after we've had an opportunity to brainstorm who we think works in our community and how they help us. We'll revisit the book after our various trips to meet our community friends and use it as a model for books we will create (poetry and illustrations).

### **Non-Fiction**

- Bourgeois, P. & LaFave, K. (1998). **In my neighborhood—fire fighters**. New York: Kids Can Press. This book provides a very accessible way to learn about the life of a fire fighter—what they do, what they wear—in both the city and the country. Children can find information about how to prevent fires and how to deal with one should it happen. Although there is a lot of information on these pages, it's written

and illustrated so that children will be interested. We'll read this book as part of our study on fire fighters, before we take an actual trip to the fire station. The learnings in this book will provide a good springboard for our interview questions when we go on our trip.

- Brandenberg, A. (1962). My five senses. New York: Scholastic. This little book provides a good introduction to each of the five senses and teaches us that they are always working, helping to make us aware. The back cover provides a chart which has each sense labeled across the type and a picture. For example, "I see" depicts a sun, book, boat, house, stars/moon. This book would be used to initiate a discussion about our five senses and how we will use them on our tours of the neighborhood.
- Chanko, P. & Berger, S. (1999). Markets. New York: Scholastic Inc. This is a book for emergent readers. Vibrant photographs and minimal text per page, add to the ease of reading this informative little book. In it we'll learn that from flowers to fish, markets sell many things that can be bought and sold around the world. This book will serve as a resource in the classroom to which we will refer before visiting the markets. It serves as a good example of what children could create for their trip books, after the visit.
- Ehlert, L. (1987). Growing vegetable soup. New York: Scholastic, Inc. Starting with planting seeds, this book shows, in simple and direct way how vegetables are planted, grow and can become vegetable soup. It includes a recipe for the soup. After the trip to the markets and a discussion of the various vegetables, this book can be used as a reference and a recipe.
- Flanagan, A. (1996). A busy day at Mr. Kang's grocery store. New York: Children's Press. This book tells about how Mr. Kang and his family came to the U.S. from Korea and opened a grocery store. We learn about what Mr. Kang's work is like, who is family is, and what he means to the neighborhood. We'll read this book before our field trip to the Korean Market to help us gather our thoughts and prepare our agenda. When we return from the trip, we'll compare what we learned on the trip to what we learned about Mr. Kang and his family.
- Gibbons, G. (1982). The post office book—mail and how it moves. New York: HarperCollins Publishers. This book clearly describes how mail gets to us. It begins with illustrations from olden days and takes us through the modern postal system. Each page is filled up with illustrations in blue, red, white and gray only, and includes simple text. The end of the book provides a chart with interesting mail 'facts', like in the early days of our country, mail was paid for by the person receiving it and camels carried mail during the Civil War! This step-by-step book will be used prior to visiting the Post Office to help us formulate our questions.
- Johnson, J. (1985). Fire fighters a to z. New York: Walker and Company. Using an alphabet format, large photos and simple text show the kind of gloves fire fighters wear, how they get into their clothes quickly when the alarm sounds, and the different

type of equipment they use. This book would be helpful to utilize in class discussions after visiting a fire station.

Rice, M. & Rice, C. (1989). **All about things people do**. New York: Doubleday. This book introduces children to the exciting activities that go on across the world and in our own daily lives. The clearly written text explores questions common to all children about what people do in different jobs ranging from builders to salespeople. The illustrations are quite detailed and include some question and answer sections.

Rotner, S. & Kreisler, K. (1994). **Citybook**. New York: Orchard Books. This book captures the sights and sounds of New York City with bright, bold photographs and simple, minimal text. We find taxis, neon lights, markets, skyscrapers, museums, and children everywhere. This book is a great introduction to what we would find in the city.



## Teacher's References and Information

- Carroll, R. (1999). Barnes and Noble complete illustrated map and guidebook to Central Park. New York: Silver Lining Books.
- Cohen, D. (1972). The learning child. New York: Schocken Books.
- Cole, M., Cole, S. (1996). The development of children. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: W.H. Freeman and Company.
- DeVries, R., Kohlberg, L. (1987). Programs of early education. The constructivist view. New York: Longman.
- Dewey, J. (1938). Experience and education. New York: Collier Books.
- Elkind, D. (1976). Child development and education. A Piagetian approach. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Forman, E. and Cazdan, C. (1987). Exploring Vygotskian perspectives in education: The cognitive value of peer interaction. In J. Wertsch (Ed.), Culture communication and cognition. New York: Cambridge.
- Michaelis, J. (1988). Social studies for children. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Mitchell, L.S. (1934/1991). Young Geographers. New York: Bank Street College of Education.
- Readdick, C. & Douglas, K. (November 2000). More than line leader and door holder: Engaging young children in real work. Young Children, 55 (6), 63-70.
- Seefeldt, C. (2001). Social studies for the preschool/primary child. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Sklar, M (Ed.) & Barbato, J (Ed.) (1996). Patchwork of dreams: Voices from the heart of the new America (ethnic diversity series, no. 5). New York: US Press
- Sunal, C. (1990). Early childhood social studies. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Publishing Company.
- Taba, H., Durkin, M., Fraenkel, J., McNaughton, A. (1971). A teacher's handbook to elementary social studies: An inductive approach. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

## **Websites**

### **Central Park:**

[www.centralparknyc.com](http://www.centralparknyc.com)

[www.centralpark.org](http://www.centralpark.org)

### **NYC Transit Authority:**

[www.nyct.org](http://www.nyct.org)

### **Astoria, Queens:**

[www.ammi.org](http://www.ammi.org) -- American Museum of the Moving Image

[www.astoriahc.org](http://www.astoriahc.org) -- Astoria Historical Society

[www.astorialic.org](http://www.astorialic.org) -- Astoria/Long Island City

<http://queens.about.com/cs/assoc/>

[www.licweb.com/](http://www.licweb.com/) -- Long Island City

### **Greek Recipes:**

[www.eatgreektonight.com](http://www.eatgreektonight.com)

[www.ellada.com](http://www.ellada.com)

## Proposed Timing of Units

Week	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8	Unit 9
1	X								
2	X	X							
3			X						
4			X						
5			X						
6			X						
7			X						
8				X					
9				X					
10				X	X				
11					X				
12					X				
13					X				
14					X				
15						X			
16						X			
17						X			
18							X		
19							X		
20							X		
21							X	X	
22								X	
23								X	X
24								X	X

Date (End September)

Dear Families,

Starting in October, we will begin a study of our school neighborhood community. Our exploration will take us on many adventures through the neighborhood which, hopefully, many of you will be able to join us on. This study is based on the premise that first-hand experiences are the most dynamic and generative types of learning for children this age. The children will be able to develop a greater awareness of their surroundings by exploring the neighborhood around school. We are so fortunate to be in the middle of such a rich tapestry of culture, business, and nature. As we walk around and observe, we will also be able to compare city and country neighborhoods. Our 'five senses' tours will include visits to bakeries, a butcher, a pharmacy, markets, and more, seeing what food is sold and where it comes from, and doing a little cooking of our own. Since Central Park is virtually across the street from us, we'll spend some time exploring what's in Central Park, see what it's used for, and who maintains it. We'll get to know some of the people who work in our community and visit them where they work—shop clerks/managers, fire fighters and postal workers. So that we can get a taste of another neighborhood that shares many similarities but also provides many rich and fascinating contrasts with our school neighborhood, we'll take a few trips across the East River to learn about Astoria. We'll explore the idea and reality of community service and find a meaningful way to give back to the neighborhood.

We'll keep you posted on our field trip schedule as we plan them. In the meantime, it would be wonderful for the children to explore their home neighborhoods with you. Encourage them to notice details (e.g., the buildings, the people, the businesses, the sounds).

Enjoy your explorations!

Sincerely yours,

## **Our Five Senses Tours of the Neighborhood-- Schedule**

(The school bus is available for those trips not in the immediate neighborhood)

### **Monday--Week 1**

D'Agostino (whole class, 2 teachers, 3 additional adults)--9:00--11:00

### **Thursday--Week 1**

Ecce Panis Bakery (5 children, 1 teacher, 1 adult)--9:00--10:30

90<sup>th</sup> Street Pharmacy (5 children, 1 teacher, 1 adult)--10:00--11:30

### **Monday--Week 2**

Milton Cleaners (5 children, 1 teacher, 1 adult)--11:00--12:30

Schatzie's Prime Meats (5 children, 1 teacher, 1 adult)--1:00-2:30

### **Thursday--Week 2**

The Bagelry (5 children, 1 teacher, 1 adult)--10:00--11:30

Great Feet (kid's shoe store) (5 children, 1 teacher, 1 adult)--1:00-2:30

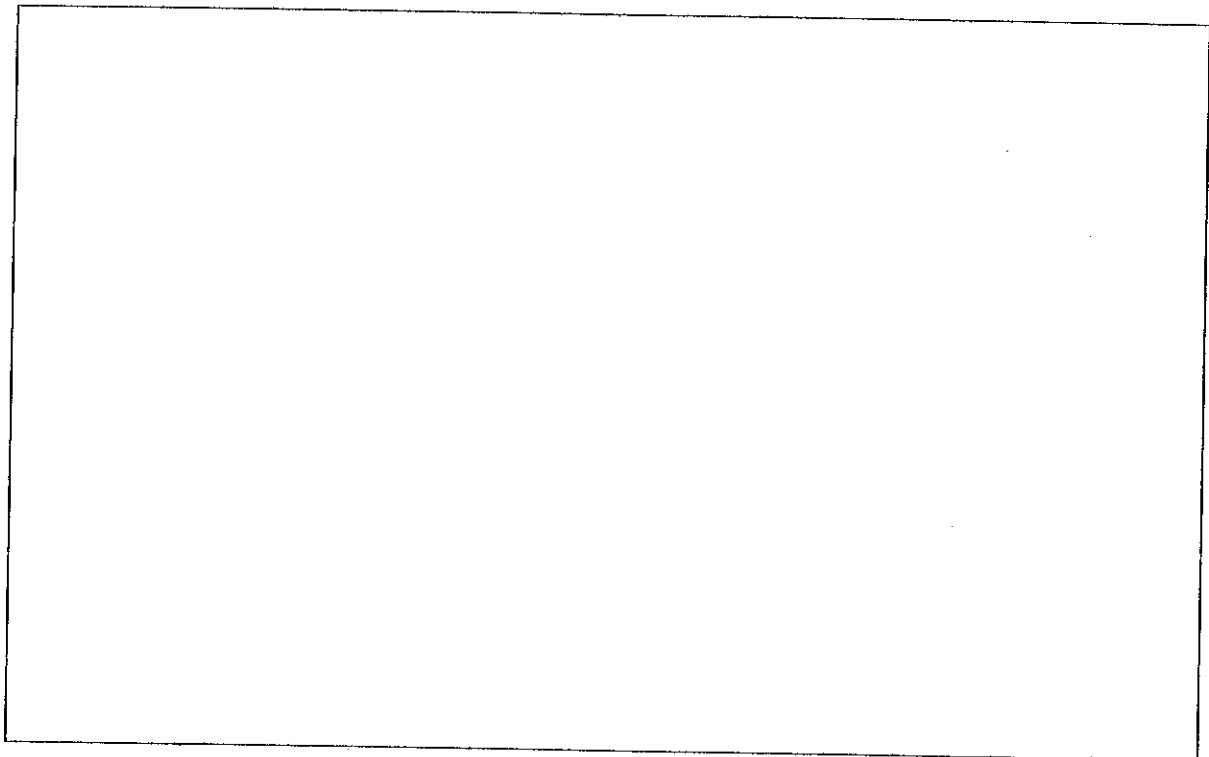
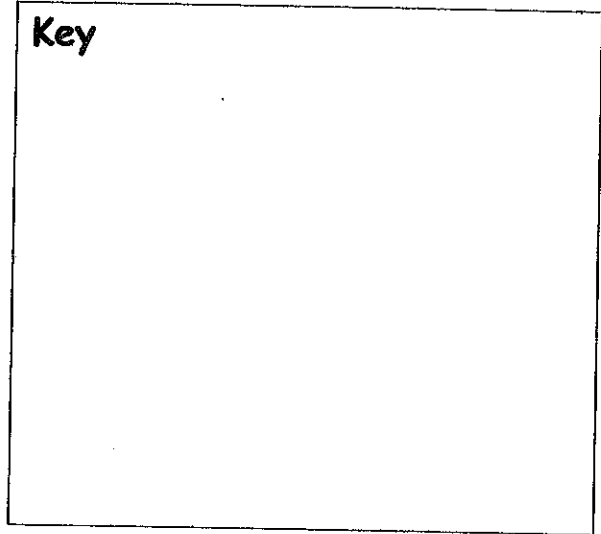
### **Monday--Week 3**

Union Square Farmer's Market (whole class, 2 teachers, 3 adults)--12:30--2:30

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Table Mapping**

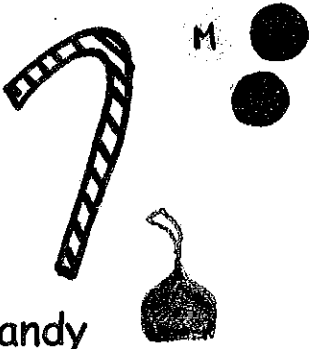
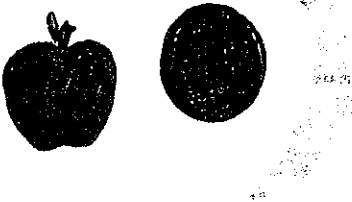
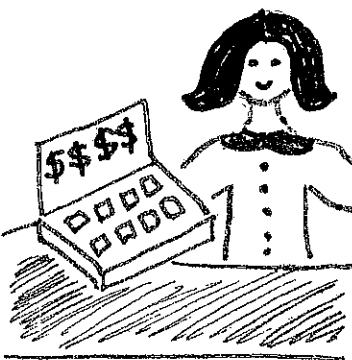


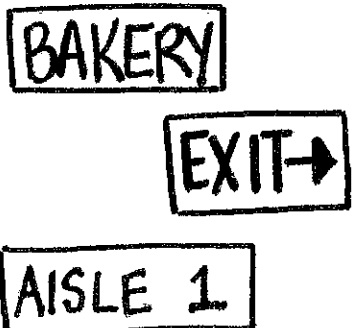
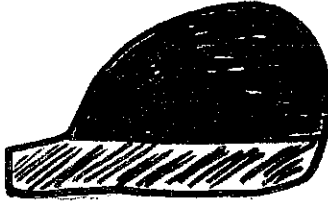
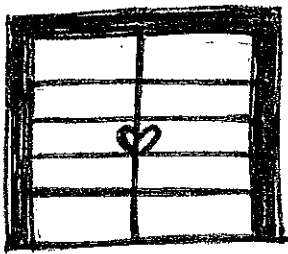
**Key**



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**D'Agostino Trip**

Can you find? Circle the ones you see.

 <p>Candy</p>	 <p>Fruit</p>	 <p>Cashier</p>
 <p>Ice Cream</p>	 <p>Cereal</p>	 <p>Juice</p>
 <p>Signs</p>	 <p>Meat</p>	 <p>Freezer</p>

How do the products get delivered to D'Agostino?

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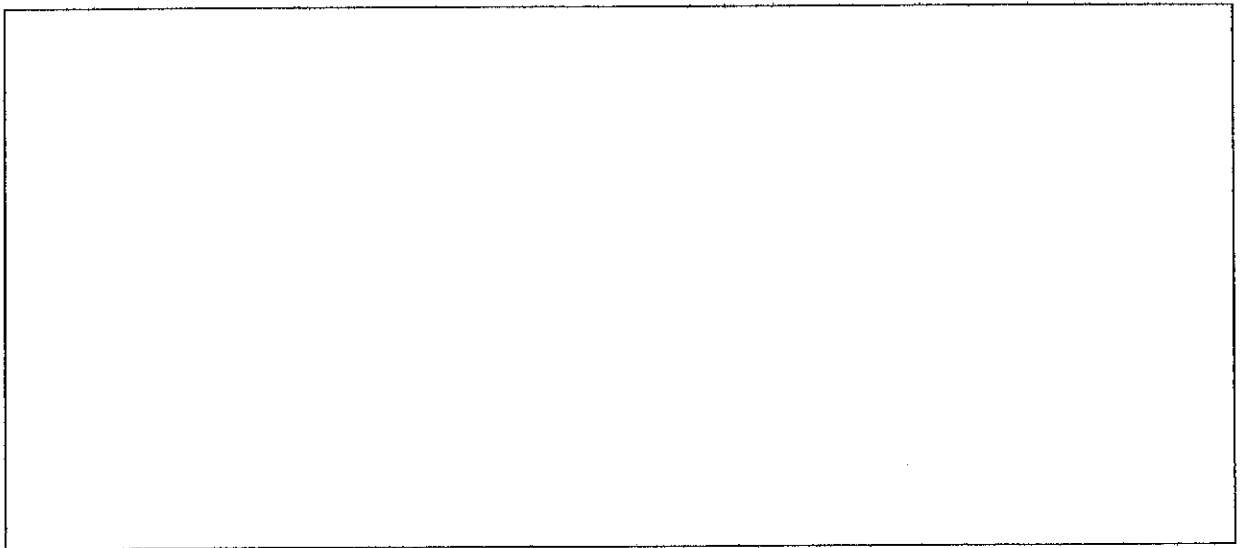
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Can you find the butcher? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

What's his name? \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of something you saw (one of your five senses!) on the trip?





Describe something you discovered from one of your other four senses (hear, smell, touch, taste).

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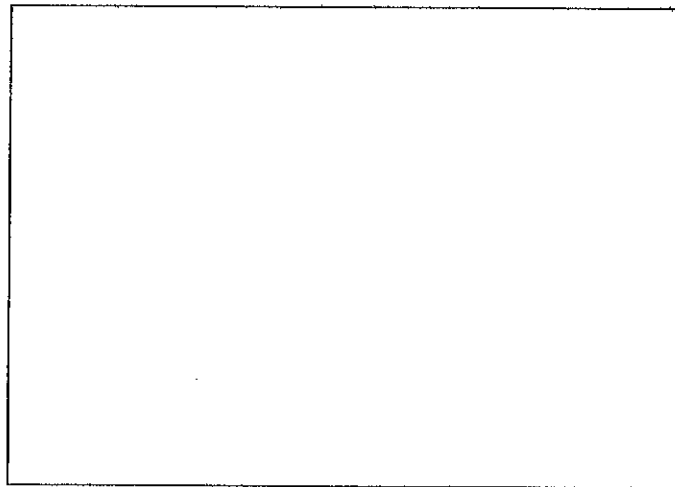
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Ecce Panis Trip**

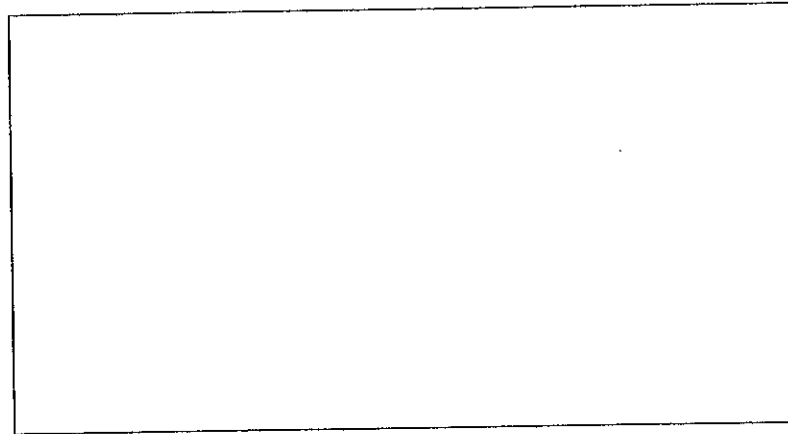
How many different types of bread are there in the store? \_\_\_\_\_

Draw the bread you'd like to taste.



Who makes the bread? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you find something, other than bread, that is sold at Ecce Panis? Draw a picture and label it.



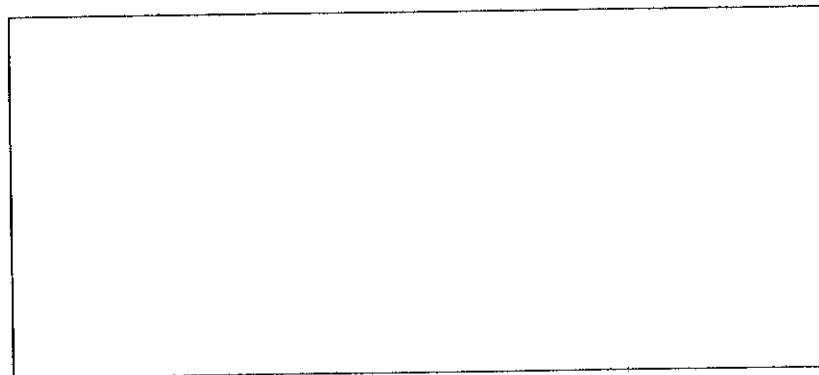
How many people work here? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the way the bakery smells?

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Where do they bake the cookies? Draw a picture.



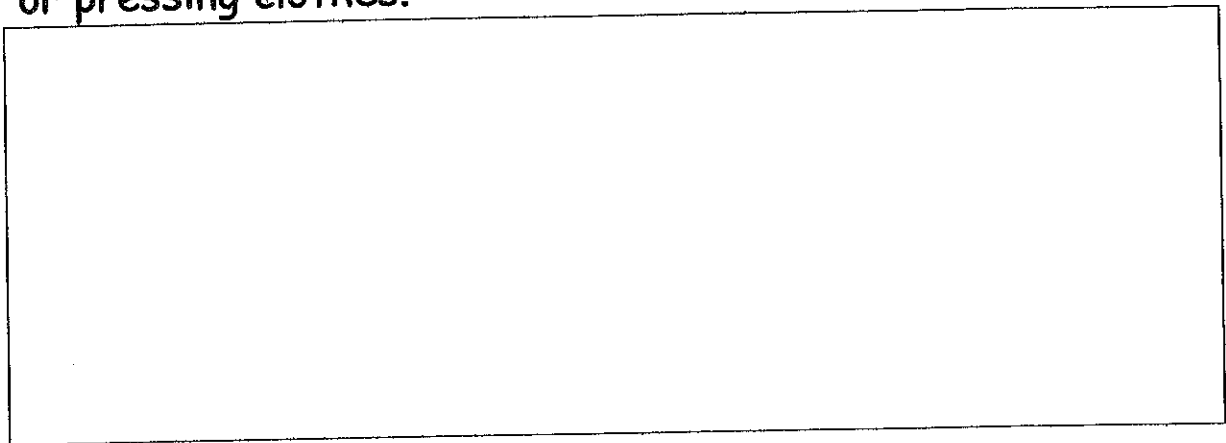
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Milton Cleaners Trip**

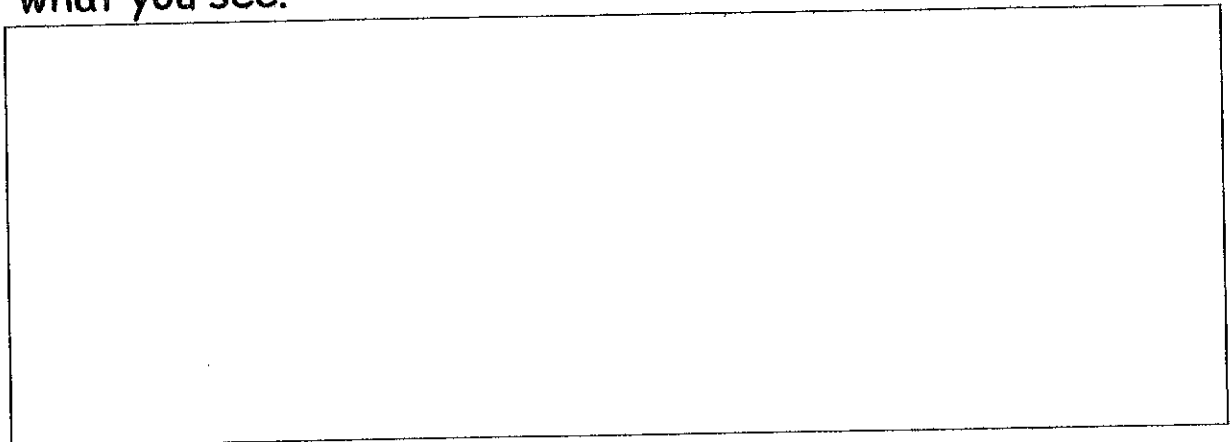
Who is the owner? What country is she from?

\_\_\_\_\_

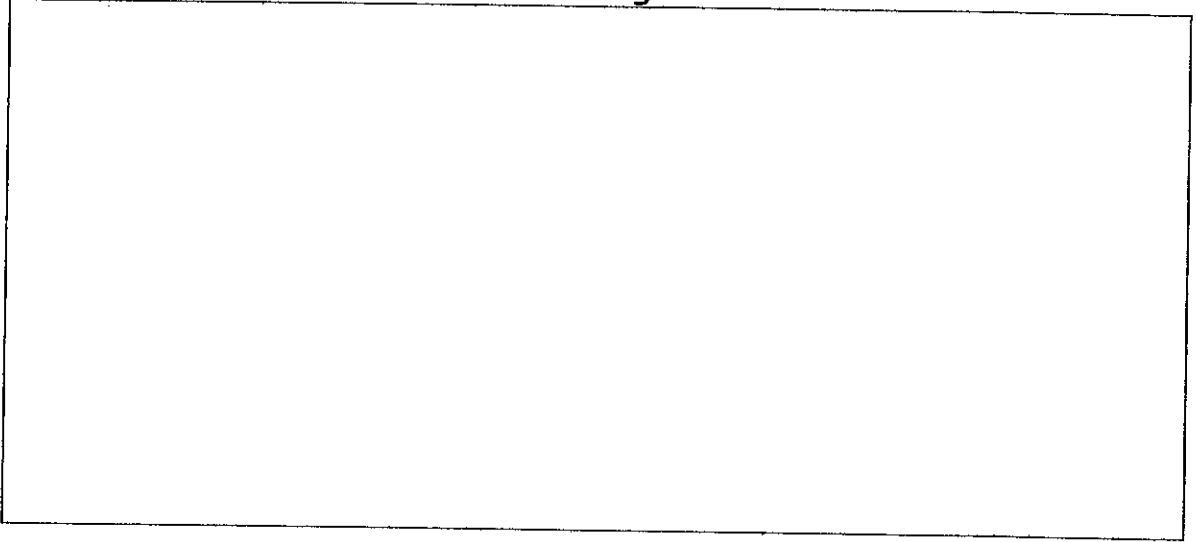
Draw a picture of a machine that is used for dry cleaning or pressing clothes.



What does the tailor use for sewing? Draw and label what you see.



Draw what you find most interesting?



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

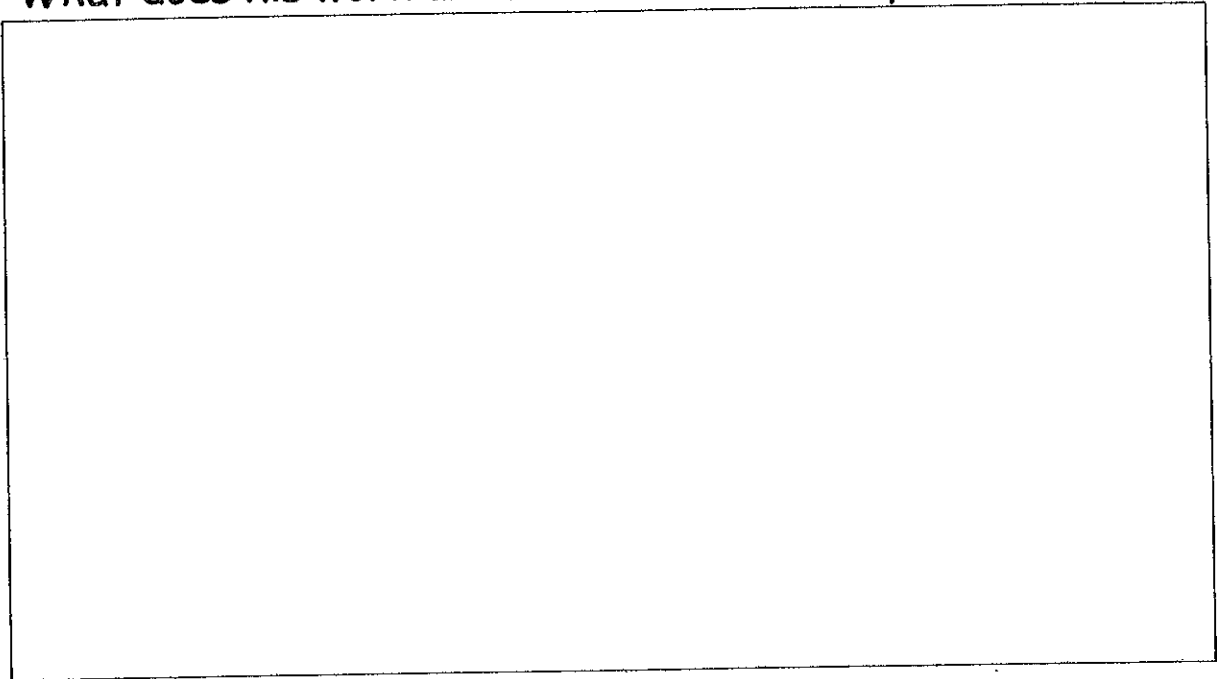
**90<sup>th</sup> Street Pharmacy Trip**

What does a pharmacist do?

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What does his work area look like? Draw a picture.



Which of these items are sold at the 90<sup>th</sup> Street Pharmacy?

Medicine \_\_\_\_\_

Beanie Babies \_\_\_\_\_

Cosmetics \_\_\_\_\_

Hairbrushes \_\_\_\_\_

Food \_\_\_\_\_

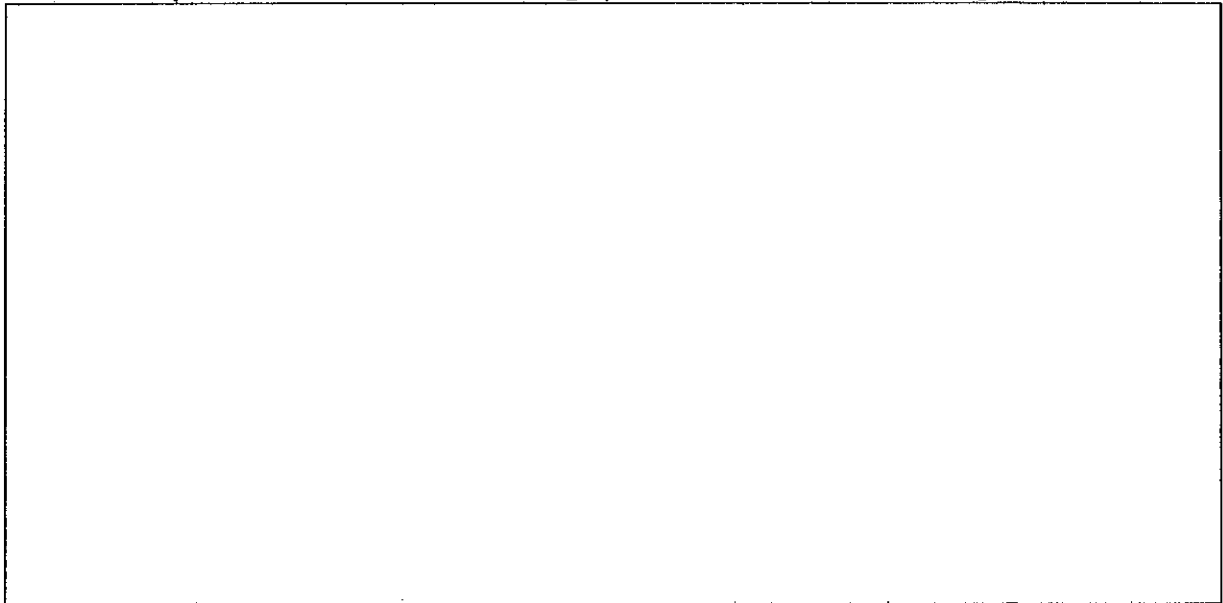
Eyeglasses \_\_\_\_\_

Thermometers \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting Cards \_\_\_\_\_

How many people work here? \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of something you find interesting.

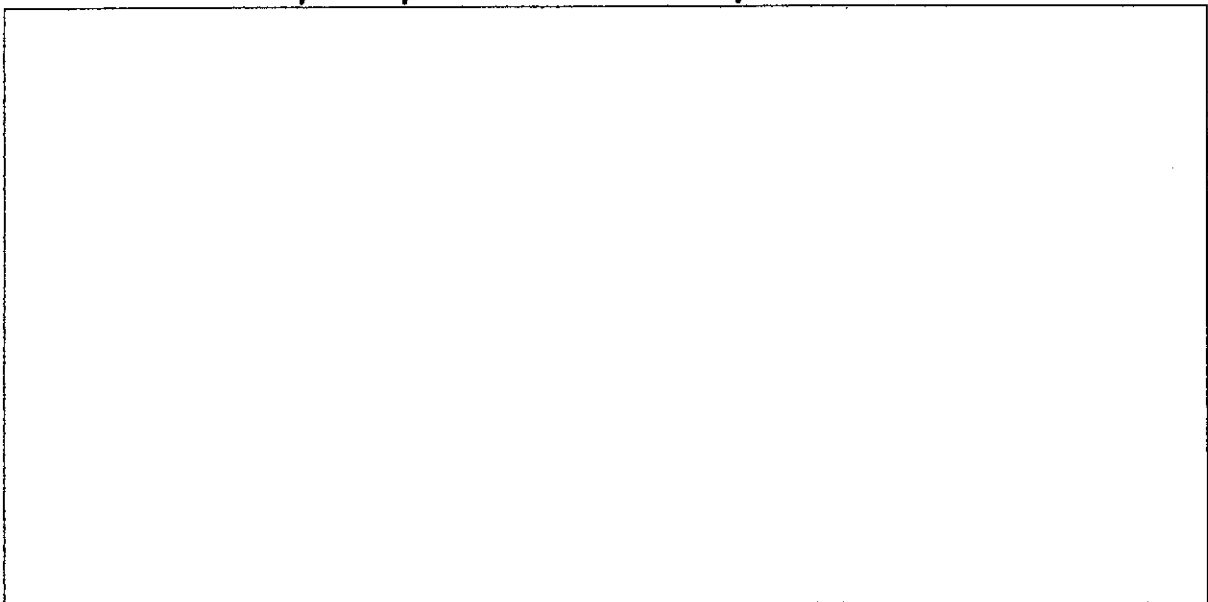


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Schatzie's Prime Meats Trip**

How many different types of meat are sold? \_\_\_\_\_

How does Tony chop meat? Draw a picture.



What tools does Tony use in his job? Please draw them.

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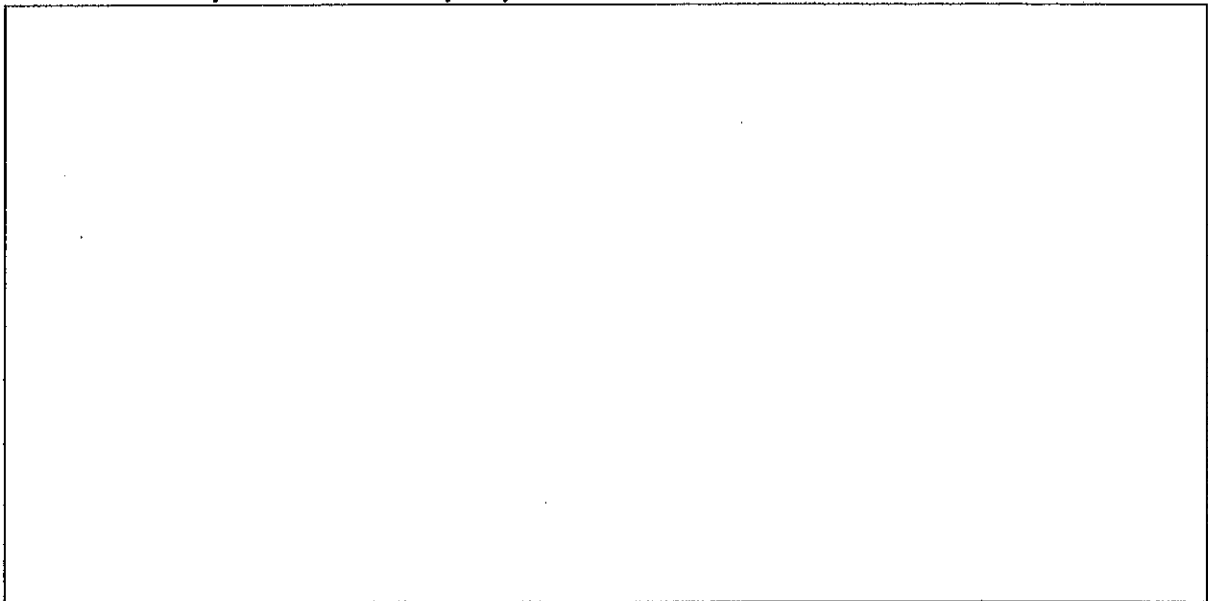


Where is Tony's family from? \_\_\_\_\_

Find the sports pictures on the walls? What sports are the children playing?

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Draw Tony's meat display.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Great Feet Trip**

What is sold at Great Feet?

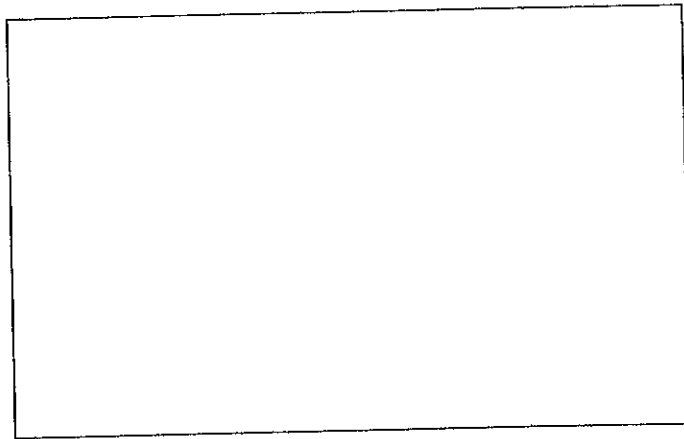
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Draw two items.

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Draw a picture of what you use to measure feet and label it.

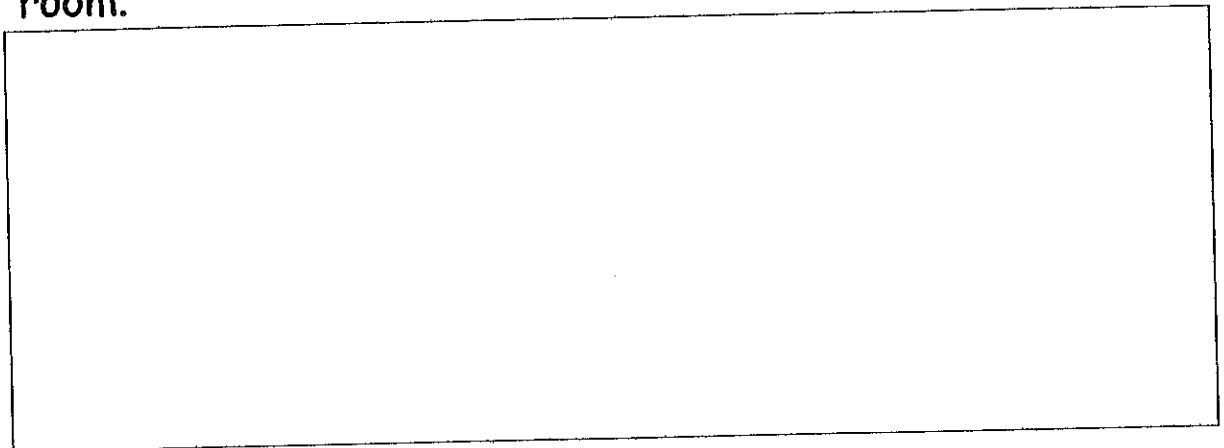


Who is the manager of the store? \_\_\_\_\_

What job did she have before she was the manager of the store?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where are the shoeboxes kept? Draw a picture of that room.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

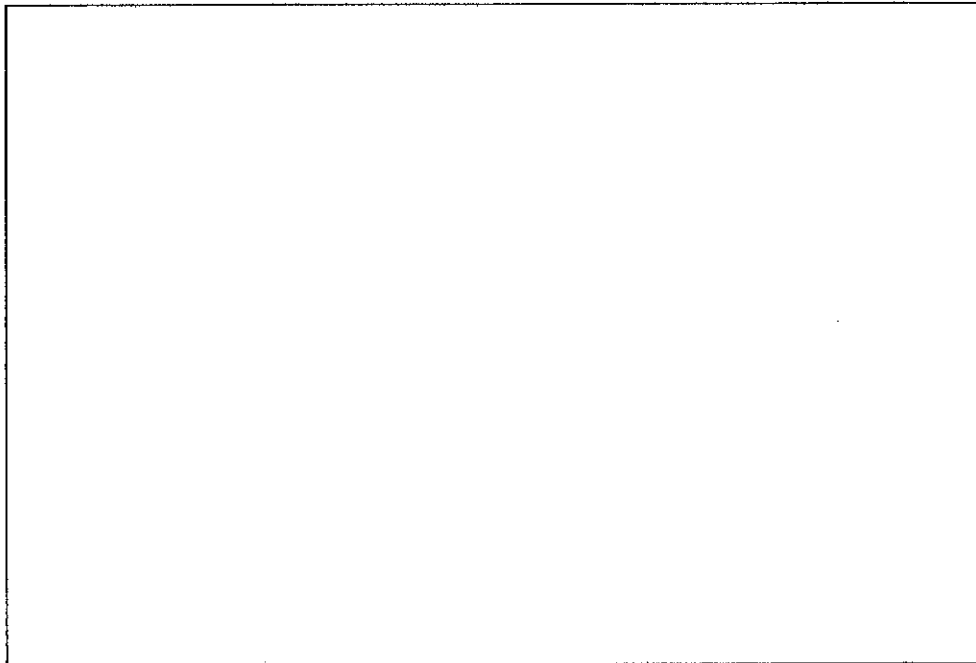
## The Bagelry Trip

Count all of the different types of bagels sold. \_\_\_\_\_

Which is the most popular kind of bagel for people to buy?

\_\_\_\_\_

Draw something you saw when the bagels were being made.



Who is the manager? \_\_\_\_\_

How did he learn to make bagels?

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Draw a picture of two things (and label them), other than bagels, that are sold here.

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### *Banana Bread Recipe*

2 bananas

1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups flour

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup buttermilk

2 eggs

1 tsp. baking soda

$\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. vanilla

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup vegetable oil

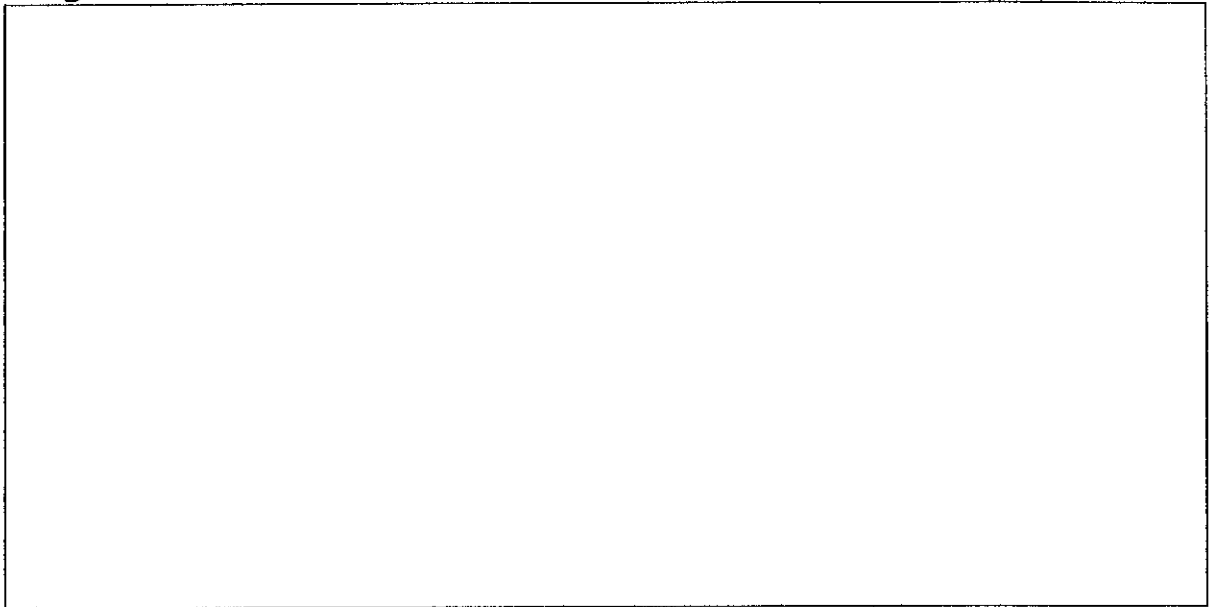
#### **Directions:**

Mash bananas. Combine all dry ingredients in a large bowl. Add bananas, oil, eggs, vanilla, and buttermilk. Mix thoroughly. Bake for 1 hour at 350 in a greased loaf pan. Let cool and enjoy.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Union Square Farmer's Market**

Find a vegetable farmer. Draw a picture of some of the vegetables.



How long does it take to grow potatoes, tomatoes, and zucchini?

Potatoes \_\_\_\_\_ Tomatoes \_\_\_\_\_ Zucchini \_\_\_\_\_

When are the seeds planted? \_\_\_\_\_

How are the potatoes dug up from the ground?

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Where does the farmer live? \_\_\_\_\_

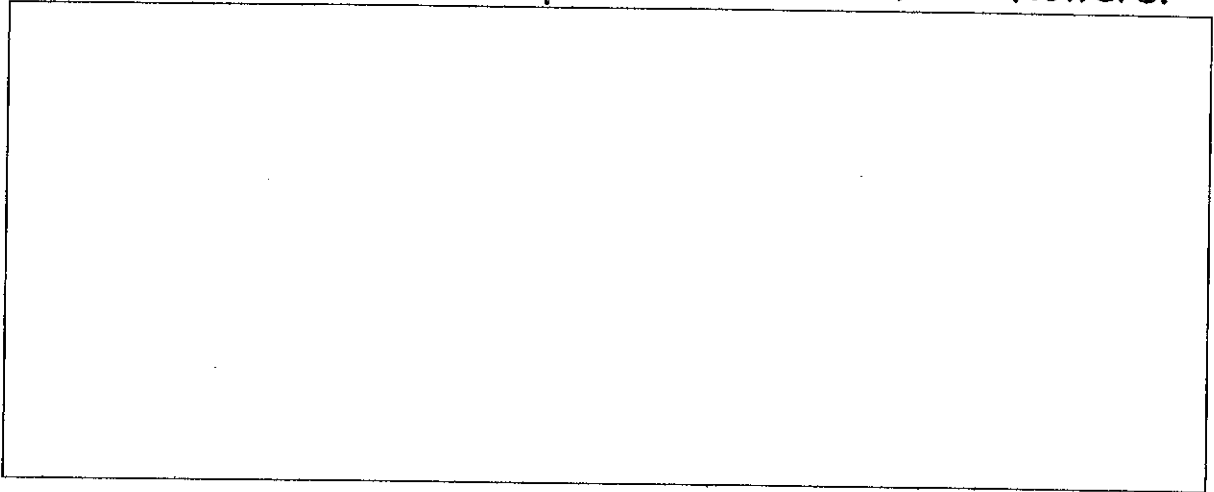
How far away is that? \_\_\_\_\_ miles

Draw two of the baked goods you find at the Farmer's Market.

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Find the flowers. Draw a picture of some of the flowers.

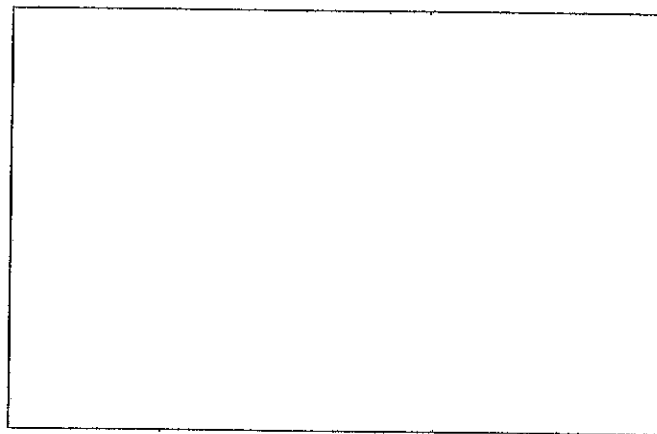


How do they smell?

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Find the Honey Maker. Draw a picture of the bottle of honey.



## Vegetable Soup

1 large onion	2 carrots
1 medium potato, with skin	9 French beans, ends off
1/6 small cabbage	1 stalk broccoli
3 medium tomatoes	1 small green pepper
1 sweet corn (husked)	3 vegetable stock cubes
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ liters water	1 big handful peas
1 bay leaf	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped parsley
1 teaspoon dried marjoram	1 teaspoon dried thyme
salt and pepper to taste	

### Directions

Slice onions and carrots into rounds. Cut potato into cubes and beans into small pieces. Chop cabbage wedge into shreds. Put in a large pan. Set aside.

Slice broccoli stem into rounds; leave tips whole. Chop tomatoes into eighths. Cut out stem of green pepper and take out seeds; slice pepper into rounds, then into pieces. Cut sweetcorn off cob. Put in a bowl. Set aside.

Add vegetable stock cubes and water to pan with vegetables. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered for 10 minutes.

Add peas. Add vegetables in bowl. Add herbs. Stir. Bring to simmer. Add salt and pepper to taste. Stir. Simmer, uncovered, about 10 minutes longer, until vegetables are crisp tender.

Servings: 12

## Soft Pretzels

1 egg

1 teaspoon sugar

3  $\frac{1}{4}$  cups flour

1 package dry yeast

1 tablespoon water

1  $\frac{1}{3}$  cups warm water

2 tablespoons coarse salt

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Pour warm water into a bowl, sprinkle yeast over water, let stand 5 minutes. Add sugar and one cup flour, blend. Add 2 cups flour. Knead dough on floured surface. Divide into pieces. Roll into desired shape. Put pretzels onto greased cookie sheet. Beat egg with 1 tablespoon of water, brush on pretzels. Sprinkle with coarse salt. Bake 15 - 20 minutes, cool and enjoy!

**Demonstration for Extinguishing a Fire**

**Materials:** small glass dish, candle, modeling clay, matches, spoon, vinegar, sodium bicarbonate.

**Directions:**

**Step 1**—Place a small amount of modeling clay inside the glass dish at the bottom. Press the bottom of the candle into the clay. Be sure the top of the candle is lower than the bottom of the dish. If it is not, cut off the bottom of the candle.

**Step 2**—Use the spoon to put some sodium bicarbonate in the bottom of the dish around the candle.

**Step 3**—Carefully light the candle.

**Step 4**—Use the spoon to pour some vinegar over the sodium bicarbonate. Do not allow the froth to touch the flame of the candle. Ask students to describe what they observe. (First, the vinegar makes the sodium bicarbonate froth. Then the candle goes out).

**Step 5**—Explain that the vinegar mixes with the sodium bicarbonate to make a gas called carbon dioxide. Tell the students that the carbon dioxide replaces the oxygen that the candle must have in order to burn.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fire Station Trip**

Draw two things that fire fighters wear to be safe.

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Why might a fire fighter wear a mask?

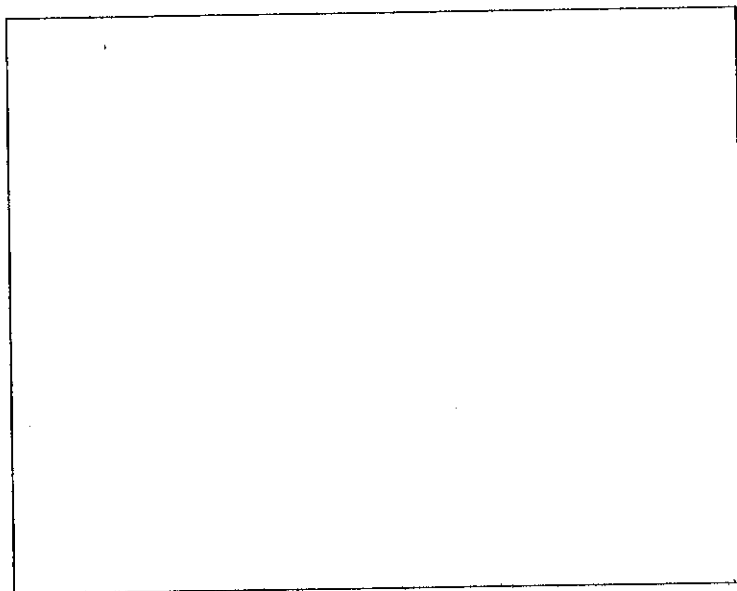
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Where does the water come from when fighting a fire?  
Draw one of your ideas.



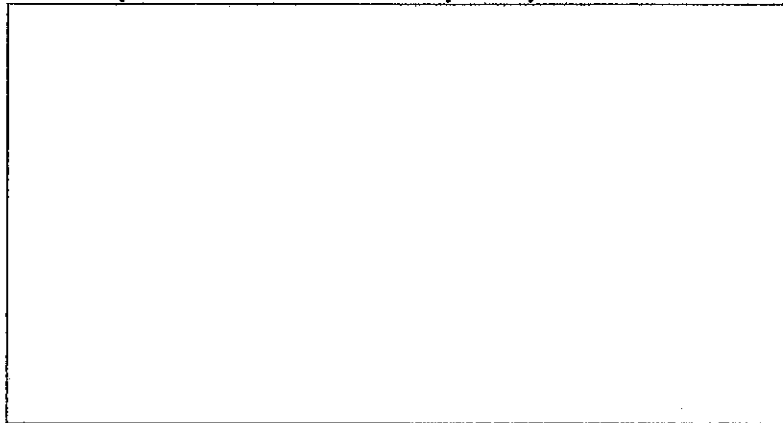
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Post Office Trip**

Check the services that you find at the Post Office.

- \_\_\_ selling stamps      \_\_\_ selling stationery  
\_\_\_ mailing letters      \_\_\_ weighing of mail  
\_\_\_ providing post office boxes

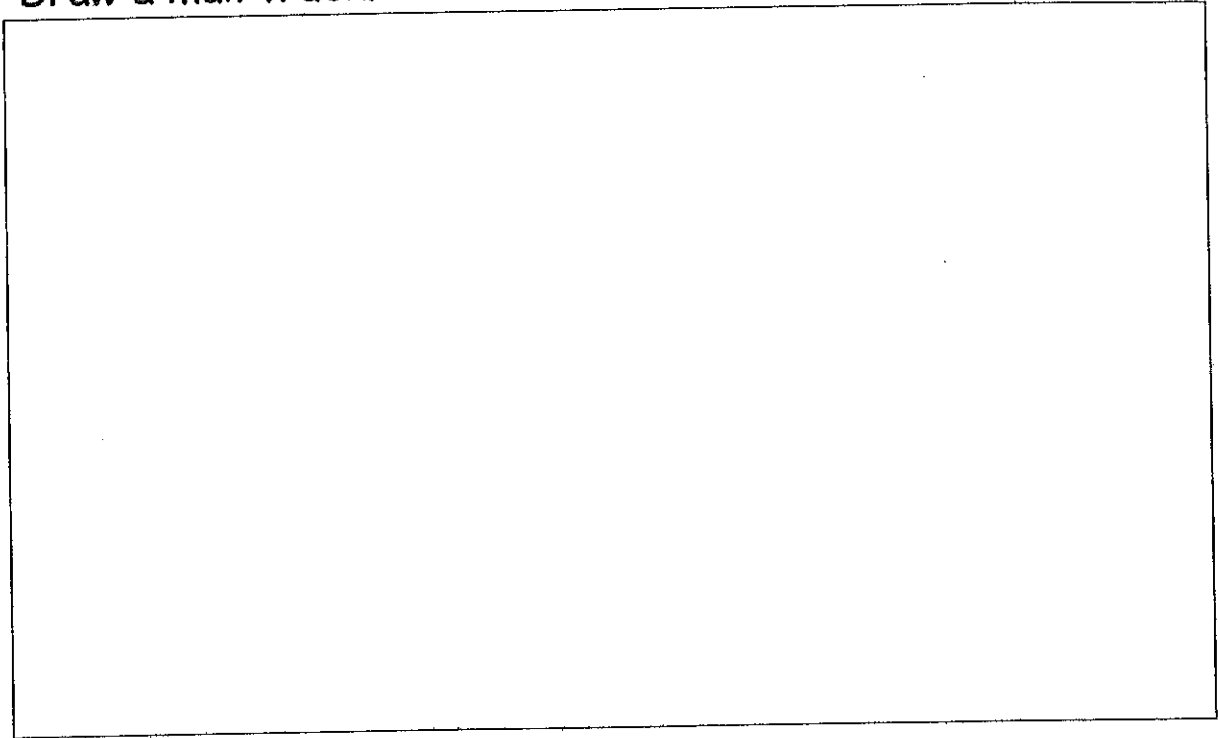
Draw the stamps and stationery department.



How many pieces of mail are processed each day at this location? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you find out how much a first-class postage stamp costs? \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a mail truck.





## Three Greek Recipes

### Appetizer: Horiatiki (Greek Salad)

#### Ingredients: (serves 12)

8 ripe tomatoes  
2 cucumbers  
2 onions  
2 green peppers  
2/3 lb feta cheese  
olives  
capers  
1 cup olive oil  
oregano  
salt

#### Directions:

Cut the vegetables in slices and mix in a salad bowl. Top with the olives, capers and oregano and cover with 'crumbled' feta cheese. Pour the olive oil evenly.

### Entrée: Tryopita (Cheese Pies)

#### Ingredients: (serves 12)

2 lbs feta cheese  
2 lbs filo pastry  
½ lb ground kefalograviera cheese  
2 cups milk  
6 tbsp butter  
8 eggs (beaten)  
dill or mint (diced)  
pepper

a little margarine

**Directions:**

Mash the feta cheese with a fork and add the kefalograviera, milk, butter, dill (or mint), eggs and pepper. Butter a pan with the margarine and place half the sheets of filo on the bottom also buttered with the margarine (so it doesn't stick). Pour the cheese mix and cover the rest of the filo sheets, also buttered with margarine. Bake in medium oven for one hour.

**Dessert: Loukoumades (dumplings)**

**Ingredients: (serves 12)**

8 tsps yeast  
4 cups flour  
2 short tsps salt  
oil  
thyme honey  
cinnamon  
sesame seeds

**Directions:**

Thin the yeast in 1 cup warm water. Mix the flour with the salt and put it in a deep ball. Add the yeast and an extra cup of warm water and mix well until you make a uniform thin paste. Cover and leave in the shade for 1 ½ hours until it rises and forms bubbles under the surface. Heat the oil in a deep frying pan and pour your mix in, one large spoonful at a time. The mix will form round dumplings. Remove them with a strainer when they darken a little. Pour honey over them, cinnamon and the sesame seeds.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## My New York City Building

It's time to explore your own building with your families! Perhaps you could visit the basement with the superintendent or building owner to see how the building is heated or where the water and electricity come into the building! Please answer the questions on this worksheet and bring it back to school by **Monday, April xx**. You're going to have the opportunity to share some things you've learned about your home with your classmates.

1. Is there an elevator in your building?                      Yes or No
2. How many floors are in your building?                      \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many apartments are on your floor?                      \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is there a laundry room in your building?                      Yes or No
5. Are pets allowed in your building?                      Yes or No
6. How many windows are in your living room?                      \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the outside surface of your building made of?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What color is your building?                      \_\_\_\_\_
9. What floor do you live on?                      \_\_\_\_\_

## Our NYC Buildings

Student's Name	Elevator Yes/No	# Floors in Building	# Apts. on Floor	Laundry Room Yes/No	Pets Yes/No	# Windows in LR	Surface	Color of building	Floor lived on

Dear Families,

Now that Spring has officially 'sprung', we will be spending some time visiting different parts of Central Park and learning a variety of things. With all of the magnificent things to see and exciting adventures to take there, it was difficult to narrow the focus for this study. We've decided to explore:

- ❖ **Sheep Meadow** and have a picnic lunch to begin our study
- ❖ **Wildlife Conservatory** along with the **Delacorte Clock**
- ❖ **Belvedere Castle**, the spectacular view of the Park from its terrace, and the **Nature Observatory**
- ❖ **Conservatory Gardens** and Fountain

The schedule of the visits is attached. If you'd like to join us, please sign up on the sheet outside of the classroom.

Please come and enjoy with us!

Sincerely yours,

## Central Park Trips--Schedule

Transportation to Park Entrances not within walking distance via our school Bus

### Monday

Picnic lunch and discussion (Sheep Meadow) (2 teachers)  
11:30—1:00

### Wednesday

Children's Zoo and Delacorte Clock (2 teachers, 3 adults)  
10:00—12:00

### Monday (2<sup>nd</sup> week)

Belvedere Castle and Nature Observatory (2 teachers, 3 adults)

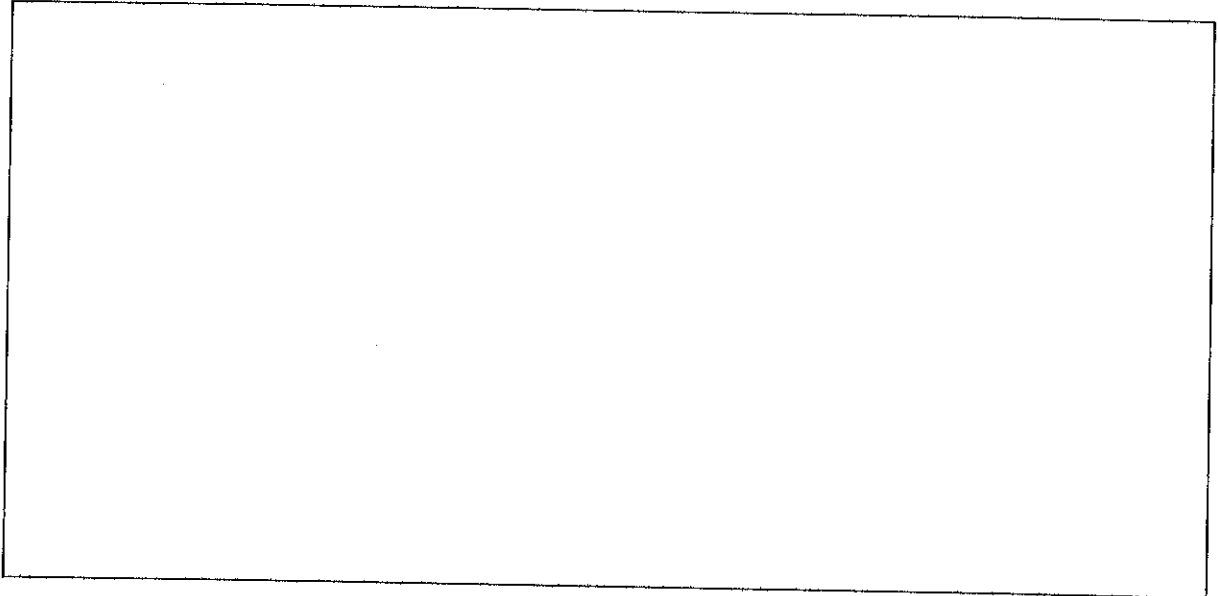
### Friday (2<sup>nd</sup> week)

Conservatory Garden (2 teachers, 3 adults)  
1:00—2:30

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Central Park Wildlife Center Trip**

Can you find the polar bear? What is he doing? Draw a picture.

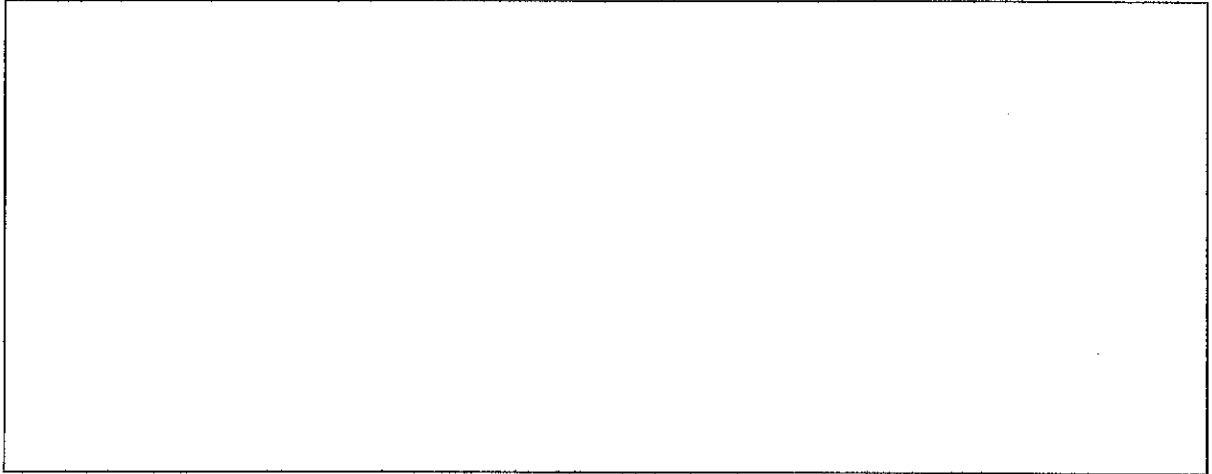


How are the sea lions fed?

\_\_\_\_\_

What do the penguins eat? \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of your favorite animal in the zoo.



Check the animals you see on the Delacorte Clock.

\_\_\_ monkeys

\_\_\_ penguins

\_\_\_ goat

\_\_\_ hippos

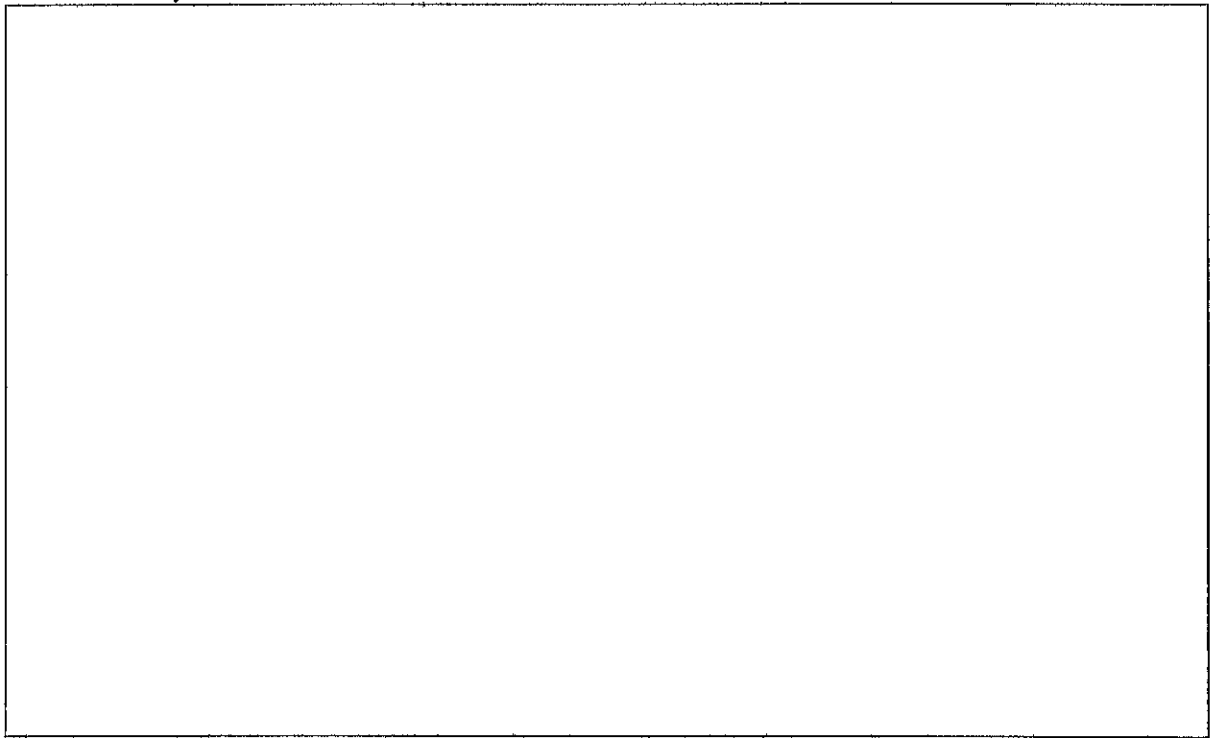
\_\_\_ bears

\_\_\_ elephants

\_\_\_ kangaroos



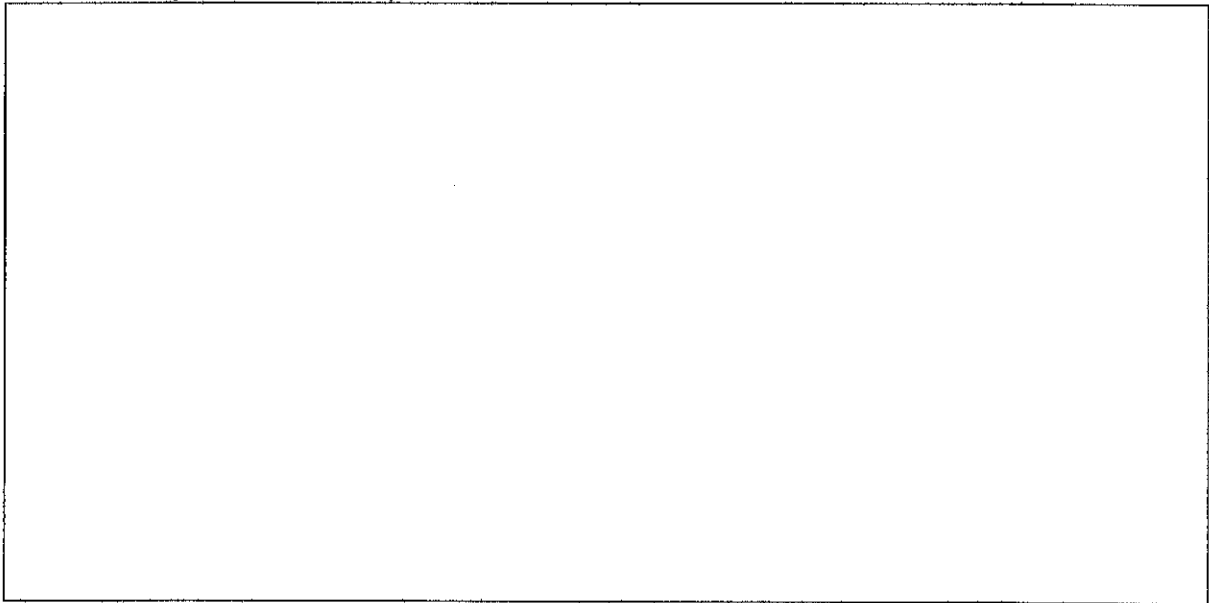
Draw a picture of the Delacorte Clock.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Belvedere Castle**

Draw a picture of your favorite view from the terrace.



Describe the view in words as well.

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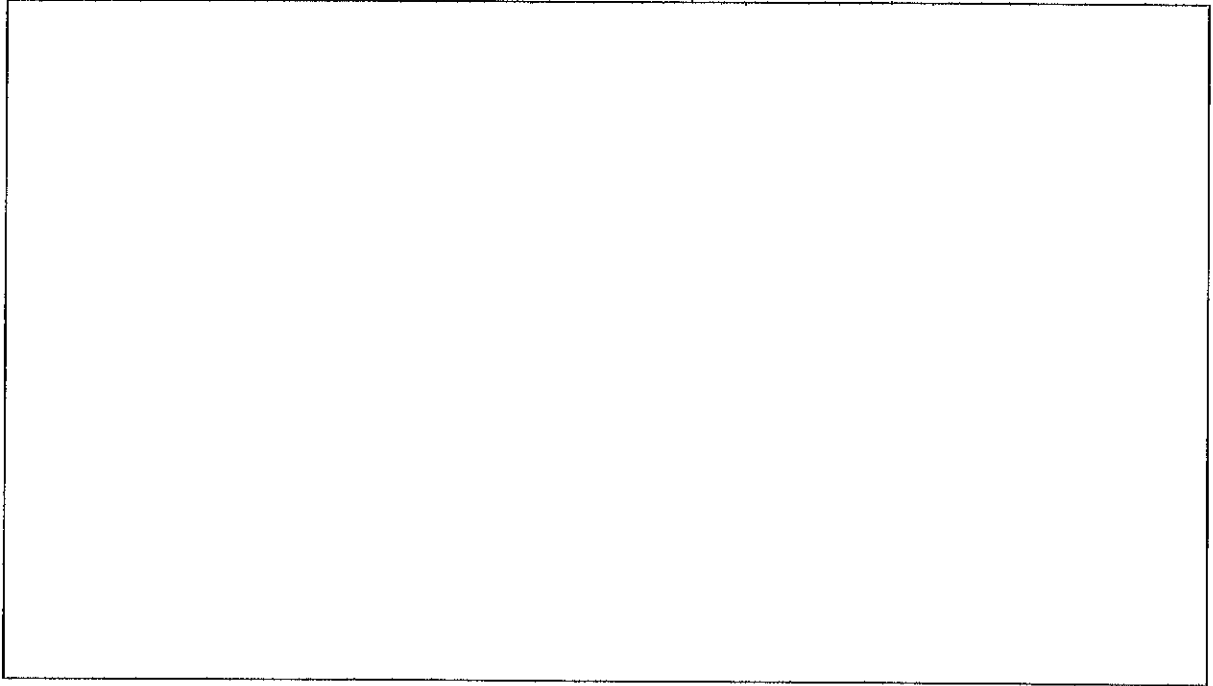
What do the instruments up on the roof do?

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Look at what is inside the castle. Draw a picture of something you find interesting inside the castle.



What does an Urban Park Ranger do?

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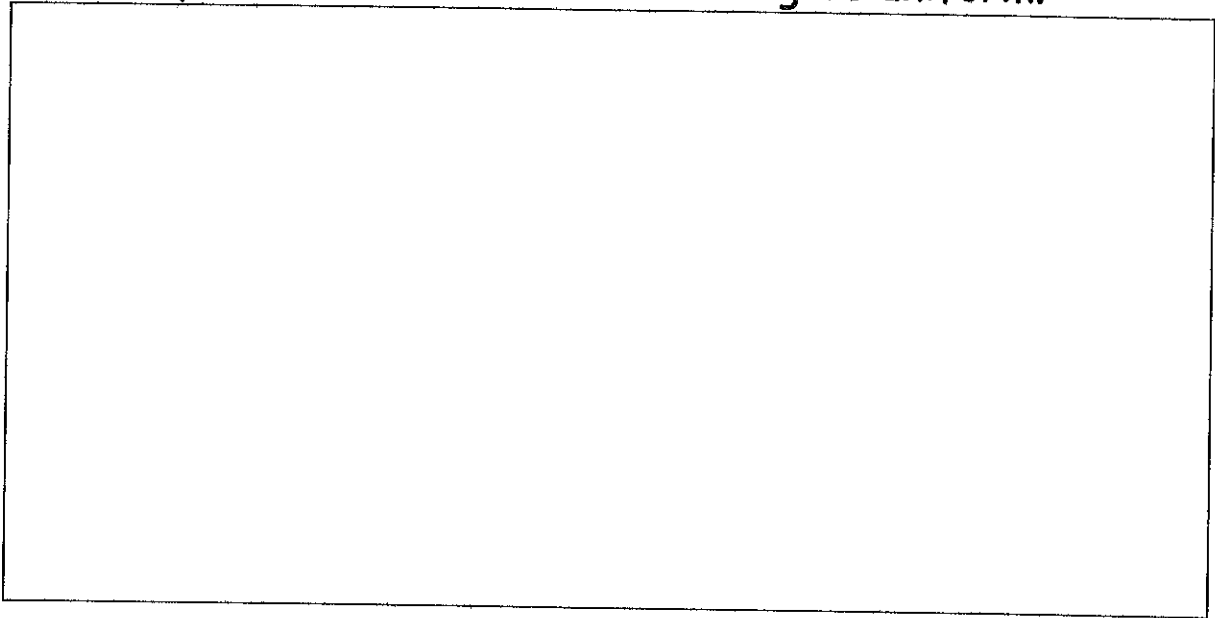
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Why is his or her job important in the park?

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Draw a picture of the Urban Park Rangers uniform.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Conservatory Gardens Trip**

Name one thing.

What do you hear? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you smell? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you see? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you feel? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what the gardens and fountain look like?

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On a separate sheet of paper, paint a watercolor of something you find interesting or beautiful.

## Come to our Block Party!

Dear Families,

As the school year is coming to an end, we think it's time to celebrate and share the work we've done in our Neighborhood Study! The children all agreed that they'd like to host a Block Party for their families on June xx, 2001, from 8:30 A.M. to 9:30 A.M. At the party, you'll be able to enjoy our Neighborhood Exhibit, showcasing all of the projects the children have been working on since early Spring. Many of you have accompanied us on one or more of our trips in and around the neighborhood, so you can imagine the wealth of material we now have to display!

We look forward to seeing you there. Coffee/juice, bagels and muffins (from the neighborhood!) will be served.

Sincerely yours,