

LESSON 10 - A Study On the Development of Connecting Routes from the Neighborhood to the Riverfront Trail*

(developed by Roy Bohn)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

To introduce basic principles of urban planning

To demonstrate the power of children's involvement in decisions affecting their neighborhood

To explore aspects of river ecology, commerce and relationships of the River to urban development

Take children out of the classroom and experience the richness of using the neighborhood and resources such as the Riverfront Trail and the Mississippi River for real-world learning

OUTCOME OBJECTIVES

Students (and other participants) will gain valuable experience in neighborhood planning & development.

Group presentation by youth to City officials with suggestions for improved connecting routes to the Riverfront Trail (includes improvements in street, landscaping, signage and safety)

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES

1. Identify participating school and teachers and/or other community youth programs
2. Presentation of these materials to school and public officials, neighborhood and media
3. Select beginning week for the 3 consecutive bi-weekly presentations including bike ride
4. Secure presenters, send them plan, and set preparation meetings
5. Coordinator and presenters attend planning session - set tasks and deadlines
6. Work out logistics with bike ride (full morning will be needed)
7. Coordinator leads bike ride and facilitates students completing assigned tasks
8. Invite community people (parents, alderpersons, police on bikes)
8. Facilitate work sessions on recommendations and presentation practice – certificate of good citizenship distributed

BIKE SAFETY & REPAIR REVIEW

Recap last presentation

Bike safety (rules of the road, bike safety check, using a bike, head protection)

Have children share personal experiences in riding safely and traffic hazard identification

Bike repair (flat tire repair, tightening bolts)

Description of next presentation

BIKE RIDE AND COMPLETION OF TASKS

Recap of tasks for children to complete on ride (destination, what to look for)

Fitting children with bicycles and helmets, providing pencils and note pads to take notes, camera, taking non-bikers in van (taking spare parts, water, first aid)

Stopping at various points to and along route to discuss planning considerations and to write opinions on note pads

Show examples of displays showing similar or previous events

Reach trail, hear discussion on river ecology and wildlife

Return to school, collect notes

Description of next presentation

Note safety hazards along feeder route (glass, truck traffic, Railroad tracks)

Arrange prior to session possible stops at points of interest (fire station, businesses) Our route included stops at glass and metal recycling businesses, salt plant and a truck scale.

Ask for brief introduction to these places (2-4 minutes) for possible future field trips

RELATED IDEAS

Invite resource people to present and help students develop their own presentations. A few suggestions include:

Museum exhibit preparators to help in design and development of student presentation visuals

City government mapping staff for various maps showing neighborhood, areas of commerce and residential areas

Naturalist for interpretive part of field trip

Historian and/or older residents of neighborhood to talk about history of city and river. Inclusion of photos useful in presentation.

Architecture students to assist children in drawing/portraying vision of people using trail and river as resources for better city living