

Land Use

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Educational Goals: Team work is a benefit; as students get worked up about the multitude of uses to which land can be put, the suggestions fly! The activity promotes awareness of our surroundings and often results in new ideas for land use. The lesson can be taught in a social studies context, as well as a preliminary to map making and model building.

Description: Most people rarely think about how land is used. We normally go about our daily life in blissful ignorance of what goes on behind the doors of buildings we have never had the opportunity to visit. This lesson is a great introduction to the various ways in which real estate is used. The urban environment is a virtual melting pot of land use. This lesson can be followed by planning or map making lessons.

Diciplines: Architecture, Social Studies and Urban Planning.

Time: 2 hours / one mentoring session.

Materials: Land use maps, if available, *preferably of the neighborhoods in which the students live*; a list of “Land Uses” prepared in advance to start things off and keep the lesson moving.

Additional Resources: You can consult the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York which includes lists of various land uses and maps. Go to <http://www.ci.nyc.ny.us/html/dcp/html/zone/zonetext.shtml> for the text of the Zoning Resolution. On the same page are links to the Zoning Maps.

Activity: Presentation / Group Activity

Lead the class in a discussion of the various ways in which land is used. Refer to the actual Zoning Maps and ask students to verify whether land in their neighborhood is being used lawfully, in accordance with the zoning indicated on the map. Start a running list of “Land Uses” on the board and add students’ suggestions. You will probably run out of board space once the lesson gets going. You may have to ask a student to help writing the suggestions on the board. Another alternative would be to break the class up into groups and have them develop lists on their own. Lists could then be compared to see which uses are common to everyone’s lists.