

9/11 MEMORIAL

UNIT: History of the World Trade Center

GRADE LEVEL/S: K-2

TIME NEEDED: 2-3 sessions

TEACHER: Helen M. Simpkins

LESSON TITLE: BUILDINGS THAT REACH FOR THE SKY

Common Core Standards

R 7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

SL 2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

W 9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Key Questions/ Issues Addressed

What purpose(s) do skyscrapers serve in our cities and nations?

How are skyscrapers like cities in themselves?

Why are people fascinated by skyscrapers?

Lesson Goals/ Objectives

Students will be able to compare and contrast features of the Twin Towers with other notable tall buildings in the United States and around the world.

Students will be able to identify reasons that people from the United States and other nations wanted to view and visit the Twin Towers.

Students will be able to describe the great diversity of people that worked in and visited the World Trade Center.

Students will be able to explain how the Twin Towers were similar to a diverse city.

Key Terms

Diversity, Jobs, Occupations, Skyscraper, Twin Towers*, World Trade Center*

* See [9/11 FAQ](#) or [9/11 Fact Sheet for Early Childhood Students](#) for more information

Materials

Photos of the Twin Towers

Photos of the World Trade Center

Photos of notable buildings in the United States and around the world, such as the Empire State building and Flatiron building in New York City, the Willis Tower in Chicago, the Pentagon in Arlington, VA, the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, etc.

Materials
(continued)

A few suggested photo sites:

- www.911memorial.org/world-trade-center-history
- www.newraleigh.com/articles/archive/edifice-rex
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tallest_buildings
- wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Pentagon_US_Department_of_Defense_building.jpg

Photos of individuals that reflect different cultures, nationalities, religions, social and cultural groups, etc.

Maps of the United States and the world

Drawing paper, crayons, colored pencils

Background for lesson

Visit the www.911memorial.org/world-trade-center-history for background on the World Trade Center.

Note: The time needed for the lesson may be adjusted by deleting some of the activities and procedures listed and focusing on only one or two aspects of skyscrapers.

Instructional Activity/ Procedures

1. Explain to the students that they are going to learn about some very important buildings. They will see photographs of the buildings and of the people working and visiting the buildings. They are going to look very carefully at the photos as if they are actually visiting and exploring the buildings. Afterward, they will talk about what they have learned from their “visits and explorations.”
2. Break the term skyscraper into two parts and write the terms, separating them with some space, i.e. sky / scraper. Ask the students what they mean when they talk about the sky. *How “high” is the sky?* Ask the students what they mean when they talk about scraping something. *Have they ever scraped against something? What did they do?* Ask them what they think a skyscraper is. *What would a building that is called a skyscraper look like?*
3. Explain to the students that they are going to look at some different buildings. Some of the buildings will be famous, some may not be famous. Some will be skyscrapers and some will not be. Some buildings may be similar in appearance and others will be very different.
4. Briefly show a few photos of skyscrapers. They are going to learn as much as they can about the buildings by looking very carefully at the photos and using their imaginations.
5. Ask students to help you make a list of things that they would like to learn about these buildings. For example: *Where is the building? How old/new is it? What purpose/s does the building have (i.e. hotel, business, sightseeing, theater, hospitals, restaurants, gift shops, coffee shops, newspaper stands, offices, etc.)?* Encourage students to use their imaginations. *Who works in/visits these buildings? What kinds of jobs are performed by those working in these buildings? Where do all of the people who work and visit in these buildings come from?*

**Instructional
Activity/
Procedures**
(continued)

Possible answers include: Window washers, maids, janitors, messengers, security, doctors, nurses, mechanics, electricians, plumbers, shopkeepers, business persons, lawyers, etc. (Make as long a list as possible so that students understand how diverse the work force is.)

6. Ask students to name some of the tallest buildings in their town and have them describe the buildings. *What are the purposes of the buildings? Are any of the buildings tall enough to be considered skyscrapers? What are some of the businesses that might be found in these buildings?*
7. Ask the students if any of their parents or relatives or friends live or work in a skyscraper. *Why do people want to visit a skyscraper? Have any of the students ever visited a skyscraper? Can they name the building? What did they do during their visit?*

Possible answers include: Go to a restaurant, visit someone who lives or works there, go to a doctor, lawyer, or shop, visit an observation deck, stay in a hotel, etc.

8. Show photos of various skyscrapers as you move through the remaining activities and procedures. Use photos showing the inside and the outside of the skyscrapers. Tell students that skyscrapers may have an observation deck. Explain the purpose of an observation deck. *Have any of the students visited an observation deck? What was it like? How did the city and surrounding area look from the deck? If they were standing on the ground next to a skyscraper and tried to look up to its top, how would they feel? If someone was at the top of the building and looking down at the student, how would the student look to the person at the top of the building?*
9. As a class, make a list of words and phrases that could be used to describe a skyscraper. Consider the many aspects of the building: size, color, windows, lights, materials use to make it, things that are happening inside the building, how it compares and contrasts to surrounding buildings, things you might find in the building, how you travel up or down in the building, what the halls may look like, how many people you see, whether it is quiet or noisy inside, what you may see if you are inside and looking outside, what the underground part of the building looks like, the diversity of the people you may see, etc. *How do you travel in a skyscraper?* Encourage the children to use their imaginations to identify and/or describe as many aspects of a skyscraper as possible.
10. After discussing the many possible aspects of a skyscraper, ask the students how and why a skyscraper could be compared to a city.
11. Distribute drawing paper, crayons, etc. to the students. Have them draw a scene with a skyscraper. Ask them to name the buildings they draw. It could be a building they have heard about or visited, one they have seen in a photo, one they live near, or one they imagine using details they have learned.

**Evidence of
Understanding**

Students' understanding of the nature and role of skyscrapers will be evaluated based upon the knowledge revealed in their drawings and in their comments and contributions to the class discussions.

**Extension
Activities**

Search magazines and newspapers for photos and drawings of people living, working, and visiting skyscrapers. If possible, cut the photos and drawings from the magazines and newspapers and use them to create a bulletin board of “The Life of a Skyscraper.”

If possible, arrange for the class to visit a skyscraper and to take a tour of the building. As part of the visit, arrange for a number of people who work there with different types of jobs to speak to the students for a few minutes about what they do. If a visit is not possible, invite several people who work in skyscrapers with different types of jobs to talk with students about what it is like working in a skyscraper.

Make a bulletin board listing as many jobs as possible that people have in a skyscraper. Next to the jobs, try to find and attach a photo or drawing of someone doing that job. Ask the students to come up with a good title for the bulletin board.

On a bulletin board, post photographs of as many famous skyscrapers from the United States or around the world as possible. Place a World or United States map (depending on the focus of the building locations) in the center of the bulletin board. Using push pins or staples and colored string or yarn, connect the photo of the skyscrapers to its location on the map. Make a key listing the names of each skyscraper and ask students to match the building names to the correct photos and locations (city or country) where each is found on the map.

APPENDIX A

Photos of the World Trade Center pre-9/11.
All photos: Collection of 9/11 Memorial Museum.



Photos by David A. Hanson. Gift of David A. Hanson Family.

APPENDIX A
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