1997

Basic Needs: A First Grade Curriculum Study

John Heffernan
Bank Street College of Education

Basic Needs:
A First Grade Curriculum Study

By

John Heffernan

Mentor Stan Chu

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education/Master of Education

Bank Street College of Education

1997

Basic Needs: A First Grade Social Studies Curriculum Study

By John Heffernan

Abstract

The following first grade curriculum study is an investigation of food, shelter and services in the neighborhood surrounding the school. The activities incorporate hands-on research, discussion, and expressive materials to offer opportunities for children to discover the interdependence and relationships that exist in their immediate environment. The three units of food, shelter and community services have specific goals, and they are:

Food - Investigate how markets, stores and restaurants provide food for the neighborhood, where the food comes from and how it gets to Park Slope.
Shelter - Investigate how and where people house themselves in the neighborhood and what are the essential parts of a home.
Services - Investigate how people offer and receive services specifically at the fire department, post office and hospital.

This curriculum study aims to provide children with opportunities for learning how the neighborhood 'works' at fulfilling its basic needs for those who live and work there. The activities allow time for testing their ideas and reflecting on experiences directly related to their everyday life. The time, space and appropriate materials for these activities allow the first graders to make sense of complex interdependent surroundings in order to feel more competent in their neighborhood.

Table of Contents

5. Bibliography

I. Rationale

The Child as a Member of the Community

This study explores the basic needs of people in the neighborhood surrounding the Berkeley Carroll School in Park Slope, Brooklyn. Central to the study of basic needs is the role of 'work' - people productively providing goods and services for the community's use. By examining the community's places of work this study provides opportunities to observe the neighborhood's interdependence, the use of technology, and the effects of the geography.

A child at six, seven and eight years of age " has experienced a sense of finality regarding the fact that there is no workable future within the womb of his family, and thus becomes ready to apply himself to given skills and tasks, which go far beyond the mere play expression of his organ modes or the pleasure in the function of his limbs" (Erickson, 1950, p. 227). As the child's locus of interaction and understanding becomes larger their studies in school follow a progression from the self, family, and the school out into the neighborhood. The child's sense of competency and security at six and seven years of age can be supported by providing them with the opportunity to further understand the world around them. Cohen (1972) believes, "the key to understanding urban life at six or seven lies in the concrete and visible processes of interdependent relationships which make urban life possible" (p.151). This study's relatedness to the child's real life experiences in the surrounding neighborhood plans to uncover these necessary interdependencies.

An urban neighborhood can be a confusing and intimidating place for anyone and the study's attempt to investigate who, why where and how people work in their community encourages children to feel competent when navigating their surroundings. Researching the complex process of how food arrives on your kitchen table involves predicting, investigating, sorting through information and possibly revising previous explanations. This meaningful search helps children make sense of their world. Allowing children to examine their neighborhood helps them orient themselves within the community. As the child of six, seven, and eight wishes to become more competent and masterful in their interactions within the neighborhood, their explorations in this study addresses their need to become more knowledgeable and skillful members of the community.

The choice of a neighborhood study enables the children in the class to make sense of their immediate world. Caroline Pratt (1924) explains that a child's exploration of subject matter should help develop "first hand research and to use what they find: we want them to discover relationships in concrete matter, so that they will know they exist when they deal with abstract forms, and will have habits of putting them to use" (p. 32). Developing a curriculum in the local neighborhood around what the children have experienced acknowledges that the body of information most seven year olds possess is primarily connected to the children's lives in Brooklyn.

The Social Construction of Thought

As children begin to attend school their social circle widens. Daily they encounter neighbors, peers and their parents, store workers, and institutions within the community. As they interact they learn the structure of their relations with peers and adults. These interactions or experiences shape the child's perspective of the world. The child's outlook is expanding to include how others relate to each other and to him. As the child extends out from his family into the neighborhood "becomes significant in its ways of admitting the child to an understanding of meaningful roles in its total economy" (Erickson, 1950, p. 228). A study of the neighborhood will examine yet another sociocultural context that shapes a child's reality.

The study has its foundation in interactions with people, events and objects. In order to learn about the surrounding community it is necessary for the children to communicate with a variety of people. Trips, interviews, and expressive and investigative activities in the class give each student the opportunity to learn about, with and from other people. When visiting a soup kitchen the children want to question the director, converse with a volunteer, discover how people are served and see how the food is cooked. Information and knowledge need to be gained first hand through direct communication with people or through interaction with a material. Dewey (1938) states the word interaction "assigns equal rights to both factors in experience-objective and internal conditions. Any normal experience is an interplay of these two sets of conditions...An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what at the time constitutes his environment" (p.42). As the

children discover relationships within their environment they are creating their own meaning. The process of creating meaning is a life long process for everyone and this study in first grade allows each child to make sense of their world through: their senses, communicating with neighborhood workers and peers, and investigative problem-solving. After visiting the Food Coop to research their questions, activities are chosen in the classroom to help the children interpret, summarize, and synthesize their experience. Choosing to study the surrounding neighborhood enables the children to build on and adapt their previous understanding in response to their current experiences. Bruner claims when the child is making sense of their world they are learning the conventions within their culture. "Meaning is a fact of public life and cultural patterns form the template for all human action, growth, and understanding" (cited in Seefeldt, 1993, p. 90). Through trips and activities in the class the children are learning less about artifacts, rules and beliefs than of how things fit together into "associative chains and images that tell what can be reasonable linked up with what" (p. 90). Each experience is carried over to the next, as earlier experiences met up to later ones.

Each location we visit, person we talk to, and object we see or use exists within a world of related objects. "Facts, isolated, have no meaning in life. They begin to mean something only when they begin relating themselves to each other" (Pratt, 1924, p. 31). The child's notion of reality is not formed in isolation through private encounters but through negotiations with others. Vygotsky believed that social interaction is the generator of thought and that the individual consciousness is constructed from outside through reactions with

others (Seefeldt, 1993, p.107) . One method this study employs to foster social interaction is discussion (one-on-one, small group, whole group, and being part of interviews) Dialogue helps us learn not only what is being talked about but how to compare notes, how to disagree, how to weigh arguments, and how to support other's ideas (Blackie, 1971, p.81). Experiences that are connected and interactions that develop cooperation, sharing, and interdependence allow the children to encounter and value perspectives other than their own. Common group experiences and the collective recording, evaluation and reflection of these events encourages the growth of individual consciousness.

Another form of interaction the children engage in is peer collaboration. Forman and Gazden define collaboration as "a mutual task in which the partners work together to produce something that neither could have produced alone (cited in Seefeldt, 1993, p. 329). Collaboration on various activities enhances social and cognitive performance because it encourages individuals to acknowledge and coordinate conflicting perspectives on a problem. As four children coordinate the painting of a mural they share their knowledge, feelings and opinions on many different levels. Collaboration requires social coordination and allows partners to encounter different experimental strategies. It is a complex social interaction that involves cooperation, sharing, problem solving and communication skills.

Six and seven year olds are becoming more concerned with accuracy, workmanship, the completion of tasks and the making of useful objects (Cohen, 1972, p.143). Recognizing these characteristics is helpful in planning the children's active involvement on trips and their work in the classroom to make sense of their experiences and

impressions. From the beginning maps are used for children to orient themselves and record what surrounds them. While on our initial walks to explore what is around the school, the children label the work p[laces on 7th Avenue. Trips to various locations offer the opportunity to locate and label the streets and different places and objects in the neighborhood. In the classroom, mapping activities focus on the geography of the neighborhood and the placement of work places in relation to one another. Learning how the neighborhood is set up gives the children a sense of mastery over their immediate environment. In addition to mapping exercises, children write and read their own books, construct and describe their block buildings, and act out their experiences in dramatic play. These activities allow the public expression of what they understand about the neighborhood. This public display also offers a time for peer evaluation and assessment of the work through comments and questions.

My role as teacher includes providing opportunities for the children to predict, observe, record, classify, summarize, and utilize information they learn about the order and structure of different places and events. As we explore the neighborhood and its places of work "the task of the child is to gradually learn to attend to, identify, and discriminate the important features of objects and relationships from the vast flow of sensory information." (Heatherington & Parke, 1986, p. 370) While on a trip and when involved in activities in the class a child must sort through general information to get at specific and purposeful information. This process of examining the neighborhood follows Eleanor Gibson's "differentiation theory" which explains how experience affects perceptual learning and development. During and

after each trip the children will make increasingly finer discriminations among objects and events and attend to the relevant attributes of objects. Perceptual development is directly related to the child's educative experience and the type and structure of the activities can aid its growth.

Method of Inquiry and Investigation

As the children search to make sense of the neighborhood surrounding the school they need to have a method of inquiry to guide their explorations. In assisting the children to organize and develop their experience a method similar to the scientific method is useful. Initially, the children generate ideas that are directed toward a leading question: What is a neighborhood? What will we see at the Food Coop?. The answers to these questions are hypotheses that can be tested and examined through action. Secondly, the children test their hypotheses on trips and different forms of research. They make careful observations about the results or consequences of their actions. After a trip to the animal hospital the children check to see if what they thought they would see matches what they saw. Thirdly, the children "keep tract of their ideas, activities, and observed consequences ." In order to keep tract of their experiences the children will discriminate and record the salient features of each event through reflective activities. Dewey (1938) explains, "to reflect is to look back over what has been done so as to extract the net meanings which are the capital stock for the intelligent dealings with further experiences. It is the

heart of intellectual organization and of the disciplined mind" (p.87). This method is extremely useful for getting at the significance of different parts of the neighborhood and how different parts interrelate. Reflective activities offer opportunities to make sense of their neighborhood by comparing and synthesizing former and current experiences. Reflective group discussions and collaborative work allows individuals to share what another thinks and feels so that "over time the children become participants in each other's knowing" (Cuffaro, 1995, p.52).

Our study is motivated by our search to 'find out' the how, why, when, where of different people, places and objects in the neighborhood. Our class of first graders is interested in a variety of topics which include animals, particularly pets, how babies are born due to one of the teachers pregnancy, and food. Their specific interests have shaped the trips we have taken. Connecting the study to their interests allows the children to discover "there is a dividend in becoming skillful in the art of 'finding out,' they have the material to go into their world, to become an important part of the child community, to contribute to group knowledge." (Winsor) The process of developing methods of inquiry and discovery in the surrounding environment connects with the six and seven year old characteristic of 'being more interested in realities." (Pratt, 1924, p. 19)

Evaluation and assessment of the children's growth lay within observing and recording their work in the various activities. Their understanding of social and physical phenomenon is evident in their symbolic reproduction and interpretation. Their work exposes the development that is taking place, the moving forward or the standing

still. By assessing the children's work the teacher is able to support and expand their growth through questions, the offering of advice, follow-up activities and planning future trips.

Use of Materials

The benefit of studying the environment nearby is its accessibility for first hand experience. The children will be able to take in information through their senses. Caroline Pratt (1924) explains, "we want them to have a full motor experience because they themselves are motor; and to get and retain what they get through their bodily perceptions" (p. 32). They will be guided on their search to find out how, where, when and why things happen in direct sensory terms. Each trip will be a common experience shared by the entire class that will lead to individual, partner, small group, and whole class opportunities to recreate, reflect on and represent their experiences. With this common foundation the children will integrate: (1) previous knowledge, (2) information and impressions of the trip and (3) others' knowledge of similar and different events. Once back in the classroom the children will make sense of their experience through meaningful activity with a variety of materials.

Six and seven year olds are "natural explorers, investigators, experimenters who are ready to develop techniques of fact-finding, and relationship-thinking...they must be active participants, even in a bodily way, in their learning" (Cohen, 1972, p.149). The materials offered in this study that allow the children to be active and reflective

participants include: blocks, paints, writing and drawing materials, books (fiction, nonfiction and poetry), music and movement, clay, charts and graphs. Many of these materials are adaptable so that the child can manipulate them to connect to their feelings, thoughts, and wishes. "Materials also become tools with which children give form to and express to their understanding of the world and of the meanings they have constructed" (Cuffaro, 1995, p.33) The materials chosen are intended to help the child bring forth relevant ideas and research problems that are connected to their everyday life. Open-ended materials that allow for experimentation and manipulation allow children to see the effects of their movements and actions. Building a conveyor belt with blocks or the tools from the fire station with plasticene allows for the recreation of real life experiences.

The children's reflective and summarizing activities with these materials encourages "the expression of relations through images (symbols) which sometimes actually intensifies the recaptured experience or object by pruning it of all except the essential"(Mitchell, 1991, p. 26). The use of these materials is congruent with Susanne Langer's belief that humans have a physiological need to express the meaning of their experiences in symbolic form (Seefeldt,1993, p.108). These various forms of expression are means to explore ideas and to discover components and attributes of events, people and objects.

School Environment

The first grade class undertaking this study is part of an independent school in the Park Slope section of Brooklyn. The school contains pre-school through twelfth grade. The school building our classroom is in houses grades one through four. Our building is on a residential street located a half block from Seventh Avenue, a busy shopping area for the neighborhood. The people who live in the immediate surrounding neighborhood are predominately upper middle class white people but the people who shop and work on Seventh Avenue are mixed ethnically and socio-economically. The children are six and seven years of age. All but two of the children in the class come from the school's surrounding neighborhood. A majority of the children come from upper socio-economic families. Out of twenty-one children there are three children of color and two of which live in different neighborhoods.

The elementary division (grades 1-4) has a strong emphasis on academic skills. Reading and writing are more central to the first grade curriculum than work with blocks or dramatic play. The elementary division director has instituted the use of a phonics program for part of the reading instruction and pre-planned math manipulative program for formal math instruction in the three first grades. Art, Music, PE, Computers, and Science are taught by specialists outside of the classroom in half class groups. Each specialists attempts to connect their material to what the children are studying in their social studies curriculum.

The Social Studies curricula follow a specific pattern from grade to grade. The first grade curriculum has four distinct studies for the

year: self, school, neighborhood and Prospect Park. My curriculum study would not fit into this plan because it would take to long to develop. I would take approximately one half to three quarters of the year for an in depth neighborhood study. The second grade studies the larger community of Brooklyn, the Inuits, and Australia. The third grade studies immigration, and then specific far away countries such as China and Japan. For the most part the teachers keep in mind future programs and prepare the children for the next level.

The subject matter of each first grade unit contains knowledge that is related to their experience. The children for the first half of the year had not been doing much work with blocks and paints. Blocks were only used as a choice for twenty minutes after lunch. As the assistant teacher, I saw the study of the neighborhood as an opportunity to include these materials into our study. My outline of the study includes what we would been done if given more time to develop the study in depth.

There is continuity in the units first grade studies but attempting to cover four large areas of study in one year creates a lack of depth in each study. I should also keep in mind that the children's questions, interests and contributions may alter the course of study. A teacher has the "responsibility for understanding the needs and capacities of the individuals who are learning at a given time" (Dewey, 1938, p. 45-46). Children can contribute to the content, structure, and pace of the curriculum if the materials and schedule of activities allows for opportunities for genuine follow-up on children's comments, actions and questions. The block area and dramatic play are two activities where the children's contributions order the activity.

The teacher, as the guide who helps connect the child's personal world and the larger public world also contends with the child's interests that do not connect with the curriculum. In these situations, the teacher must recognize how to either turn the child's curiosity or questions so that they might connect to the topic at hand. This can be done with a question or a comment that can help the child make a connection between their own ideas and the subject be investigated. It is of utmost importance that I realize when a child contributes to an activity he is doing so from his own personally integrated perspective. My relations with him about his interests, questions and contributions should not divorce him from the activity but should help him focus in on investigatable questions and methods.

A daily schedule includes:

8:30	Arrival
8:45	Meeting
9:00	Readers' Workshop
10:00	Story/Snack
10:30	Special
11:15	Social Studies or Math
12:00	Lunch
12:45	Yard
1:30	Writers' Workshop
2: 15	Pack up
2:30	PE
3:00	Dismissal

2. Curriculum

Introduction

This study examines what people need to survive in a neighborhood. Prior to teaching children to investigate what people need to survive I, as the teacher, want to clarify what community means to me.

Community is the context for living. Living ultimately is our means of expressing who we are. Humans, as social beings, need a social context to express their thoughts, feelings, and wishes. Community is just such a context. Bellah et al (1985) believes that "the drive toward independence and mastery only makes sense where the individual can also find a context to express the love and happiness that are his deepest feelings and desires" (p.49). Our modern day communities are deeply interrelated and interdependent even more so than ages ago. The technology and the economics of American life particularly urban American life is characterized by intense interdependence.

Central to a community's existence is group participation in discussion and decision making. A community is made up of individuals who have inherent value and dignity. A community must create a balance that enables it citizens to become their own person while at the same time maintain a unity of people connected to a group with shared beliefs and values. Does everyone have identical beliefs? No, among a community's members there are real cultural differences and

ambition is not everyone's motive. Instead people are seeking justice, respect and a sense of feeling valued. Meaningful work is critical to the health of a community. Work that is not merely a means for personal advancement but is a contribution to the everyone's well-being. Citizens need to be contributors to the public welfare and turn outside themselves. A sense of responsibility to those that came before and to those who will come after is the opposite of a self-serving drive to be first.

Knowing what community means for me as a teacher is essential because I believe as Wordsworth wrote in The Prelude, "What we have loved, Others will love, and we will teach them how" (cited in Bellah et al, 1985, p.293). The way I design the community in my classroom teaches what I love, value and feel is important. The classroom is one context for individual expression within a group. The children and the teacher are an association of people who work and communicate to give expression to themselves. A place to share thoughts, feelings and wishes.

A study that focuses on what a neighborhood's basic needs is a wonderful opportunity to expose the values of people who care for the well-being of others. The nurse who changes the diaper of an infant born hours before, a firefighter who puts his own life on the line to save a four year old and his family, a letter carrier who still delivers your birthday card from grandpa even when there is two feet of snow on the ground, the price checker at the Food Coop and the farmer at the local green market. These workers offer us goods and services that we need not because we are a money hungry, ambition ridden society. Instead, these people perform acts that are for the good of the local

community and have a direct impact on our lives. We are dependent on their actions. We rely on their work, on their responsibility and commitment to us, the neighborhood.

This notion of community as responsible decision makers who discuss their thoughts and ideas is a concept that I want as part of my classroom. A community where people work together to contribute to a greater good should be a daily practice in my classroom. This study examines the basic needs of our neighborhood by allowing the children opportunities to recreate and make sense of people and places that provide food, shelter and community services.

Content

An examination of food, shelter and community services in the school's surrounding neighborhood offers the possibility to develop numerous concepts, ideas, and skills. This study begins by discovering what people's basic needs are in Park Slope, Brooklyn. Living or surviving - how we make it from one day to the next - in our neighborhood is a complex endeavor. Daily living entails fulfilling our basic needs of shelter, food, and clothing along with relying on a myriad of community services. How people survive and get a variety of their needs met "refers to the interaction between people and their physical world." (Cenedella, 1982, Bank St. Notes) This interaction involves work - people productively providing goods and services for the community's use - that is effected by tools, technology, and the geography. The examination of places of work and the discovery that work is an organized and planned operation leads to understanding how people: depend on one another, are responsible for the care of others, use knowledge and skills to perform their tasks and are effected by the geography of their neighborhood.

In addition to discovering the geography, history and economics of specific types of work the study exposes the values and attitudes of the neighborhood. Visiting a hospital exposes the care and support that nurses, doctors, technicians exhibit in their daily work. The energy and enthusiasm for safety that a fire fighter shares expresses his concern for our well-being. The dedication and hard work of a postal worker displays his efforts to help people communicate all over the globe. The encounters with workers in the neighborhood exposes their values and

provides a way for the children to explore and analyze their own personal feelings and attitudes. Biber (1972) expresses, "the teacher's role is primarily to help the student clarify his own reactions, opinions, sentiments, preferences, help him hammer out a style of life in a certain set of surroundings"(p.24). Helping individuals clarify their values in class helps develop a community of cooperative, responsible and thoughtful decision-makers. An individual's expression in the classroom is dependent on the materials that are chosen. Materials that are expressive and that individuals can structure to match their thoughts, feelings, and wishes allow for meaningful work.

Each place of work we visit in our democratic society displays groups of people working toward common goals. Through complex planning and coordination they meet the needs of the people in the community. The classroom, too, is a place where each person learns to be responsible for themselves and involved in the care of the group. Cenedella (1976) believes "that fundamental to everything else that goes on in a classroom is the process of building a society" (p.92). Activities and materials are thoughtfully chosen to help foster competency, individuality, and cooperation.

Development of Ideas

An initial discussion of "What is a neighborhood?" provides the starting point for the study. The discussion provides the opportunity for the children to express their ideas, agree and disagree with others, and ask questions. Their ideas are recorded on chart paper for further reference. The initial discussion is a valuable assessment tool as the children describe their understanding of the different parts of a neighborhood, how it is laid out, and specific and general information they know about their own neighborhood.

Next, the class takes walking trips through several commercial and residential streets. Prior to the trip, a discussion about what they think they will see sets the stage for the trip. Their comments are related back to what they said in our initial meeting where we defined what a neighborhood is. A trip sheet that has different stores listed and areas for them to connect the name to the location helps them organize what they see and orient the information on a map (Appendix A). Back in the classroom the children can make individual large scale models of the maps they worked on during the trip.

After organizing and recording our information from the walks in the neighborhood, the class discusses what people's different needs are in the neighborhood. We examine how work helps people fulfill their needs. For the children of the class, I imagine they understand the work their parents do helps support not only their parents but the entire family as well.

The first basic need we examine is food. Initially, we brainstorm all the different places in the neighborhood where people get food.

Next, the list is divided into categories that classify the different locations - restaurants, grocery store, supermarket, deli, etc... A theme that is carried through our study of food is where does the food come from that we purchase throughout the neighborhood. Our trip to the Food-Coop explores a store that gets its food from a variety of sources and whose customers make a distinct choice to shop at the coop. Our trips to the Food Coop, a green market, a soup kitchen and a restaurant focus on where the food comes from and the work people do at each location to help community members get food. Specific mapping, interviewing, and building projects in the class integrate food services with the geography, history and economics of the local neighborhood.

Next, we examine how people get shelter in the neighborhood. Walking tours through the neighborhood explore ways we house ourselves. Specific trips to various types of 'homes' in the neighborhood, a tour with a superintendent, a visit to a homeless shelter, and a construction site expose the similarities and differences of how and where people live. A goal of our trips is to research the question, 'What are the basic parts of a home that are necessary for living in our neighborhood?' Drawing, building, and mapping exercises connected to their environment in the class, at home and on our trips in the neighborhood help develop observing, planning, evaluating and skills. These activities also offer the opportunity to synthesize, summarize and express the information they have gathered.

The final unit explores services in the community. Services are provided to members of the community even though they are in some cases not directly paid for. Services contribute daily to the care and

welfare of the neighborhood. A goal of this unit is to explore the different ways people receive and offer services in the neighborhood. This unit takes trips to the fire station, hospital and post office and allows the children the opportunity to recreate and make sense of people whose work is the care of the community through fire prevention, health services, and mail distribution.

Each trip leads to activities that are based on how the children experience the trip. A logical question the children might have at the Food Coop or green market is 'Where does the food comes from?'. A possible follow-up trip to the Brooklyn Terminal Market continues their understanding of how people in the neighborhood get one of their basic needs, food. The sequence and ordering of the food production and distribution systems allows the children to see how economic and geographic forces effect these complex systems in our city. Learning how food comes into our homes relates to what Winsor (1958) says is the "responsibility of the social studies program to give children a sense of man's use of his environment...a sense of rootedness in one's own world or community" (p. 22). The connections in the process of how food is transported, distributed, and sold uncovers and extends the concepts of interdependence, technological development and geography.

Exposure to various phenomenon on trips is intended to expand connections and/or extend possibilities to see the interrelations among the neighborhood's people, places and things. "In the selected, arranged environment of the classroom, the knowledge and activities of the world, often remote and mysterious for the young, come within the reach of the young." (Cuffaro,1995, p. 71) The larger world of the

surrounding neighborhood can be explored with familiar and accessible materials - the public world made personal.

One of the most effective ways children, ages 6 and 7, "construct and reconstruct, formulate and reformulate their experience is through play." (Cuffaro, 1995, p. 79-80) Play integrates the personal world of thought and feeling with their concept of reality. In addition to play, materials such as crayons, blocks, paints, and clay offer opportunities for children to work out their understanding of their world. This working out is accomplished through the personal expression of their thoughts, feelings and wishes.

It is by observing the children using these materials that I, the teacher, discover what themes to extend further. My close observing, listening and dialoguing helps to create a teacher/student partnership in curriculum development. My recognition and acknowledgment of the children's questions and personal understandings that are expressed in their daily work enables the curriculum to be meaningfully connected to the children's experiences.

Sequence of Neighborhood Study

1. What does 'neighborhood' mean to us?

a. Initial Question: What is a neighborhood? Examine children's initial concepts - record what they think a neighborhood is and then what they want to find out.

b. Take impression walks in the neighborhood. This can lead to discussions about what people need to life in the neighborhood.

c. Explore the work people do in the neighborhood.

2. Food

a. How people get food in the neighborhood? Record all the ways people get food in the neighborhood. Classify these listings.

b. Visit the Food Coop, green market and a restaurant. Examine where and how the various locations get the food they sell. Observe how the work places are set up, the jobs the workers do, and their use of tools.

c. Investigate how food is delivered to the neighborhood and city. Possibly visit the Brooklyn Terminal Market or read the book, Night Markets.

d. A possible extension includes a trip on the Staten Island Ferry to see the waterway distribution methods and waterway transportation that connects the geography of our surrounding area to their food consumption.

3. Shelter

a. Where and how do people live in the neighborhood? Visit different homes, homeless shelter, construction site and interview a superintendent. Discover similarities and differences in peoples' home.

b. What is necessary to have in a home? Make a list of essential things for everyday living in our neighborhood.

c. Investigate one essential item. Research it qualities, uses, and its source.

4. Services

a. What do people need in the neighborhood that they don't buy? Visit the fire station, post office, and hospital.

b. What do the different workers do? What tools are used? What are the parts of the work place?

Concepts - The concepts that drive this unit within the neighborhood study are:

1. Community- people communicating with one another for the betterment of the entire group.

a. Interdependence - how people work together cooperatively with each other; offering support, care and service in getting their needs met.
b. Responsibility- commitment to the general welfare not just self-interest.

2. Technology - the uses and effects of tools in work. i.e. forms of transportation to transport food, equipment at a construction site, tools firefighters use, and machines in the mail room for sorting.

3. Geography

a. direction and location - location of services in relation to people in the community and our school.
b. physical landscape - how the local geography effects how we met our needs.

4. Personal Involvement - work to effect change in the neighborhood through kind and caring acts.

-donate books to the pediatric ward hospital
-paint pictures for the soup kitchen walls
-collect pennies to purchase toys for children without homes
-Prospect Park restoration projects.

Ideas - The above concepts lead to the development of the following ideas:

1. What is in a neighborhood?

a. What are peoples' needs to survive?
b. What is in the neighborhood is shaped by people's diverse needs.
c. Distinction between places that sell things we consume and services.

2. Work in the neighborhood helps people meet their needs.

a. Each place of work has specific purposes related to needs of certain community members.
-i.e. At the nursery workers care for infants in an environment set up in relation to the infant's specific needs.
b. Work is effected by geography.
- Discover what parts of the neighborhood the hospital, fire department and the post office serve. Where are fire hydrants located? Where are mail boxes located?
c. Work is dependent upon the technology used and available.
-Interviews with neighborhood workers will assist in learning about specific tools.
d. Work is connected to economics.
-Work helps people get money to buy what they need for themselves and their families
-What happens when some people lose there jobs and can't get work.

3. Work is a complicated process.

a. Work requires skills, knowledge, training, order, cooperation, and planning.

4. Workers are real people who are diverse in age, ethnicity, and gender.

a. Examine why people do the work they do. Work is a way to make money and sometimes do what you like.
b. Communicate with workers about their personal lives to learn they are parents and have other interests outside of work.

5. Not everyone is able to get their needs met.

a. How do people without work and/or homes get their needs met?

6. Some work is fulfilling in-itself and people don't do it just for the money and rewards i.e. firemen, co-op worker, soup kitchen volunteer.

a. Some jobs provide people with satisfactions that are not monetary i.e. saving lives, feeding people, making a mouth watering dish.

Skills and Qualities

To be active participants in our classroom community and responsible citizens within the community the following skills and qualities are developed:

Skills

1. Use various research methods:

    a. locate and collect information
    b. classify data
    c. attention to specific details

2. Problem solving individually, with partners and whole group.

    a. observation
    b. gather and organize data
    c. form questions which lead to solutions
    d. communication with others
    e. summarize, interpret, compare and synthesize ideas through discussions, writing and expressive materials.

3. Reading skills

    a. Learn letter sounds
    b. Use context cues
    c. Recognize and employ grammatical rules

4. Writing skills

    a. creative writing - stories, poems
    b. expository writing - describing our trips and recording information.

5. Mathematical Skills

    a. counting

b. estimating
c. graphing
d. sorting
e. computation - addition and subtraction strategies

3. Identify relationships among the community and stores/services, workers, tools and jobs performed, the layout of stores, geography of neighborhood, their ideas and others.

Qualities

1. Sharing
2. Cooperation/Collaboration
3. Compassion and caring
4. Valuing the dignity of each person.

H. The Neighborhoood Study

1. Food Unit

The unit that investigates our basic need for food in the community begins with a discussion to figure out all the places in the neighborhood to get food. After recording the different locations, I ask an organizing question such as, "What is the difference between a deli and a restaurant? Following various descriptions the list is divided into different parts according to the type of store. The children's method of classification is based on their experiences and the discussion is a tremendous opportunity for each person to listen to viewpoints other than their own.

A goal of the food unit is to research the process of how food comes into the neighborhood. One trip within the food unit is to the Food Coop. A goal for this trip is to discover that food sold to different coop members comes from many diverse locations - small farmers, terminal markets, distributors, etc... In addition to discovering the many locations the food comes from, the children will observe the jobs of the different workers and how they work together to help people get the food they need. Prior to the trip, a discussion is held to uncover what the children know about food stores. I would anticipate comments such as:

-It has many aisles that have different types of food.
-The store sells things you use in your house like soap and toilet paper.
-It sells vegetables and fruits.
-There is a place where you pay that has a cash register.
-They have meat.
-There are rides out front that you pay for.
-They sell drinks like milk, juice and soda.
-They take your money card when you pay.
-Your food is put in a bag that can be paper or plastic after you pay.
-The meat is wrapped up in plastic.
-You can use a shopping cart or a small cart to put your food in.

-They have a line for people who only have 10 things or less.
-People use coupons to save money.
-The people who work there have a special uniform.
-They sell foods in cans.
-There are foods in refrigerators and freezers.
-They have a deli that gives you lunch meat.

After what they know is listed we would have another meeting about what we want to find out about the Food Coop. Prior to the trip I would give them general information about how a coop works. Specifically mentioning that shoppers must be members and that all members do some kind of work for the coop. Some of the questions asked may include:

-How many people work there?
-How much money do you make in one day?
-Where does the food come from?
-How much fruit do you sell in a day?
-How long have you been in business?
-Who decides what food you buy?
-Who is in charge of the store?
-How old do you have to be to work there?
-How much do workers make?
-How do people get a job at the store?
-How cold is the freezer?
-Do you take credit cards?
-Why do you have to be a member to shop there?
-How many members do you have?
-What if there aren't enough jobs for everyone to do?

In order to find out answers to some of these questions, we bring our list of questions to the food coop and ask our tour guide. On the walk to the Coop the class maps their route and labels streets and where the coop is located on the block (see Appendix B). At the Coop, a trip sheet (see Appendix C) is used to record information they observe and learn from our tour guide. The trip sheet focuses on noticing the different parts of the Coop, the different types of work and tools, and the ways food is delivered to the Coop. Once back in the class, we can check to see what questions were answered and record the answers. Some

questions will not be answered because they can not be investigated further. Other questions are asked in a way that makes them uninvestigatable. It is necessary for me to turn these questions into investigable ones and help them set up an investigation. Some questions can be investigated further such as, "Where does the food come from?" or "Is there a difference in taste between fruits and vegetables that are grown organically or with chemicals?" To help answer some of their questions, activities as well as books may be useful to research the subject matter (See Bibliography). In order to find out where food comes from we will first find out what we learned about how deliveries are made to the Food Coop and who makes them. The class can follow-up on this question by reading the book Night Markets, visiting a farm, or taking a trip the Brooklyn Terminal Market. Such reading and/or trip is further research to discover more about the complex process of how food comes to our home tables. This process involves coordination, teamwork, multiple transport methods, technology, and geographic variables. The list with our questions will remain up in our class and questions can be added to it at any time.

Additional projects include:

•Comparing the Food Coop with the other food stores such as Key Food or a corner market. This can be done for homework or on a separate class trip. Comparisons can be made between the store layout, employee jobs, and types of products.

•Create with plasticene different tools that where used in the Food Coop i.e. conveyor belt, cash register, price guns, scales.

•Mapping exercises back in the class where children use blocks, or paper, pencils and crayons to design a food store they have visited.

•Compare organic foods versus chemically grown food. Research reasons for different types of growing, people's preferences, and tastes of each type.

•Run a class market with items bought from the food store. Children plan the different jobs, the layout, and then purchase and sell the food with real or fake coins.

2. The Shelter Unit

Each child lives in a home that is both similar and different from their classmates. Shelter is another basic need and daily necessity in our neighborhood. This study will bring out what they previously know about how and where people live and challenge them to look more in depth at what are the needed parts to a home.

Prior to our trips to different people's homes, what is known about homes will be recorded. Some of what they know may include:

-Homes have toilets.
-Home have lights.
-People live in apartments or houses.
-Some people don't have homes.
-There is furniture inside people's homes.
-Homes have showers.
-There are kitchen, bedrooms and bathrooms.
-People have to pay to have a place to live.
-Homes are all different sizes.
-Some homes are one floor and some are two or three floors.

-Some homes are made out of brownstone and others out of brick.
-Houses have electricity.
-Some houses have cable TV.
-Some apartments buildings have elevators.
-Most homes have a refrigerator.
-Homes have stoves to cook food on.

In addition to visiting different homes of people connected to the class, we will visit a superintendent at a nearby apartment building. One goal for our interview with the superintendent is discover that heat, electricity and water are in each apartment and come from outside the building into each person's home. Prior to the trip our will discuss what a superintendent is and what they think one does. Questions people want to ask the 'super' will be recorded. Questions that might be asked could include:

-How old is the building?
-How many apartments does the building have?
-How big is each apartment?
-Where do you live? If not here then why?
-Are people allowed to have pets?
-How many floors are in your building?
-How does water get into each apartment?
-Is there air conditioning?
-Is the building safe?
-What is your favorite part of the job?
-What is your least favorite part of your job?
-What job did you have before this?
-Do you like your job?
-Do you have any other jobs?
-What type of repair do you do the most?
-How does a building get heated?
-Do you have any children?

The investigative trips to different homes, a homeless shelter, and a construction site will integrate our research to find out what are the necessary objects in homes. Our interview and tour with a superintendent provides the

opportunity to learn about the parts of an apartment building and what a "super' does to keep an apartment building operating. The information the super gives to us can spur the children's curiosity to pose further questions about the qualities of different parts of an apartment building i.e. heating system, electricity, water, etc... Discovering what is essential in a home will involve investigative and comparative research that will lead to group discussion. During their research and discussions my role will be to offer focusing questions to help distinguish between objects of need versus want. Activities to help them seek answers to their questions include:

- Graphing projects (i.e number of bathrooms in your home, number of lights in your home, the number of outlets in your home) will record the similarities and differences among the research information gathered during investigative work on walks, on visits and at home.
- Reading books about different aspects of shelter. (see Bibliography)
- Mapping projects to include mapping parts of their own home and locations we visit. Comparing the maps leads to further classification and questions.
- Building projects to either recreate homes we have visited or to create their own idea of a home using blocks or scrap items that are located around people's homes and donated for use i.e. fabric, paper rolls, wire, cardboard, boxes, etc...
- Once we have established what is necessary for a home in our neighborhood, the class will explore the qualities of one accessible and investigatable necessary part of a home. One possible necessity in a home is water. Investigations with water will explore its properties, uses and how it gets into a person's home.

3. The Service Unit

Service 'work' provides for the community's needs through the delivering of mail, caretaking of local parks, and the nurturing of infants in the nursery. The purpose of this unit is to provide opportunities to understand the ways people receive and offer services. Many service professions are integral in maintaining the welfare of the community. Connected to their jobs many times is a certain level of commitment and responsibility to the members of the community.

The class' initial encounter with the concept of service will be through a story. The book to introduce the role of service in the community is The Park Bench by F. Takeshita. This book written in both Japanese and English chronicles the work of a local park worker who cares for a park bench that many members of the community use with enjoyment. People do not buy things from him nor does he work to make and sell goods, instead he finds incredible satisfaction in caring for a bench that improves the quality of many a park goer's day.

After reading the book I would ask, "Are there other people in the neighborhood who don't sell things but who make life better in our neighborhood? "After each child told me the name of a job or worker I would ask why they think that job is valuable to the neighborhood. I would record the job names and their comments. Finally, I would ask how they think these workers get paid if they don't sell things?

Preparation for the hospital trip

The unit will start with an initial discussion. I start off by explaining a situation that happened on my street in my neighborhood. The situation involves a boy, Tony, who was riding his big wheel very fast down the block. He got his leg

caught in a metal gate in front of someone's house. It was hurt badly. Tony couldn't get up and his mom came out. He needed help with his leg, more help then his mom could give. Tony's mom thought he could have broken his leg. How could Tony get help? Following this question I will see where the conversation goes and ask questions if needed to assist the children in clarifying their thoughts. Hopefully, the children will mention the hospital as one possibility for a form of care.

The second part of the discussion will begin by going back and examining a chart from a previous meeting that listed things we think are in the neighborhood. We check to see if a human hospital is listed. Having found it on the list I ask, "Several people told us that a person can go to a hospital and get your leg put into a cast if it is broken, I'm wondering what else happens at a hospital?" I chart their responses on paper and use it as a reference throughout our study.

The next day I ask the children to work with a partner and write at least three things they want to find out about a hospital. I inform the children on our visit we will be touring the pediatric ward and the nursery and generally explain what each part does. I instruct the children that one question must be about the nursery, one about the pediatric ward and another about anything they want to find out. After they have completed their work the entire class comes together and shares their questions. I record their questions on chart paper.

Additional preparation will include reviewing the trip sheet with the class prior to our visit.

Trip sheet (see Appendix D)

Part of the trip will include interviewing several workers at the hospital and they will include a hospital administrator who handles the tours, a nurse from the nursery

and a doctor from the pediatric ward. I will take along our questions and different times ask questions to our guides.

Follow-up meeting

A whole class discussion that will have the charts that we made prior to the trip (*What we know about hospitals* and *What we want to want to find out*) available and in sight and the trip sheets the children have completed. The initial question will be "Our trip to the hospital included visiting several parts of the hospital. Where did we visit in the hospital?" After their responses we will look at our questions about what we wanted to find out. Responses to our questions will be charted. Specific areas to examine to help organize their data will include: What were the different workers we saw in the hospital and what did they do? What do you think they have to know to do there job? What are the different tools that are used and why are they used? Describe the school in the pediatric ward and how is it similar and different from our school?

Possible Follow-up activities

1. Have the children's drawing and writing from the trip sheets bound together into a book. Read it aloud and allow time for children to ask question about each other's observations.

2. Block building: Allow for time after the trip to construct different parts of the hospital they saw on their trip. After structures have been completed have time for description of the building and questions/comments from children.

3. Painting: The children paint something from the trip. Prior to the painting a discussion is useful in focusing their efforts. An initial question of "What did you see at the hospital? What colors will you use? What size will you make the ---, big or little?" will help personalize their painting experience.

4. Plasticene: The children use plasticene to recreate/symbolize something from the trip. A preparatory discussion will be helpful focusing the children on the workers they saw, the different parts of the hospital, the tools used, etc...

5. Dramatic Play: Before a group begins their play a leading question of "If you were to pretend to make a part of the hospital what jobs and roles would people be? What props would you need?"

6. Story writing: Working with a teacher small groups of children write a story about their trip. Members discuss the different elements and the sequence when collaborating on how it should be written and illustrated.

5. Math:

a. Children research their own birth weight, length and time of their birth and make a graph with the entire class's data.

b. Using the data about their weight and length the children can work in partnerships figuring out differences and similarities.

c. Children can create questions to take a survey about their individual birthing experiences or their experiences with hospitals.

6. Science: Research what an infant is capable of doing physically after birth. Examine their movement, responsiveness, vocal expression, sleep, and eating patterns. Question a doctor or nurse at the hospital about newborns to discover information. Invite a mother and/or father and her/his newborn to the class for observation, dialogue and questioning.

7. Personal involvement: Donate books to pediatric school. The class holds a bake sale with different foods they make or collect pennies from home. The money would be used to purchase books. I can also find out if the school accepts used books and if so the children can select books from home that they no longer read.

8. Read books about hospitals. (also see Bibliography)

Tubes In My Ears by Virginia Dooley is a book written from the perspective of a six year old who has an operation. The book shows the workers, different tools and expresses the feelings children have towards hospitals. Other books include:

My Hospital Book by William Coleman. An activity book for a child who is taking a trip to the hospital. It makes the hospital a familiar place by introducing different parts of it in a friendly and non-threatening way.

Jeff's Hospital Book. by H.L. Sobol. A photo documentary that chronicles a boys surgery to repair his eyes.

The Hospital Book. by James Howe. A factual book that describes the many workers, tools and parts of a hospital. Helpful photos.

Rescuing a Neighborhood. by Robert Fleming. A detailed look at the real day to day life of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Volunteer Ambulance Corps. The story and photos connects workers with their jobs, families and communities.

Be a Friend by L. Weiner, A. Best, P. Pizzo. Children who have HIV write about how life is for them. This book eloquently brings to life an issue that can be evaded in our society and excluded from our conversations with children. The book gives real faces to this virus and connects it to the lives of young children.

Additional Trips

The service unit will continue with trips to the fire department and the post office. The fire department stresses fire prevention on their tours. In addition to fire prevention, I would request that a fire fighter demonstrate how they use fire hydrants to help put out fires. This would lead to our classroom investigation of where fire hydrants are located in the community. A possible connection would be to locate where a water main is being repaired in the neighborhood and to then observe the water distribution system that exists underground. The children would also examine how the school is equipped to deal with fires: fire proof doors, fire alarms, fire escapes, fire extinguishers, fire drills, etc. We would ask a representative of the fire department what they do when making building inspections, specifically focusing on schools.

The last trip would be to the post office to observe how mail is received, sorted, transported and delivered. The class would actively test how long it takes for mail to be delivered to different locations by writing letters to friends or relatives. In their letters they will have asked the person they are writing to be part of this

experiment. Once the results have been collected, we would record the information and chart the results. Investigating the value of stamps in relation to how much packages weigh or to what distance they are being delivered is an activity that can be set up in the classroom. The classroom "post office" rules and prices can be discussed and determined in a whole group meeting. The children also would investigate drop box locations and how they work and why they are needed. An examination of the school mail system would offer a look into a smaller mail distribution system as compared to our neighborhood system.

Culminating Experience

Our final project after our visits to the three services (hospital, fire station, and post office) would be small group murals that will synthesize what we gathered from our visits and follow-up activities. Each group prior to painting will need help in organizing what they want to include in their painting. Using all of the charts, class books, their own writing and drawing the children collaborate to summarize their information. Next, they plan their painting thinking about the size of the different parts, their position in relation to each other, the colors they would use and make and who wants to paint what.

The mural is not only a "way for the group to celebrate their collaborative efforts and their collective learning," (Explorations, 1992, p. 154) but also a way for me to evaluate my work as a teacher and the children's understanding of the subject matter. The mural can be used as an assessment tool to observe (1) what elements of the study were relevant for specific children, (2) how children work

together taking and giving ideas, (3) how the children spatially organize their painting and (4) the feelings that children bring to the project about the neighborhood, painting, and cooperative work. Painting a mural is a method of assessment that helps their learning as they work to make sense of their private meaning through a public act - cooperative painting.

4. Final Project

The final project for the entire neighborhood study will be the construction of a neighborhood in the class. The project would be done in partnerships and each group would design one place that we have visited or think is a valuable part of the neighborhood. Prior to construction the partnerships would answer questions and draw pictures of (1) what their building is, (2) its different parts, (3) why it is valuable to our neighborhood, (4) what type of work/workers would you need. After completing their construction preparation using class charts, books and other class work they review their work with a teacher and then begin construction.

The buildings are made out of cardboard boxes (the supermarket boxes that fruit is delivered in) and various other materials from home and school - wood scraps, wire, cardboard tubes, spools, cardboard, plasticene, string, glue, tape, craft sticks, etc... This project is a challenge in design to create ideas in miniature and to synthesize the information they have gathered from all their research. It is also a challenge in collaboration to work cooperatively exchanging ideas and feelings about their work. After a group has completed their own building they can work on necessary parts of the neighborhood that are located on the street i.e. stop signs, street signs, trash cans, fire hydrants, drop boxes. etc... Once the entire class has finished the town would be open for operation.

Each group would either sell something or provide a service which they would get paid for rendering. Each building would have to have objects for sale or a service to offer in order to create revenue to buy goods to satisfy their own needs. Plastic coins can be used in the transactions between proprietors and consumers. Children have practice with not only counting, adding and subtracting but with the laws of supply and demand and its effect on their own purchasing power. Problems arise that need individual, partner and whole group solving. Working out

group problems through discussion is a tremendous way to practice community decision making and communication skills and the neighborhood provides an opportune testing ground for solutions. It is valuable that the children get a few weeks to play with what they created. The operation of their built neighborhood offers opportunities for dramatic play that incorporates their learning throughout the study, their previous experience and their current feelings. Managing their own building offers each child the possibility to discover relationships within their built neighborhood such as the location of their business and its aid or detriment to business sales. Overall, this construction activity connects the children's real life experiences with materials that are interactive and accessible.

3. Applications

In this section I will list the ways the study of a community's basic needs is applicable to third and fourth grade and kindergarten, as well as to children living in a suburban area. I will also present two alternative methods of studying basic needs with first graders.

A. Third and Fourth Grades

The activities chosen for 3rd and 4th grades have both similarities and differences to the 1st grade activities described in this study. They are similar because both offer the opportunity to investigate aspects of their environment that are meaningfully connected to their lives. For a 8-10 year old, discovering how and what people ate and wore 100 years ago in Brooklyn or running a school store to meet the school's needs provides activities that they can relate to their everyday experiences. The 3rd and 4th grade activities differ from the 1st grade activities because they extend the basic needs study through time, space and alternative viewpoints. Children in 3rd and 4th grade are able to investigate foreign geography and history that are removed from their immediate neighborhood and comprehend the life of people in the past. Researching how the Native Americans used corn can be investigated through first hand activities to make their understanding more concrete. And finally, the ability of 8-10 year olds to recognize and appreciate perspectives other than their own deepens. Activities to comprehend life from a handicapped person's perspective enables them to look at their own neighborhood through new eyes.

1. The food, water, and materials used to make our shelter and clothing used in Park Slope, Brooklyn can be sourced locally, nationally, and internationally. A concept that guides this study is our neighborhood's interdependence on goods from communities in the US and other countries to fulfill our basic needs. Students can investigate the origins of these goods through various research activities:

• Tracing building materials such as brick, concrete, marble, and sandstone from their place of origin to their use in buildings creates an in depth study that examines the multi-step process of construction.

• Studying where and how fruits, vegetables and fossil fuels are harvested and extracted includes exploring the geography, economy, history and technology of foreign countries.

2. Looking beyond Park Slope, the students can explore how communities in other countries meet their basic need requirements. Studying a community in a developing country offers the opportunity to compare two diverse ways of life.

• Hands on activities: constructing model homes, preparing foods, and making clothing.

• Discovering a culture other than one's own enables you not only learn about other ways of life but also helps you evaluate your own community's methods more closely.

• We would look at the interdependence in Park Slope and compare it with the self-sufficiency of the residents in less developed communities.

3. Studying how communities in the past satisfied their basic needs offers many possibilities:

• Going back in time 100 years and researching through books, illustrations, photos, and newspapers what Brooklyn was like in 1897. Students examine the styles of clothing, the types of buildings and foods that were eaten.

• Study how the first settlers, the Native Americans fulfilled their basic needs in the area now called Brooklyn. Activities such as grinding corn and/or weaving allow for the students to physically experience the efforts of the Native Americans.

• Comparing how resources were used in the past with our modern consumer society exposes some present day environmental dilemmas: land management, waste disposal, and economic conservation, among others.

4. Study how the community is designed for people with physical handicaps.

• Questions include: How do you design a traffic light that is useful for a blind person? What type of construction is needed for a person in a wheelchair to get into a building with steps in front of the entrance?

• Students learn about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and how this legislation assists people who years ago were ignored and denied access to many locations. Allowing the children to have hands on experience at designing a doorknob for people with arthritis or a ramp for the Williamsburg Bridge that makes it wheelchair accessible are real life issues that need solutions.

5. Study the structural design of the neighborhood, focusing attention specifically on the need for shelter.

• Explore how form and function connect in the structural design. Study different materials and the construction of structural, decorative and/or symbolic parts of buildings.

• Cooperative activities to build structures and experiment with their elements provides opportunities to develop various skills: fine and gross motor skills,

problem solving, communication, spatial relational, and knowledge of their surrounding environment.

6. The study of how needs are met is the study of work in the community. Meaningful work in the community produces engaged workers. The same is true in the classroom. One method of connecting the study of work in the neighborhood to the students' life in the classroom is for the students in a class to take on a job for the school.

- An entire grade or one class can manage the school store by organizing the supply, delivery, selling, and buying of materials.

- An entire grade or one class can manage an inter school postal system.

- Engaging students in this type of work puts them in positions of responsibility and exposes the organizational and planning aspects of work.

B. Kindergarten

The activities chosen for a kindergarten class's study of basic needs has its foundation in the immediate and concrete life of the child. A basic needs study for kindergarten aims to use the child's experiences as a reference to discover

relationships within their environment. Researching how food is eaten, sold and grown in the family, neighborhood and surrounding area offers opportunities to investigate concrete aspects of their everyday lives. These activities are focused more on helping the children see themselves as part of a more immediate group (the class or the family) rather than the 1st grader's learning of how groups function based on evidence from research. Both the kindergarten and 1st grade activities concentrate on what is experienced sensorially but the kindergarten activities don't require going into great depth whereas the first grade's study extend their investigations over more time and go into greater detail. Cohen (1972) states that fives "interests cover an amazingly broad scope but fives seldom pursue an interest in great depth" (p. 66). The kindergartners are gathering more information that changes their generalizations about certain topics into more detailed classifications. i.e. the activities that investigate different types of food helps add factual information to their general understandings.

The focus of the following activities is on meaningful experiences that are related to the children's life, needs and interests as well as their cognitive maturity.

- Food projects and building activities help to discover similarities and differences between the foods families eat and houses they live in.

- Classify different types of food and trace their place of origin. i.e. What is a root vegetable and how does it grow?

- Examine one type of food such as bread or rice to discover its attributes, ingredients and ways to make and eat it. Trips: an Indian restaurant, Jewish bakery, Italian bakery, a mill, and a farm with wheat.

• Classroom visits from family members to cook a favorite bread allows for the exploration of economics, geography, mathematics, language arts and family and cultural history.

•Trips to near by farms, green markets and local stores expose the process of food production and distribution.

• Examining the relationship between the seasons and the children's homes, food and clothing can be personally researched. Discover that as the seasons change so do our needs.

•Interview and visit family members or friends who do work related to food services, housing (architects, construction workers, etc...) or clothing in the immediate neighborhood. Personal meetings with workers who are connected to the class expose the students to technology, economics, geography and the skills and qualities of each worker.

C. Suburban Setting

While needs remain the same in suburban settings, the way these needs are met are different. As compared with the urban neighborhood, the suburban neighborhood is more spread out with the car as the main means of transportation. People in the suburbs are more isolated and independent than in the urban neighborhood.

• Examining where, and how people shop, live and work in the town explores the geography of the environment, its uses and its design. Examine how people get food and clothing by exploring the design of the strip mall as a planned structure that speaks to the needs of the surrounding community.

• Discover how people travel and use transportation to meet their basic needs. i.e. How far do people travel to met their needs.

• Examine the role of community involvement through volunteer organizations that help neighborhood: fire department, neighborhood watches.

• Explore the neighborhood as not only a habitat that fulfills the basic needs of humans but of other species as well.

Alternative Approaches for First Graders

1. Study the role of water in the neighborhood

• Examine where the water source for the town is located and trace its route to the community.

• Interviews, trips and classroom activities can lead to discovering how water is used by the fire department.

- Explore water through science projects with lakes, rivers, streams that test water quality, plant life, animal life and human effect on the water.

- Studying water and its role in helping people meet their needs also includes examining how it is necessary to efficiently use this limited natural resource.

2. Study of the built environment

- Observe, classify, categorize different materials in the neighborhood. i.e. marble, cement, steel, wood, etc...

- Examine the relationship between form and function for each material. What makes each material useful for its job?

- Visit work sites to observe the specialized tools and methods of work. See the practical use of technology and effects of cooperation.

- Collaborative building projects in the class give hands on experience in the cooperative and multi-step process of construction.

- Compare the design of different buildings and how they are used. i.e. schools, churches, synagogues, mosques, pizza parlors, etc...

4. Appendices

Name _____

A Walk on 7th Avenue between Carroll Street and Garfield Place.

1. Draw a line from the kind of store to where it is on the block.

Carroll Street

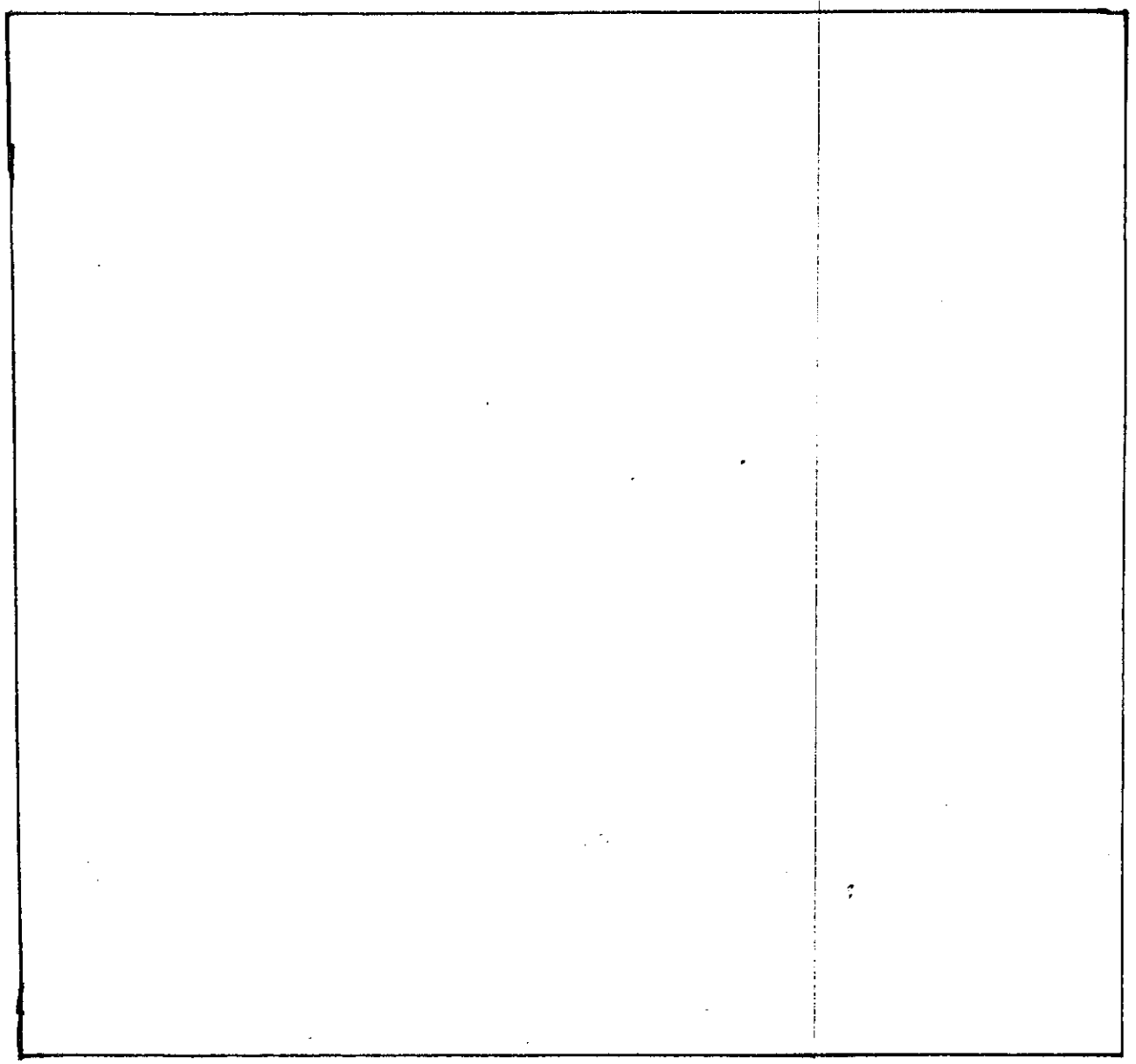
Garfield Place

Bank
Video Store
Eye Care Store
Pizza Parlor
Supermarket
Back Rub Store
Restaurant
Deli
Food Store
Real Estate
Empty
Art Supply Store
Sneaker Store
Cleaner
Laundrymat
Toy Store
Wine Store
Bookstore
Drug Store
Hair Cutters

Carroll Street

Garfield Place

2. Sketch the most interesting store you see

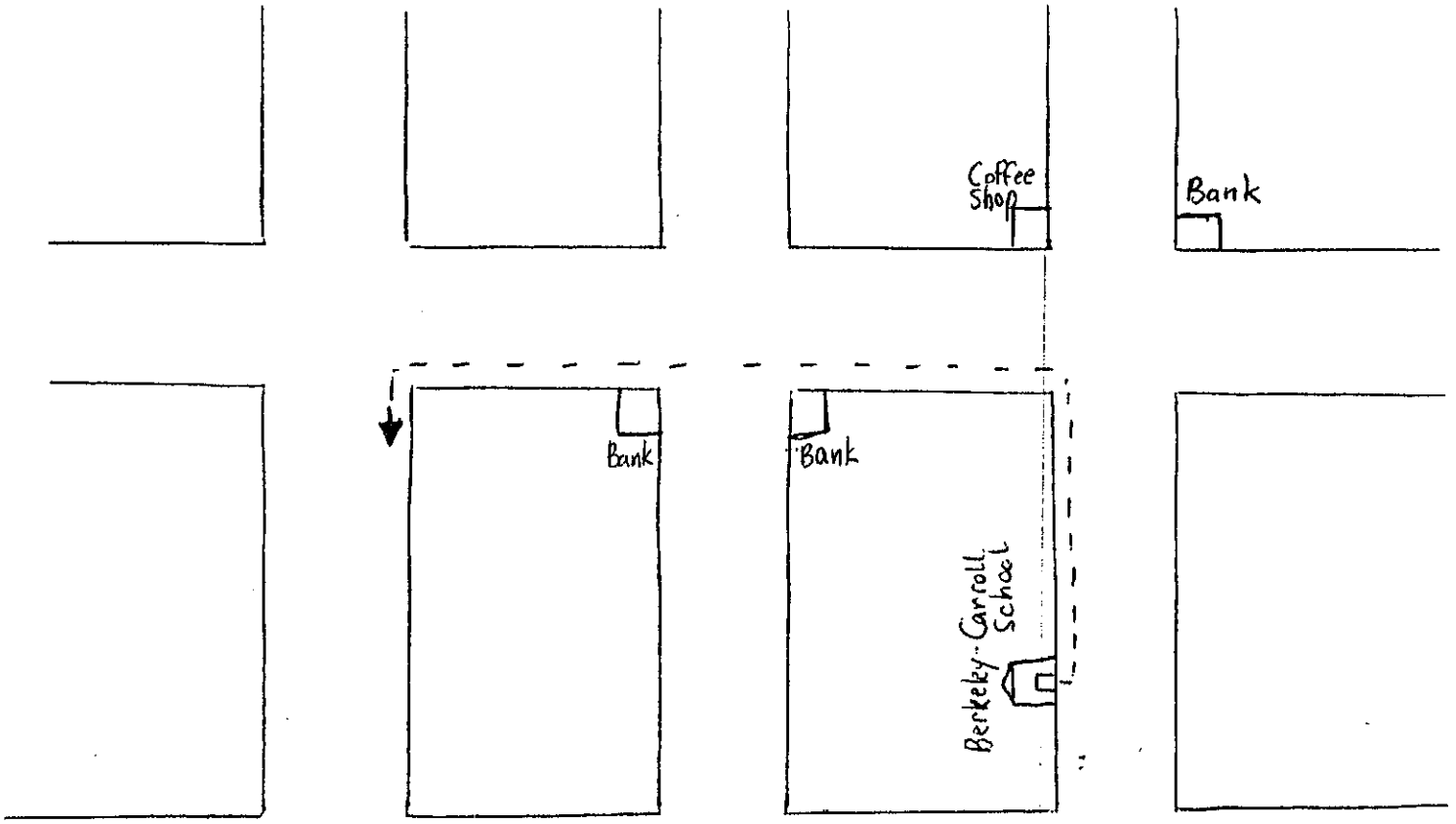


3. What does the store sell ?

Apppendix B

Name _____

Walk to Park Slope Food Coop



1. What street is Berkeley Carroll School on ?

_____

2. Label 7th Ave on the map.
3. Put an X where the Food Coop is.
4. What street is the Food Coop on ?

_____

Appendix C

Name _____

My trip to Park Slope Food Coop

1. What are the different parts of the food store?

2. Draw a picture of one part of the store.

3. What are some of the different kinds of work people do at the food store?

4. What are some of the tools people use at the food store? Draw pictures on the back.

. List the different ways the Food Coop gets their food:

Name _____

Trip to Methodist Hospital

A. The Nursery

Draw a picture of a worker in the nursery and the work he/she is doing.

B. Describe how the workers help care for the new born infants.

C. The Pediatric Floor

Draw a picture of the most interesting part of the Pediatric Floor.

2. Describe the help and care children get on the Pediatric Floor.

5. Bibliography

References

Bellah, R. et al. (1985) Habits of the Heart. Berkeley: University of CA Press.

Blackie, J. (1971) Inside the Primary School. NY: Schocken Books.

Biber, B. (1972). The Whole Child: Individuality and Values in Education. NY: Bank Street College of Education.

Cenedella, J. (1976). Social Studies Programs: An integrative creative experience. Schooling: A Social Moral Force. p. 90-96.

Cenedella, J. (1982).Social Studies: The Core of the Curriculum. Bank Street Notes. Winter.

Cohen, D. (1972). The Learning Child. NY: Schocken Books.

Cuffaro, H. (1995). Experimenting with the World. NY: Teachers College Press.

Erickson, E. (1950). Childhood and Society. NY: Norton & Co.

Hetherington, E.M. & Parke, R.D. (1986). Child Psychology. NY: McGraw-Hill Company.

Mitchell, A. & David, J. (Eds.) (1992) Explorations with Young Children. Mt. Rainier: Gryphon Books.

Mitchell, L.S. (1991) Young Geographers. NY: Bank Street College of Education.

Pratt, C. (1924) Experimental Practice in the City and CountrySchool. NY: Dutton & Co.

Seefeldt, C. (1993) Social Studies for the Preschool &PrimaryChild. NY: Macmillan.

Winsor, C. (1958) What are we doing in Social Studies. NY: Bank Street College Of Education

Books for Food Unit

Carle, E. (1993). Today is Monday. NY: Philomel Books.

Gibbons, G. (1988). Farming. NY: Holiday Books.

Grossman, B. (1989). Bunny at the Grocery Store. NY: Harper & Row.

Hautzig, D. (1994). At the Supermarket. NY: Orchard Books.

Horwitz, J. (1984). Night Markets. NY: Crowell.

Lewin, T. (1996). Market! NY: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books.

Lobel, A. (1980). On Market Street. NY Greenwillow Books.

Patent, D. (1991). Where Food Comes From. NY: Holiday House.

Schotter, R. (1993). A fruit and vegetable man. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.

Shannon, T. (1961). About food and where it comes from. Chicago: Melant Publishers.

Zim, H. and Skelly, J. (1975). Eating Places. NY: Morrow & Co.

Books for Shelter Unit

Agell, J. (1984). A home is to share - and share - and share. Scarsdale, NY: Bradbury Press.

Barrett, J. (1969). Old MacDonald had an apartment house. NY: Atheneum.

Bunting, E. (1991) Fly Away Home. NY: Clarion Books.

Cannon, C. (1972). Kirk's new house. NY: Coward, McCann, and Geoghegan.

Clifton, L. (1976). Everett Anderson's Friend. NY: Henry Holt & Co.

Cole, J. (1986). Magic School Bus at the Water Works. NY: Scholastic.

Gibbons, G. (1990). How a house is built. NY: Holiday House.

Glenn, P. (1993). Under every roof. Washington, DC: Preservation Press.

Kalman, B. (1990). The Kitchen. Crabtree Publishing.

Maestro, G. (1973). The remarkable plant in Apartment 4. Scarsdale, NY: Bradbury Press.

Morris, A. (1992). Houses and homes. NY: Lothrop, Leet and Shepard Books.

Schaaf, P. (1980). An apartment house up close. NY: Four Winds Press.

Sobol, H. L. (1978). Pete's house. NY: MacMillian.

Teibl, M. (1979). Davey come home. NY: Harper & Row.

Ventura, P. (1993). Houses. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Books for the Service Unit

Dooley, V. (1996) Tubes in my Ears. Greenvale: Mondo.

Fleming, R. (1995). Rescuing a Neighborhood. NY: Walker and Company.

Howe, James (1994). Hospital Book. NY: Morrow.

Maass, R. (1987) Fire Fighters. NY: Scholastic.

Rylant, C. (1989) Mr. Griggs Work. NY: Orchard Books.

Sobol, H.L. (1975). Jeff's Hospital Book. NY: Walck Inc.

Takeshita, F. (1989) Park Bench. Brooklyn: Kane Miller.

Weiner, L, A. Best & P. Pizzo. (1994) Be a Friend. Morton Grove, IL: Whitman & Company.