

Landmarks

Lesson Objective & Summary

Objective: Students will identify defining features of a “landmark” and will differentiate between natural and man-made landmarks. Students will then investigate local landmarks (either natural, man-made, or both) in their community and create a visitor’s brochure to share information about their chosen landmark with others.

Summary: Students will watch several ProjectExplorer.org episodes about some of the natural and man-made landmarks that exist around the world. Students will then define what a “landmark” is, and explain some of the defining characteristics that differentiate man-made from natural landmarks. Students will then research and/or explore local landmarks within their community/country and create an informative tourist brochure that would educate a visitor about that location.

Grade Level:
Upper Elementary

DURATION:
2 - 3 Lessons

SUBJECTS:
Arts Ed, English Language Arts,
Geography, World History

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Standards & Benchmarks

From the Common Core Standards for Language Arts, Grades 3-5

- Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic. (*Common Core Standards for Language Arts, Grades 3-5, Research to Build and Present Knowledge*)
- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly (*Common Core Standards for Language Arts, Grades 3-5, Writing: Text Types and Purposes*)

Background Information for Educators

Landmarks have long served to mark iconic or significant places within a community. Some landmarks were naturally formed, such as the Old Faithful geyser in Yellowstone National Park in the United States, or Mount Etna in Sicily, Italy. Other landmarks were created by human beings as monuments, ceremonial sites, or even as defense structures within a local community; these landmarks often hold significance to a local culture or populace because of its commemoration of a certain person or event. Some examples include the Great Wall of China, Machu Picchu in Peru, Angkor Wat in Cambodia, and the One World Trade Center (also known as the Freedom Tower) in the United States. The Seven Wonders of the Ancient, Natural, and Modern World are all landmarks, as well.

Landmarks that are naturally formed usually reflect unique characteristics of the local landscape. For instance, the Seven-Coloured Sands of Mauritius reflect this island nation's formation through volcanic activity. Yanar Dag in Azerbaijan pays homage to its history as the "Land of Fire," and shows how this nation's naturally-occurring flames from its petroleum-rich landscape earned its moniker.

The following is a list of episodes from ProjectExplorer.org's [collection on Natural and Man-Made Landmarks](#):

Natural

- Azerbaijan: [Yanar Dag](#) and the [Mud Volcanoes](#)
- Belize: [The Belize Barrier Reef](#)
- Mauritius: [The Seven-Coloured Sands](#)
- South Africa: [Table Mountain](#)
- Zambia: [Victoria Falls](#)

Man-made

- Australia: [The Sydney Harbor Bridge](#)
- Belize: [Caracol](#)
- England: [The London Eye & Other Landmarks](#)
- India: [The Gateway & Other British Landmarks](#)
- Mexico: [Teotihuacan](#)
- Thailand: [Ayutthaya](#)

Guiding Questions	Key Vocabulary
<p>What is a landmark?</p> <p>Why are landmarks used?</p> <p>How are landmarks classified (natural / man-made)?</p> <p>What differentiates a natural landmark from a man-made landmark?</p> <p>What are significant landmarks in my community? State? Country?</p>	<p>Landmark</p> <p>Man-made</p> <p>Natural</p> <p>Significance</p> <p>Iconic</p> <p>Monument</p> <p>Commemorate</p>

Lesson Plan

1. Display 6-8 photographs of famous landmarks with which students would be familiar (some suggestions: Mount Rushmore (US), Eiffel Tower (Paris), Mount Everest (Nepal), Niagara Falls (US)). Ask students to identify what the similarities and differences of these landmarks are.
2. Ask students to work together to create a class definition of the word “landmark.”
3. Pose the following questions to the class: why are landmarks used? What is a landmark’s significance? Are there different types? If students have not yet identified that there are naturally-formed and man-made landmarks, help guide them to that conclusion.
4. Share several episodes from ProjectExplorer.org’s [landmarks collection](#). It is recommended for teachers to select videos that represent both naturally-formed and man-made landmarks. As students watch each episode, have them share where each landmark is, whether it is natural or man-made, and what its significance is for the community in which it is located.

Possible Activity: If the technology is available, have student groups investigate different landmarks and complete a class chart or use post-it notes as an interactive way to differentiate between the natural and man-made landmarks they explore.

5. Once students have a working understanding of what a landmark is, have them brainstorm some of the landmarks in their local community. Depending on the location, the teacher may want to limit or extend the geographic area that students will explore to identify local landmarks.
6. Have students work in pairs to select one of the landmarks in their community, country, or state. Using research, photographs/illustrations, and informative explanations, student pairs will create a brochure that could be used to inform a visitor about that landmark. As much as possible, students should include information about the landmark’s geographic location, history, significance, and any other important information about their chosen landmark.

Helpful Hint: Local tourist bureaus and hotels will often have leaflets to local sites. It may be helpful for students to preview these samples to know how information is shared.

Possible Extension

Contact a local Tourist / Visitor’s Bureau to see if student’s brochures may be displayed. This will give students an opportunity to prepare a finished product for an authentic audience, which will encourage them to use multiple drafts and revisions. (We’d love to see pictures of this! Email us at: education@projectexplorer.org)

Assessment / Evidence of Understanding

- Students will be able to define what a “landmark” is, as well as what differentiates between naturally-formed and man-made landmarks. Students will collaborate with others to investigate, research, and create a brochure about a local landmark that could be used to inform visitors about a particular place and its significance.

Assessment Rubric	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
Understanding of Landmarks	Student vaguely defines what a landmark is but has a difficult time differentiating between naturally-formed and man-made landmarks.	Student clearly defines what a landmark is and can give specific factors that differentiate a naturally-formed landmark from a man-made landmark. Student may be able to give specific examples of different types of landmarks.	Student not only clearly defines what a landmark is and can differentiate between naturally-formed and man-made landmarks, but student is also able to explain why a specific landmark is reflective of the history and/or significance of that particular place.
Visitor's Brochure	Student brochure includes basic information about the landmark, including its geographic location and a short description of the landmark. Student research may be limited, or information shared may be vague. Brochure may or may not include visual representations of the landmark, and may also include errors that reflect poor revision or drafting. Brochure may be written without audience consideration.	Student brochure includes all required information about the landmark, including its geographic location, history, significance, and a description of the landmark using grade-level vocabulary. Student research reflects grade-level expectations, and information is complete. Brochure includes at least one visual representation of the landmark and reflects thoughtful drafting and revision with minimal mistakes. Brochure keeps target audience in mind and uses appropriate language, descriptions, and sentence-structures.	Student brochure includes all required information about the landmark using vocabulary and complex sentence structures that exceed grade level expectations. Brochure may also include additional information not required, such as a timeline, map, diagrams, or other pertinent information that reflects in-depth research and understanding of the landmark. Brochure includes multiple visual representations of the landmark and reflects thoughtful drafting and revision without mistakes.

Additional Resources

The Seven Wonders of the Natural World

http://www.unmuseum.org/7wonders/natural_wonders.htm

The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World

<http://www.travelchannel.com/interests/hot-topics/articles/seven-wonders-of-the-world>

<http://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/sevens-wonders-of-the-ancient-world>

The Seven Wonders of the Modern World

http://www.unmuseum.org/7wonders/modern_wonders.htm