

Activity 1

Introduce the Unit with a PowerPoint presentation slide show of the Armory Campus as it exists today. We must set the setting of our unit since our children have never visited this area of the city, nor are they familiar with the history of this area. Question – Can you identify any of these places and how can or do they affect us today?

Concept and Skill Grades 3 and 4 Frameworks: Observe and describe local or regional historic art facts and sites and general questions about their function, construction, and significance.

Activity 2

Materials

Booklet entitled *A Little History of Springfield, Massachusetts*.

Have them read and enhance this booklet with art materials. Brainstorm predictions for some of the questions asked and stimulate interest and excitement for the coming experiments.

Activity 3

The Little Dig

Prepare pans with hidden materials and have small rakes, shovels, and paintbrushes available. We have included balls from muskets, spent balls, shards of pottery with Native American designs, horseshoe nails, a horseshoe, a simulated badge from an Armory employee, etc. Have the children make a grid on the pans using masking tape. As they uncover their “finds” have them draw a picture of the object. Students will then try to identify and label each object. Keep their finds in a journal.

Composition Standard 24: Students will gather information from a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the quality of the information they obtain, and use it to answer their own questions.

Activity 4

Make arrangements with the Instrumental Music Teacher to display 2 identical musical instruments. Then have the teacher demonstrate the interchangeability of their parts. Have students list the things in their lives that have interchangeable parts. Perhaps a discussion of “throw away” products could be introduced at this time.

Culminating Activity

Prepare puzzles for each child. We used Dr. Seuss's "Cat in the Hat". To demonstrate the limits of hand made products have each child cut the puzzle up into 6 pieces and then try to exchange a part with another student.

To demonstrate the interchangeability of parts give each child the identical puzzle that has been cut up using machine cut puzzles (paper cutter). Again exchange pieces.

Discuss and list conclusions.

Options:

This activity can be done in many different ways. If you have a die cutting machine in your school, you can use it to cut identical pieces that can be interchanged.

Use the ballpoint activity that is listed on the website.