

BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Education Pack

Summary and Index

Most educational resources available for the built environment are focused on urban environments. There are very few areas in the Hebrides that could be described as urban, or even suburban, and even when there are settlements the buildings are most often very loosely grouped and widely separated. There is little sense of "street" as found in many other parts of the UK.

The principle aims are

The first set of worksheets in this pack looks at developing an introduction to the built environment to record and produce information on the local built environment in and around your school, and produce an I spy booklet that can be used to share some of your findings with other pupils in your school.

The next set of activities builds on this local information, to look at some of the influences that have shaped, and continue to shape the character of the local built environment in the islands: eg location, climate, history.

Also an option to use the resources of the internet and google earth to compare and contrast the local findings with another contrasting area, either on the islands or on the mainland.

The aim is that students will then use their new knowledge and understanding of their local built environment to help identify landmark buildings or structures that

There is information how architects and other professionals working in the built environment communicate design; looking at scale, and drawing conventions including plan section and elevation

BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Our Local Area - I spy Booklet

Introduction to the built environment

These worksheets take an area local to the school as their subject, and are intended to promote visual awareness and understanding of the built environment. Using their personal experiences as a starting point young people can develop their knowledge of buildings and the spaces in-between them to make up their minds about the quality of their own surroundings.

Using the activities described pupils will learn to identify and interpret the built environment that they see every day, by looking closely and analysing what they experience they will begin to appreciate its design and impact on the locality and to think about how it might be improved. From these experiences they can develop a personal point of view about design quality, and a critical response to the built environment that will engender a capacity to take responsibility for the places where they will live and work.

Visual awareness is more than just 'looking'; it is also about 'seeing', and seeing leads to understanding. Subjects such as history and geography and science help pupils to quantify places; to identify, to categorise and to understand why they are as they are, how they work, and their interrelationships. But visual awareness, really seeing and understanding, adds a critical dimension. It encourages the development of qualitative judgements about buildings and places, and a deeper understanding of how places have come to be, how they are now, and how they can be in the future.

Aim

In this activity the children will produce an I spy booklet of their local built environment. There are 3 parts to the activity

1. Building a library of different building types
2. Visiting the site to look and record

BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Our Local Area - I spy Booklet

Introduction to the built environment

3. Return to the classroom to analyse and report their findings and collate the I spy booklet.

Before you start

- Choose an street/area local to your school to study in detail.
- The extent of the study area will vary from school to school, and will be dependant on class size too, as well as your location, but it should ideally include a minimum of 10-20 buildings. Schools in more built up areas may have up-to 30 or 40 buildings in total (15/20 on each side of the road.)
- Ideally it should have a good mix of building types , including residential, public , commercial, from different periods of history.
- be short enough for the class to walk along during the visit
- be within walking distance of the school
- In rural areas with small schools it might be difficult to have an local study area that includes a wide range of building types. This does not matter, as this fact can then be used as a way to explore the particularities of your own local built environment, and how that might be different to that of other places, both on and off the Islands.

When carrying out the pre-visit assessment ensure you have identified safe stopping places where the group can discuss and draw.

A display of the area being studied is invaluable as an interactive resource for the pupils to use throughout the project. For younger pupils It should be in place for the first lesson. For older pupils, one of the first tasks might be to create this display themselves.

Take photographs of all the buildings in the chosen study area from the road/ street, It is really important to also include the spaces in-between the buildings, as well as the spaces between the road and the buildings, where buildings are set back form the road, as part of the display.

Arrange each side as a panorama on a display board in the classroom, leave enough room between the rows of photos and around the side for pupils to add their research findings.

It is a good idea to have extra copies of the display photos to use in some activities

You will need a map of the local areas showing your chosen study area. This can be displayed on the wall or you can use an interactive whiteboard to display a map form an internet site. You may decide to use both options to allow the pupils to study the map when it is not on the whiteboard.



BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Our Local Area - I spy Booklet

Part 1

Introduction to the built environment - Building a library of building types

Aims

To introduce pupils to the project and the variety of building styles and features of the built environment they might expect to find

Class discussion

Explain to pupils that they are going to be studying buildings in the area around their school, and learning how to analyse the built environment. This will involve going outside and working like detectives to find out as much as they can.

They will put together an I spy our area book to be used by other pupils in the school. At the end they could also present their findings to the rest of the school and their parents, in an assembly, or create a class book.

Introduce the topic with a discussion about buildings and elements of the built environment in your local area.

Within your local area there are many different types of building, as a group discuss the different purposes buildings can have:

ie: religious, public meeting places, transport, defensive, commercial, agricultural, industrial, and domestic.

Activity - Library of Building Types

Use this discussion to start to build a library of different types of buildings in your area.

Use word cards initially to build up the library, but then as the project develops you could enhance it using images

eg: pictures from magazines, internet, google earth and street view, photographs, drawings by the pupils

Use colour coding for public, private, commercial, agricultural functions.

Are there ways that you can tell what use a building has by how it looks from the outside?

What other built things are there in your environment?

Examples could include: Ruined and derelict buildings, causeways, slips, piers and harbours, bridges, defence structures, wind generators, sheds, greenhouses, walls and fences, bus shelters, containers, caravans, mobile masts, telephone boxes, post boxes, wheelie bin shelters, signage etc.

These types of structures are not strictly buildings but they often form significant features of the local built environment.

Use these examples to add to your library of your local built environment.

Resources

- stimulus display showing panorama of buildings in your chosen street or study area
- map of local area including study area
- drawing equipment
- coloured cards for writing on and displaying
- architectural vocabulary lists from resource pack
- resource sheet 1 and 2

Outcomes and Outputs

- increased understanding of the elements of the built environment
- being able to use a map to locate the school and study area
- drawings and phrases to describe the study area from memory and by looking at the display
- comparison of attributes of two buildings

BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Our Local Area - I spy Booklet

Part 1

Introduction to the built environment - Building a library of building types

Are there any local buildings or built structures that are more distinctive than most of the others? what makes them stick out? Size? Use? Colour? Setting? Historic? Materials? Does their function mean that that it's important for them to be distinctive and different from other buildings around them?

Are there other types of buildings that are not necessarily in your area, but that pupils may have seen when they have been visiting other places, or on TV or in movies?

What about world wide famous buildings or structures? Ask the children to come up with places they know of:

Eg Tower of London, Eifel Tower, Sydney Opera House, Scottish Parliament, Glasgow School of Art, Forth Road Bridge, Murrayfield Stadium, secc in Glasgow, The London Eye, The Shard in London, Empire State Building in New York. Taj Mahal, etc.

Why are they famous? Because of what they look like? Or because of their function? Or another reason? Can you draw pictures of these buildings or find pictures of these buildings on the internet?

Split the library of buildings/structures and building types into three categories:

- Local to your school. This is the area you will study for your I spy book.
- Local to your wider local area and the Islands
- Outside the Islands

Materials introduction

Look at the different materials that buildings can be made of. What are they called? Why are they used? Are they waterproof/structural/purely decorative?

Compare and contrast Activity

In pairs or small groups chose two different buildings from your library (preferably ones you have images of) and decide the similarities and differences between the two buildings and record your observations under the headings on the resource sheet

Class feedback

Reinforce the development of architectural vocabulary by encouraging class feedback under headings, including materials, shapes, doors, windows, patterns.

BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Our Local Area - I spy Booklet

Part 1

Introduction to the built environment - Our Area

Activity 2

Our Area

Look at the map of your local area, and your study area.

You could also use google earth and google maps street view to look at the area at different scales and with different filters and from different view points. How do the different views show you different things, do some ways of looking make it easier to understand the maps?

Explain the area you will be studying and it's extents.

Resource sheet 1.

Imagine that you are walking down the road in the area that we are going to study now and quickly sketch one or more of the buildings or structures you can see in the main box on the sheet.

Think about what the buildings are used for.

Pupils to work in pairs to decide on three words or phrases to describe the area and how the area makes them feel, and then write these in the spaces provided in resource sheet 1

Class feedback

on their descriptions of their area.

BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Our Local Area - I spy Booklet

Part 2

A Visit to the Area - Looking, Seeing and Recording

Aims

to observe and record features of the chosen study area.

Class discussion

Re-introduce the visit to the selected area and explain that pupils are going to observe and record aspects which will give them information to build up their knowledge about their area. Refer to previous work by asking which area we are studying, and ask someone to identify the area on the map. Other questions might include: what might we want to find out? and what might we look for?

Before you go out also look at the orientation and siting of the area. Note on the map where north is. Are there good views? What is the topography? What are the major geographical features? what can you tell from the maps? what can't you tell from the maps?

Activity:

Work in small groups: assign detective missions to each group.

Doors and Windows

How many different types can you find? What is different about them? Why do you think they are different? Where is the main entrance door? Can you always see the main door from the road?

Materials

How many different materials can you find on buildings? What do they do? What does this tell you?

Shapes and symmetry

What shapes can you find in the buildings? Can you find buildings that are symmetrical/asymmetrical?

Pattern and colour

What patterns can you find in the buildings and structures? Why do you think that pattern has been used? What colours can you find? Why are they there?

Structures that are not buildings

What other structures are there in your study area? Why are they there? How visible are they?

Visibility, size and landmarks

Can you see any buildings/structures in your area from a long way away? What do you see? When you are in your area can you see buildings/structures outside it. Are they close? Or a long way away? What kind of buildings/structures are they? can you tell from a distance, or do you need to get closer? Is there anything that you would consider to be a landmark if you were describing your area to someone else?

Resources

- stimulus display showing panorama of buildings in your chosen street or study area
- map of local area including study area
- drawing equipment
- resource sheets 3.1-3.7
- resource sheet 3.8 - Building type tally sheet
- clipboards
- digital cameras

Outcomes and Outputs

- practicing fieldwork skills
- being able to record architectural features in annotated drawings and photographs
- being able to record building use on tally sheets.

BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Our Local Area - I spy Booklet

Part 3

Analysing and reporting

Aims

To analyse and share information collected.

Class discussion

Explain that they will be working in the fact finding detective groups from the area site visit

Remind them they will be making an I spy book for other classes to use. Each group should look at all the information they have collected and discuss what they have discovered about their area.

Activity

Each group should record its key findings on a large sheet of paper and present them to the rest of the class.

Each group then decides which information should be added to the display and writes it on cards that are pinned under the picture of the appropriate buildings/structures. For instance: materials, types of windows/doors, patterns, etc also pin up drawings of details next to the appropriate buildings. Use different colours of card for different functions. Eg white for private, red for public, yellow for commercial, green for agricultural.

Give out the template for the I spy book. Each group should decide on four or five questions to include in the book. First write a draft and then write neatly or type on the template pages.

Class feedback

Ask the pupils: if you were telling someone about your detective work on the area what three things would you most want to tell them? Discuss in pairs and feedback to the class

Follow up

Collate and print out the completed I spy booklet for other pupils in the school.

Resources

- completed resource sheets from site visit
- Large sheets of paper for recording key points
- architectural vocabulary lists
- I spy book templates
- small copies of photos chosen by pupils for the I spy books
- thick felt pens
- pencils
- coloured cards for writing information on
- Scissors
- Pins

Outcomes and Outputs

- detailed analysis resulting from the visit
- presentation of the analysis requiring pupils to collate information and giving opportunities for speaking and listening
- information and drawings to be added to your display
- I spy booklets to be used by pupils in other classes

BUILDING OUR ISLANDS

Our Local Area - I spy Booklet

Suggestions for follow on activities

Aims

to build on information learnt and gathered for I spy booklet

Activity: Analysis of building types in your area

ask pupils to look at the tally sheets of building functions in the area they filled in on the site visit

what is the most common building type?

what is/are the least common building types?

What does this tell you about your area?

Talk about other places that might be familiar to the pupils, a town, a city on the mainland? How might the findings be different in these places?