V. Waterbury by Design

Subject(s):

Time Needed: 50 minute class session

Objectives:

- ✓ encourage students to recognize the architecture and structural elements of the city
- ✓ use the students' artistic talents
- ✓ gain more familiarity with "Brass City Life" website
- ✓ recognize the aesthetic differences between Waterbury neighborhoods

Areas/Disciplines Covered:

Architecture (style, history)
Art (drawing, painting)
Cultural Studies (aesthetics)
History (US, local)
Urban Studies (design, urban planning)

Materials:

- pencils and large (11x14 or bigger) pieces of paper for the students
- chalk and chalkboard or marker and chart paper
- internet and **projector** to access the pictures of the Waterbury homes from "Brass City Life"
- homework assignment

Procedure:

1. Start class discussion by asking students, "What do houses in Waterbury look like?" Keep a tally of the descriptions on the board or paper. To propel discussion, encourage them to think of the inside as well as the outside. Next ask them, "Do the house styles change depending on the neighborhood you're in? How so?" Record these answers as well.

2. Take 10-15 minutes to direct the students to the images of Waterbury houses on the website. Start by clicking on "explore neighborhoods via map" and going to "Overlook/Hillside" and checking the "photo gallery" collection there. You may want to highlight: "Williamson Dr., 1944", etc. Add one contemporary picture of your own as well. In large group discuss:

What are the differences between them?
What are the similarities?
How does neighborhood and culture define the style of house that you live in?

3. Bring in the historical knowledge of Waterbury, its neighborhoods, and houses. Make sure to include:

- ➢ The relevance of triple-decker homes: to make as much space as possible for workers in the factory and their families. [see North

Square/Crownbrook: "North Square, c. 1890" and South End: "Olivine & Jeanette Jolin, c. 1945"]

- How the Overlook/Hillside area came to look the way that it did: city manufacturers developed the land for their private homes--large luxurious homes.

Place North Square/Crownbrook: "North Quare, c. 1890" next to the F.J. Kingsbury's mansion in Overlook.

How do they compare?
Who the students imagine would live in each home?
What would they do for a living?
How would their lives be different?

- Take detail with the interiors. Include "Front Hallway, N.J. Welton House" from Overlook photos and address the pieces inside: the clocks, lights, etc.

Which house would this interior belong to, North Square or Overlook?

4. End with a contemporary picture, "Crownbrook Clean-up Campaign 1979", and ask them if that looks like their neighborhood today. Ask the students a series of questions that bring culture back into focus, such as:

- Did ethnic interest and culture have anything to do with the more contemporary designs of some Waterbury houses?
- What about the additional ornamentation on houses (paint color, lawn pieces, porch furniture)?

5. Allow them to think about those questions while they work. Pass out the paper (and pencils if necessary) and instruct the students that their task right now is to draw their house. They will have 10-15 minutes. Make sure to highlight the fact that details make a difference. What's the color? What's in the lawn? On the porch? In the windows? *If they live in an apartment, that's fine. Tell them to draw the building and highlight their portion (the area of their windows, etc).

6. End by assigning the homework project with due date and announcing that the projects will be displayed.

HOMEWORK: 2 parts, Pt. 1: Finish your house project from class today. Pt. 2: Draw a parlor room representative of 19th Century Waterbury. Keep in mind size, furniture, and other pieces within the room. [Remind them to take the "front Hallway, N.J. Welton House" from Overlook as their guide.] Write a short paragraph outlining how this room is different than your living room now. Extra Credit: Put a person in the 19th century room. If you do, make sure that their attire and demeanor matches the period.

Related Resources:

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Vocabulary List

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architecture: the art and practice of designing and building.

Waterbury by Design Worksheet

On a separate sheet of paper, draw a parlor room representative of 19th Century Waterbury. Keep in mind size, furniture, and other pieces within the room. Extra Credit: Put a person in the room. If you do, make sure that their attire and demeanor matches the period. On this sheet, write a short paragraph outlining how this room is different than your living room now.