

## Historic Preservation Inquiry Activities Table of Contents

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## **Memory Box Activities**

Maggie Clark, Fairmont Elementary School, Golden  
Cheryl Beckwith, Eiber Elementary School, Lakewood  
Kathleen Turner, East Memorial School, Greeley

### **OVERVIEW**

The following activity involves students in historic preservation in a personal and family context to help them understand why historic preservation is important to the larger society.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2.2: Students know how to interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.
- Reading and Writing Standard 5: Students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information, and technology resources.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Explain why people save items from their past.
- Create a Memory Box of items they would like to save.
- Explain the criteria they used to select those items.
- Develop general criteria for historic preservation.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What kinds of objects do people save?
- Why do they save them?
- Why is historic preservation important to a society?

### **PROCEDURE**

1. The teacher should model the making of a Memory Box by bringing 5-10 items to class that s/he has saved (or may save) because they have

- personal or family value (“To Preserve or Not to Preserve: A Look Back” for this phase of the activity).
2. Use these items to generate a discussion about the meaning and value of personal or family objects.
  3. Assign an out-of-class activity in which the students interview two adults (parents, relatives, family friends) about what items they have or wish they had saved and why. Reproduce copies of the "To Preserve or Not to Preserve Data Sheet" . Also see the "Dear Parents" letter (see both handouts below).
  4. Discuss the findings from the students' data sheets. Find out what items and explanations the sheets have in common. Are there predictable criteria for people saving memorabilia? (See “To Preserve or Not to Preserve: Establishing Criteria” for this phase of the activity.)
  5. Have students develop their own 5-10 item Memory Box (See “To Preserve or Not to Preserve: Creating Your Own Memory Box” for this phase of the activity).
  6. Ask students to revisit and revise the criteria that helps to explain why people find value in historical artifacts and why historic preservation is valuable.

## **EXTENSION**

1. Make a Memory Box for the 1950's, 1960's, 1970's, 1980's or 1990's.
2. You are a museum curator. Your assignment is to make a Memory Box for:
  - o A miner.
  - o A farmer.
  - o A one-room school from the 1880's.
3. Make a class Memory Box for the school year. Let students save items they think should be included in the box. Accept all items including newspaper articles to mark important events. Select a class historian to check the contents of the Box on a monthly basis, using the criteria matrix developed for this activity. Continue the process until the end of the year. At the end of the year, do a final sort, keeping only 10 items. Save and deliver to their next year's teacher.
4. Invite a guest speaker from the Historical Society.

## To Preserve or Not to Preserve: A Look Back

Maggie Clark, Fairmont Elementary School, Golden  
Cheryl Beckwith, Eiber Elementary School, Lakewood  
Kathleen Turner, East Memorial School, Greeley

### **OVERVIEW**

In this historic preservation activity, students will begin to analyze what criteria are used to select items to preserve.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Observe as their teacher shares items from his/her own Memory Box.
- Observe, identify, and discuss items from Great Grandmother's trunk.
- Compare and contrast items from Great Grandmother's trunk and the teacher's Memory Box.
- Discuss criteria for saving items (e.g., a special memory, time, person, place, or achievement; sentimental or collectable value).

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What objects or artifacts are important to people?
- Why are these objects and artifacts important to these people?
- How are Great Grandmother's trunk and the teacher's Memory Box similar and different?

### **PROCEDURE**

1. Teacher will put together his or her own Memory Box to share and model for students.
2. Teacher will share and explain reasons why the items were chosen for saving.
3. Students explore and discuss items in Great Grandmother's trunk.

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4. Students should explore reasons for why the items in both were selected.
5. Using a Venn Diagram, the similarities and differences should be charted.
6. Discuss what the children might have learned about the owners of the trunk/box through analysis of the items.
7. NOTE: Great Grandmother's trunks are often available from the local historical society; of the teacher can create his or her own.

## To Preserve or Not to Preserve: Establishing Criteria

Maggie Clark, Fairmont Elementary School, Golden  
Cheryl Beckwith, Eiber Elementary School, Lakewood  
Kathleen Turner, East Memorial School, Greeley

### OVERVIEW

Students will collect data and establish the criteria used to determine why an object or artifact is worth preserving.

### OBJECTIVES

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Collect data for a purpose.
- Analyze the data collected to generate a list of common characteristics of items that are preserved.
- Identify common characteristics for preservation.
- Establish criteria for preservation.

### INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What objects or artifacts are important to people?
- Why are these objects and artifacts important to these people?

### PROCEDURE

1. As homework, students are to interview two adults using the "To Preserve or Not to Preserve Data Sheet" to record the adults' responses (see handouts below).
2. After the data is collected by students, the class will be divided into small groups. Each group will select a recorder and a reporter.
3. Students working in small groups will share and record their data.
4. Students will select five of the most frequently mentioned reasons for preservation.

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5. Each group will report their findings to the whole class.
6. Data will be recorded on a chart and tabulated.
7. The five most frequently used reasons for preservation will be established as criteria for the selection of items that the students will include in their own Memory Boxes.

## To Preserve or Not to Preserve Data Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview two adults (parents, relatives, family friends, neighbors) to find out what items they would include in a Memory Box. List the items below and write the reason they would save them.

Item	Reason

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Dear Parents:

As we continue our study of Colorado History, we are learning about the importance of historic preservation. We have been working in the classroom to establish reasons used to select items that are preserved.

Your child has been asked to interview two adults and fill out the attached data collection sheet that lists the ten items each adult would include in a "Memory Box", along with the reasons they would preserve or save each item. Items selected might include pictures, toys, books, and sports memorabilia.

Thanks you for helping us with this preservation activity. Please call if you have questions.

Sincerely,

**To Preserve or Not to Preserve:  
Creating Your Own Memory Box**  
Maggie Clark, Fairmont Elementary School, Golden  
Cheryl Beckwith, Eiber Elementary School, Lakewood  
Kathleen Turner, East Memorial School, Greeley

**OVERVIEW**

Students will use the criteria they have established to create their own Memory Box.

**OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Fill out the Memory Box Matrix, analyze the data, and based on their findings will create their own Memory Boxes.
- Share their Memory Boxes with large group and tell which of the criteria were used to select each item

**INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What objects or artifacts are important to people?
- Why are these objects and artifacts important to these people?

**PROCEDURE**

1. Students will brainstorm a list of 15-25 items they might like to include in their Memory Boxes.
2. Students will prioritize their lists and select the top 14 items they want to include on the Memory Box Matrix (see handout below).
3. Students will write selected items on the Matrix and then use plusses and minuses to prioritize the items.
4. Students will then analyze their matrix to determine the top 10 items that will be included in their Memory Boxes.
5. Each student will compile their Memory Box and share them with the class.

**To Preserve or Not to Preserve  
Matrix for Memory Box**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Items	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion 5

## **Multimedia Presentation of Local Community Sites**

Carol Hunter and Jerilyn Kennoy  
Bergen Valley Intermediate School/Hackberry Hill Elementary  
Evergreen/Arvada, Colorado

### **OVERVIEW**

Students will evaluate and select community sites for suggested preservation and share this information via a multimedia presentation. A partner school will learn about their community via this presentation and provide feedback about the presentation.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2.2: Students know how to interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.
- Reading and Writing Standard 5: Students read to locate, select and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, references and technology sources.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Explain the value and purpose of historic preservation
- Develop criteria for determining historic preservation
- Informally debate attributes of sites
- Research information on a site
- Create and evaluate group multimedia stack

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What makes the selected sites worthy of historic preservation?
- Why is it important to preserve sites?
- Are other items as worthy of being preserved as structures?
- What are the similarities and differences among the sites selected?

### **PROCEDURE**

1. CD-ROM use: Each class will view the Farming and Ranching/Businesses and Mining/Shelter sections to give examples of some types of structures to preserve. (You may also wish to consider using the Doing History Virtual Field Trips for this purpose.)
2. Discuss historic preservation. Why do students think these particular sites were selected for preservation via the CD?

3. A speaker from the Historical Society will present national criteria for historic preservation and information about buildings in our community. Those that are on the national register will be noted.
4. Each class will create their own criteria for selecting community sites that they believe should be preserved and be able to defend their criteria.
5. A parent letter discussing the project and the criteria will be sent home. With parent help, students will compile a list of 2-3 sites, information about the sites, and at least 5 reasons justifying each of their selections.
6. Each student will orally present an argument for one of his or her sites.
7. The class will discuss and select a group of "semi-finalists."
8. Attributes of each site will be informally debated.
9. Students will complete criteria rating sheets and vote for their top choices. The results will be tabulated and a predetermined number will be selected for each class (1 site for every 2-3 students.)
10. Groups of 2-3 students will research any information about their site on the attached research worksheet.
11. Each group will use the digital camera to take pictures of their site and will prepare a rough draft page layout incorporating picture and text. The group will complete at least one Hyperstudio card about their site and selected class members will create a title page and link the cards together.
12. The stacks will be exchanged between partner classes via e-mail. Each partner school will evaluate the other schools stack using 2 positive comments and one suggestion for improvement from each group.
13. Each school will use the suggestion for a final revision and sharing via e-mail of final products.
14. Students will share their final product with a selected audience.

## RESEARCH SHEET

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate date of construction \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Size \_\_\_\_\_

Materials \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Architecture/Design \_\_\_\_\_

Builder/Designer \_\_\_\_\_

Use/Purpose \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Change over the years \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interesting Facts \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## EXTENSION

1. Create an additional site card containing any of the following:
  - Quote from a primary source regarding the site
  - Other interesting facts with illustration
  - Other idea to be approved by teacher
2. Create an advertisement, a poem or a song to convince others your site should be preserved.
3. Construct a model of your site.
4. Design a poster to support the preservation of your site or the idea of historic preservation in general
5. Write a story about your life as if you were a child who lived when the site was completed
6. Write a story set in the late 1800's or early 1900's about one day in the life of your building.
7. Script a video describing your site in greater detail.
8. Script and record an audio-guided tour of your site (similar to a museum-guided tour).
9. Dress up as a character related to your site and deliver a monologue explaining your relation to the site.
10. Compose a letter supporting the preservation of your site.
11. Research who or what would be the most influential person or agency to contact concerning the preservation of your site and write a paragraph explaining your selection. Provide a rationale for your decision.
12. Collect and/or make 6-10 items related to the history associated with our site.

## **Adopt A Building Activity**

Christopher Imhof  
Montessori School of Denver

### **OVERVIEW**

Using primary and secondary sources, students will learn about local history and the methods to preserve the past.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2.2: Students know how to interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Students will expand their knowledge of local history by "adopting a building" in their community.
- Students will photograph, and or sketch the building, learning about the architectural aspects of their building.
- Understand the history of their building by conducting interviews with long-time residents, employees or owners.
- Research the functional history of the building with old directories, maps, and possibly old photographs at the library or local historical society.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What year was the building constructed?
- Who built the building? Who was the architect?
- What materials were used to build it?
- What is the style of architecture?
- What was the building used for?
- Who lived in the building?
- How has the building changed over the years?

## PROCEDURE

1. Take a walk or drive through your neighborhood or town with class. Look carefully at the oldest buildings in the area. Choose one as a class or have a group choose a structure they find interesting. This will be the building (s) that you will adopt. See entries on the CD which relate to descriptions of houses that match what students observed. Examine buildings on the CD-ROM or Project web site which look similar to those the students adopted.
2. Take photographs of the building (s) from different angles, or try to sketch the building. Point out to students the architectural features of the building. Have students take close-up photos of these, or detailed drawings. These might be the stairs or railing, cornerstone, foundation, brick pattern, window frame, door style.
3. Students will then endeavor to learn everything they can about the history of their building by using the library, and/or local historical society, and interviewing long-time residents, employees, or owners of the building. Interview questions can originate from inquiry questions, but more questions should develop with in-class discussions. Questions and answers should be written in a notebook.

In the process of researching the history of their building, students may be lucky to uncover old photographs of their building, or their building on an old map, newspaper, old phone book or directory. If possible, copies of these should be made.

4. Have students put all their research together: arrange photographs, sketches and other information into a scrapbook or poster board.
5. Presentation Ideas:

Ask the students to address one of the main inquiry questions.

Introduce preservation methods and have students explain why their building should be preserved.

**Your City: Then and Now**  
Tina Loos  
East Memorial Elementary School  
Greeley, Colorado

**OVERVIEW**

To have students compare past and present-day photographs of historical buildings in your city.

**STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2.2: Students know how to interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

**OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Locate historical photographs of their city
- Identify buildings in historical photographs that still exist
- Make sketches or take photographs of historic buildings
- Explain how the preservation of historical photographs contributes to our understanding of the communities in which we live

**INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- How has your city's "landscape" changed over time?
- Where can you find historical photographs that show how your city used to look?
- Which buildings in your community that were photographed in the 1880s or 1890s still exist?
- How can you help preserve historic buildings?

## PROCEDURE

1. Make arrangements with your local historical society, public library or other repository of historical photographs for a field trip for your students, or order prints of historical photographs from such institutions to show in class. Select street scenes that include buildings that still exist. A great place to start is the Denver Public Library Western History Collection (online at <http://gowest.coalliance.org/> click on “search” and you’re on your way!).
2. Provide the necessary background information about the photographs being studied. You may want to invite a local historian to class for the students to interview.
3. Take your students on a field trip to the area depicted in the photos so that they can photograph and take notes about the present-day site.
4. Have the students write several small paragraphs comparing the historical photos to their present-day photos. What has changed? What has remained the same?
5. Save the set of photos by making a classroom archive on your computer. If you did not use a digital camera to take the present-day photographs, you may scan them and the historical prints into the computer.

## **Preserving Family History**

Keesha Narenkivicius and Ty Bliss  
Columbine Elementary/Prarie Ridge Elementary  
Grand Junction/Longmont, Colorado

### **OVERVIEW**

Students will gather and help preserve information about their family history.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2.2: Students know how to interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.
- Reading and Writing Standard 5: Students read to locate, select and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, references and technology sources.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Interview members of their family
- Do family history research
- Take the initiative in recording and preserving their family history

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- How do you “read” a photograph?
- How do you find information that will help you interpret a historic photograph?

## PROCEDURE

- 1 Ask each student to find four or five old family photographs that include at least one person who is not identified and whom they do not recognize. Ask them to bring one of those photographs to class.
- 2 Have each student do a "think aloud" with that photograph. That is, the student should express his/her own curiosity about who the unidentified person is, whether he/she may have been a relative, and point to clues (such as where and when the photo was taken) that may help answer these questions.
- 3 Emphasize that the importance of recording the names of family members who appear in old photographs while there is still someone around who recognizes them. Otherwise, the family may lose track of its history.
- 4 Hand out the "Family Memory Record Sheet" (see below) and ask the students to interview a parent or relatives who can help them identify the unrecognized persons in the photographs they have selected. They should record the information on the sheet.
- 5 On a designated day, the students are to bring the photographs and the record sheet to school and share their information with the class.
- 6 They can then make a photo album with their photographs, writing captions using the information they have gathered. (This may help some students notice and read captions in books!)
- 7 Students should be encouraged to continue collecting information about other family pictures.

## Family Memory Record Sheet

<p>(Place photo or draw a sketch of it here.)</p>	<p>Who _____</p> <p>How are the people related to you _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Where _____ _____ _____</p> <p>When _____ _____</p> <p>What was the event? _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Why was the picture taken? _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Who took the picture? _____ _____</p>
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## **Build a Model of Main Street Then and Now**

Kim Hamilton  
Carbondale Elementary  
Carbondale, Colorado

### **OVERVIEW**

To have students understand, appreciate, and document how the Main Street in their town has changed over time. In groups of 2-3, students will become "experts" on a particular historical building or place. As a class, students will create two models of their town: one of the past and one of the present. Students will work cooperatively to build the models and to write a brief caption explaining the historical uses of their building or place.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2.2: Students know how to interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Locate historical photographs of their city
- Make sketches from a photograph of a historic building or place and then photograph the same in the present
- Research the history of their building by conducting interviews with residents, employees, owners and/or by analyzing available materials at the local historical society or library
- Write an expository caption explaining the history of their building or place

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- How was the building/place used in the past?
- How has the building/place's use changed over time?
- How is it used today? Has it been preserved? How and why?
- How has the building/place physically changed over time?
- Which buildings are still there? Which ones are not?
- What do we preserve and why?
- Is Main Street used the same way today?
- Is there another part of town that is more popular today (a mall or new downtown area)?
- What do we want to preserve of our town?

## MATERIALS

- For historical photographs and information about your community's main street, contact your local library and Historical Society. The Denver Public Library has a great web site from which you can print photographs ([www.denver.lib.co.us](http://www.denver.lib.co.us)).
- The Doing History/Keeping the Past CD-ROM or Project web site.

## PROCEDURE

1. Talk with students about historical preservation. What should be preserved and why? What would they like to save from their own lives? What have their parents and grandparents saved? Why are these things valuable? What do they tell us about the past?
2. On the CD-ROMs (the Georgetown virtual field trip and the mining towns and farming and ranching market towns topics), have groups of students look for examples of "main streets." What do they notice about them? How are they similar to each other? How are they similar to your town's Main Street?
3. Take a field trip to your town's Main Street or use a map in the classroom. In groups of 2-3, students choose buildings or places that they would like to research. (Possible sites might include a train depot, post office, general store, school, jail, or park. You should do some preliminary research so that you can make suggestions to students and have some resources available.)
4. Students will need to sketch or photograph each side of the building in both the past and the present in order to make a 3 dimensional model for each. To do this, make sure that the sketch or photograph of each side is made from the same distance away and that verticals are vertical and horizontals are horizontal--tall buildings may not work. (If you can't sketch or photograph all sides, just reverse the negative of the side you can reach and make a print for the other side.) The photos and sketches should be the same size (for example, 5 x 7 or 8 x 10).
5. Paste the faces to cardboard or poster board and then cut out each view before assembling the building using scraps as hinges. Then students will need to make a roof.
6. Assemble the buildings into the town models (past and present), complete with street names, geographic features, railroad tracks, etc.
7. Based on their research, students write captions explaining the different uses of the building over time.

8. Display the models with historical captions for others to enjoy and learn from (at school, local library, etc.).

**EXTENSION**

1. What do we want to preserve for the future? Maybe it's part of Main Street or maybe it's another part of town. Why should this be preserved? What will it tell future generations about our culture? How can we preserve it?

## **Town Brochure**

Kim Hamilton, Carbondale Elementary School,  
Cathy Lasell, Cameron Elementary School of Greeley, and  
Kathy Williams, Tarver Elementary School of Thornton.

### **OVERVIEW**

Students will create a brochure that identifies historic sites in their own town.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.
- History Standard 3: Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
- Reading and Writing Standard 3: Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Identify sites in their town that have historic importance.
- Photograph or draw pictures of these sites.
- Write summaries explaining why these are historic sites.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- How do you decide whether a building or place is important historically?
- What buildings or places in your town have historical importance?
- Why are these sites important historically?
- What would you include in a brochure that described these places?

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Take photographs of several sites in your community that have historical importance.
2. Have the class brainstorm why (in general) places have historical value? (Oldest building, example of an interesting architectural style, location where an important event took place, etc.)
3. Show the students the photographs or transparencies of the places that you selected. Ask if they can think of other places that should be included.
4. Ask the students to explain why these particular sites have historical value.
5. Divide up the work for producing a brochure. Provide time for the students to take additional photographs, write summaries for each photo, and design the brochure. Look at brochures from other towns as examples.
6. Publish and display the brochure in a prominent place in the school or in the community.

## **Preserve Main Street Activity**

Chris Imhoff, Montessori School of Denver

### **OVERVIEW**

Using primary and secondary sources, students will learn about local history and the methods to preserve the past.

### **STANDARDS**

- Geography Standard 2: Students know the physical and human characteristics of places, and use this knowledge to define and study regions and their patterns of change.
- History Standard 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.
- History Standard 4: Students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history.
- Reading and Writing Standard 1: Students read and understand a variety of materials.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Expand their knowledge of local history by learning about the function of "Main Street" or the main street in their community, past and present.
- Photograph and/or sketch the store fronts of main street, learning about the architectural aspects of their building.
- Understand the economic history of the buildings past and present by conducting interviews with long-time residents, employees or owners.
- Research the history of the buildings with old directories, maps, newspaper advertisements and possibly old photographs at the library or local historical society.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- Where is Main Street?
- Who built the buildings? Who were the architects?

- What is the style of architecture?
- What are the buildings used for now? How were they used in the past?
- How has the building changed over the years?
- How would you describe the location?
- What is the difference between Main Street and a downtown area, or a mall?
- Are the oldest buildings in the area located on Main Street?

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Post a map in the classroom or on a walk or drive in your neighborhood or town with class try to find Main Street. If old maps exist try to identify a "main" street in the past. Students can find examples of Main Street photographs on the CD, or entries discussing a Main Street-like area. Discuss the hallmarks or features of a Main Street. Compare/contrast.
2. Take photographs of the buildings on Main Street. Students should learn everything they can about the function of the buildings along Main Street for the present. Utilize signs, library, newspapers, advertisements, Business directories, Business record, maps, and interviews. All information should be kept in a notebook.
3. In the process students may also learn the past history of buildings along Main Street as well. Students may be lucky to uncover old photographs. Analyze the photographs (refer to "Reading Photographs").
4. Discuss why photographs have changed or stayed the same. Examine the research material and how businesses have changed, and how other local business or malls may have influenced changes on Main Street.
5. Have students put all their research together: arrange photographs, information into a poster board or scrapbook.
6. Presentation ideas:

Ask the students to address one of the main inquiry questions.

Introduce preservation methods, and have students explain why Main Street should be preserved.

Doing History/Keeping the Past  
Historic Preservation Inquiry Activities

Create a "Then and Now" poster which can be displayed in stores on Main Street.

Create a timeline of the evolution of Main Street buildings or businesses.

## **Field Trip to an Historic House**

Matt Downey, University of Northern Colorado

### **OVERVIEW**

This activity focuses on investigating the kinds of historic houses that have been preserved and why those houses have been preserved.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 1: Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.
- History Standard 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.
- History Standard 4: Students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history.
- Reading and Writing Standard 2: Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Identify different historic houses that have been preserved.
- Describe how historic houses in Colorado have been preserved.
- Express values and opinions about the importance of historic preservation.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What are some of the houses from the 1800s that still exist today?
- How were these houses kept from being destroyed?
- What value do these houses have in helping us know about how people lived then?

## PROCEDURE

1. Introduce students to examples of historic houses available in your locality. For example, the metro-Denver area includes such early houses as the sod house at the plains Conservation Center (a reconstruction), the log and frame houses at the Littleton Museum, and the road station/farm house at Four Mile House Park. Late 19th and early 20th century houses include the Molly Brown House, the Streer House at Belmar Museum, and Hiwan House in Evergreen.
2. Visit the historic houses that you want to feature, take photographs, and pick up brochures about the houses.
3. Divide the class into small groups and assign one historic house to each group. Give them the following questions:
  - Where is the house located?
  - Who is responsible for maintaining it?
  - What value does the house have in helping us know about how people lived in the past?
4. Ask the students to write a letter to the curator or director of the historic house. The letter should include the following:
  - Questions that students may have about the house.
  - Questions they may have about the curator and how he/she became a curator.
  - Their own thoughts about what the house means to them.
5. Have students read to the class any responses they may receive.
6. Plan a field trip to one or more of these historic houses to let students experience the value of historic preservation first-hand.

## **Early Settlers' Houses**

Cynthia Stout, Educational Services Center,  
Jefferson County Public Schools,  
and Sandy Stokely, Ellis Elementary School,  
Denver, CO.

### **OVERVIEW**

This activity focuses on the houses of early (non-Native American) settlers in Colorado. Students will investigate regional styles of the houses, the materials from which they were made, and the importance of preserving these buildings.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.
- History Standard 4: Students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history.
- Geography Standard 2: Students know the physical and human characteristics of places, and use this knowledge to define and study regions and their patterns of change.
- Reading and Writing Standard 2: Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Describe different kinds of building materials available to Colorado's early settlers.
- Identify regional differences in available building materials.
- Express values and opinions about the importance of historic preservation.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What kinds of materials did early settlers in Colorado use to build their houses?

- Why did people in different places use different kinds of materials to build their houses?
- What size were the houses built by the early settlers?
- Do houses built by early settlers still remain in your community?
- If so, what materials were these houses made of and what size were they?

## **PROCEDURE**

### Materials

1. CD-ROM/Internet Use: The seven photos of houses in the Shelters sequence of the Farming/Ranching topic will be used by the whole class and by small groups of students.
2. Show the students the above photos on a multimedia projector or as transparencies on an overhead.
3. Discuss the location of and building materials used for each house.
4. Divide students into small groups to decide why settlers in different places used different kinds of building materials. Make one or more copies of the CD-ROM disk available in the classroom to allow students to inspect the photos close up.
5. Have students report and discuss their conclusions. Make sure they include locational, geographic, and cultural variables.

### Size

1. CD-ROM/Internet Use: The seven photos of houses in the Shelters sequence of the Farming/Ranching topic will be used by the whole class and by small groups of students.
2. Show the students the above photos on a multimedia projector or as transparencies on an overhead.
3. Discuss the size of these houses. Estimate the square feet and number of rooms in each house.
4. Compare the size of these houses with the students' homes.

5. Discuss why early settlers' houses were much smaller than houses today.

#### Historic Preservation

1. CD-ROM/Internet Use: None.
2. Find out if any of your local historic sites includes a preserved log cabin, sod house, or adobe house.
3. If so, take the students to visit the site or bring a video of the structure to class.
4. Discuss the value of early houses as historical evidence about how people lived in other times.
5. Discuss what house types we might preserve to let people a century from now understand what our lives are like.

## **Family Life Now and Then**

Cynthia Stout, Educational Services Center,  
Jefferson County Public Schools, Golden, CO,  
and Sandy Stokely, Ellis Elementary School,  
Denver, CO.

### **OVERVIEW**

Students in this historic preservation activity will interview their parents(s) about the family life of their generation. Students will compile an archive that includes these interviews as well as descriptions of their own family life.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.
- History Standard 3: Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
- Reading and Writing Standard 3: Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Record information from parent interviews.
- Write about their own family life.
- Contribute to the Doing History/Keeping the Past family life database.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What is family life like in Colorado today?
- What was family life like when your parents were your age?
- What are some of the issues about family life in our society (single families, divorce, etc)?

- What were the issues about family life when your parent(s) were growing up?
- What family structures exist in today's society?
- What family structures were common when your parents' were young?

## PROCEDURE

1. CD-ROM Use: Print out and make six to eight copies of the following historical photographs:

### FOOD, CLOTHING, AND SHELTER THEME:

- Clothing Sequence:
  - Photo 1: Three People at a Mining Cabin
  - Photo 4: A Family Portrait
  - Photo 5: Mr. and Mrs. Paul Peyer at Home
  - Photo 6: A Family in Front of Their Cabin
- Interiors Sequence:
  - Photo 1: Three Men in a Cabin
  - Photo 2: Two Men in a Cabin

2. Divide the class into six to eight groups and give each group a set of the four photos. Ask what these photos tell them about households in the mining regions of Colorado in the late 19th century? (Some possible responses are that families did live in mining camps and that the traditional family structure of parents and children existed, along with families that consisted only of husband and wife.)

3. Ask the students to discuss and record their responses to the inquiry questions above about family life in Colorado today.

4. Ask the students to write two accounts of family life based on their responses:

- The first account is of their parent(s) family life when they were their age.
- The second account is of their family life today

5. When the accounts are in their final forms, students will donate them to the class database or archive on family life.

## **Preserving Family Traditions**

Keesha Narenkivicius of Columbine Elementary School in Golden, CO,  
and Ty Bliss of Prairie Ridge Elementary School in Longmont, CO.

### **OVERVIEW**

Students will gather information about their own family's traditions and consider ways to preserve them.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 1: Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.
- History Standard 3: Students understand that societies are diverse and have changed over time.
- Reading and Writing Standard 1: Students read and understand a variety of materials.
- Reading and Writing Standard 2: Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Interview members of their family and do family history research.
- Identify celebrations, customs, and ways of doing things that are part of their family tradition.
- Take the initiative in recording and preserving family traditions.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- What is a family tradition?
- What celebrations, customs, and ways of doing things are part of your family tradition?
- How can you find out more about your family's traditions?
- How can you help preserve your family's traditional customs?

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Have the class brainstorm things that their families do that might be considered family traditions. Prompt them to think about things they do and eat at birthdays, holidays, or seasons of the year.
2. Ask your students to choose one of their traditions and write a paragraph describing it. Then ask them to explain in writing how they would feel if that tradition suddenly ended.
3. Break into small groups, sharing paragraphs and feelings.
4. Have the students take the paragraph home to share with their mother, father or whoever is responsible for keeping that family tradition alive. They should interview that person to find out about its origin and to gather information that will preserve that tradition. This could include recording the procedure, writing down the recipe(s) or learning the skills involved.
5. The product of this activity could be an informational poster, sharing the tradition with the class, or depositing a written record about the tradition in the class archives. Sharing food is nice, too!

## **Your School Neighborhood: Then and Now**

Tina Loos, East Memorial Elementary School,  
Greeley, CO

### **OVERVIEW**

The purpose of this activity is to have students document how the neighborhood in which their school is located has changed over time.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 1: Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.
- Geography Standard 2: Students know the physical and human characteristics of places, and use this knowledge to define and study regions and their patterns of change.
- Reading and Writing Standard 5: Students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Conduct an interview of a long-time resident of the neighborhood.
- Describe how the neighborhood has changed over time.
- Identify and photograph the most historic sites in the neighborhood.
- Preserve photographs of the oldest buildings and houses in the neighborhood.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS:**

- How has your school neighborhood changed over time?
- Which are the oldest buildings or houses in the neighborhood?
- How can you preserve an historical record of these sites?

## **PROCEDURE**

1. Take students on a walking tour of the neighborhood around your school. Have them observe and make notes about landmarks (big trees, lakes, etc.). Make photographs of the oldest buildings and houses.
2. Invite a long-time resident of the neighborhood to class to talk about changes over time.
3. Have students create a map on which they use their photographs and notes to draw the landmarks and oldest buildings and houses.
4. Save the photos by making a classroom archive on your computer. If you did not use a digital camera to take the photographs, you may scan them into the computer.

## **Your School Neighborhood: Past, Present and Future**

Anjula Jalan, Logan School for Creative Learning,  
Denver, CO

### **OVERVIEW**

The purpose of this activity is to have students learn about how their school neighborhood has changed over time and to preserve their findings in a multi-media or other permanent format.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 1: Students understand the chronological organization of history and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.
- Geography Standard 2: Students know the physical and human characteristics of places, and use this knowledge to define and study regions and their patterns of change.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.
- Reading and Writing Standard 5: Students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Describe how the neighborhood has changed over time.
- Identify buildings and other landmarks that still exist in historical photographs.
- Identify sites that have historic importance or that are worth preserving.
- Photograph and draw pictures of these sites.
- Research the history of these sites.
- Create maps of the area.

- Conduct interviews of local residents, local business people, and historians.
- Preserve photographs of important buildings and other landmarks in the neighborhood.
- Communicate in written and oral form how the preservation of historical photographs and evidence contributes to our understanding of the communities in which we live.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- How has your school neighborhood changed over time?
- How can you use photographs to tell you about the past and what do they tell you about the past?
- How do you decide whether a building or place is important historically?
- Why are these sites important historically?
- Why were certain buildings or places preserved and some destroyed?
- How can you help preserve historic buildings or places?

### **PROCEDURE**

This project will be done over several days for about two weeks.

1. Have students go through the Virtual Fieldtrips CD-ROM on *Mining and Farming and Ranching* to look at how towns and neighborhoods have been preserved and to give an idea about how to preserve information about their own school neighborhood and history.
2. Look through old photographs of the area and have the students "read" them. Discuss what the neighborhood looked like then versus what it looks like now. Take a neighborhood walk to identify buildings and other places in the area from the photographs.
3. Compare buildings in the pictures to the actual buildings. What is different? What's the same?
4. Take photographs of the area with a digital camera preferably, and do some sketches of the buildings and the landscape as well.

5. Find a historian or a local resident to come in and talk to the whole class about the area, or a former school librarian who may have some interesting knowledge to pass along to the student.
6. Divide up the neighborhood in 4 parts. In small groups of 4-5 students, have the students walk around the neighborhood and make a map with a key of their area. Include buildings, parks, monuments, roads, and other important features on the maps.
7. Take photographs and draw pictures of the different features.
8. Then have each group choose one building in their area that they think would be worth preserving, specifically, that they think would be important to be around 50 years from now. Take photographs of that building from different angles.
9. Come back as a class to discuss what each group found. Have them share their maps and the building they chose to preserve. Brainstorm ways to learn more about the buildings. Include in the discussion what has happened to the area, what is happening to the area, and what they think the area would look like in the future. Have a student record the information to be displayed as part of the final product.
10. In their groups, have students research the history of their building—some questions they are trying to answer are: What year was the building constructed? What was it used for? What is the style of the architecture? What materials were used to build it? Have there been changes to buildings over the years? Who lived in the building? Try to answer some of the inquiry questions as well.

The students can find information by going to the library, visiting an historical society, interviewing people from the area, visiting a development authority, and taking detailed notes and observations on the building itself.

11. The students will now put all of the research together. The final product will be a virtual tour of the neighborhood, or a display board if appropriate technology is not available. The tour will include a brief history of the area, the maps, photographs of the different buildings and places there now, older photographs of the area, written descriptions of the buildings and places, and a spotlight section that highlights the four buildings to be preserved and a written argument in support of preserving the four buildings. Have the students share this information with other classes and people in the school.

## **Come to Order at the Town Meeting**

Melissa Berry and Carolyn Paletta,  
Shaffer Elementary School in Littleton, CO.

### **OVERVIEW**

The purpose of this activity is to have students develop a sense of civic responsibility for protecting the sites that reflect a community's heritage.

### **STANDARDS**

- History Standard 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.
- Reading and Writing 2: Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Gather information from historical photographs.
- Begin to value the idea of historical preservation.
- Present views through writing as well as orally.

### **INQUIRY QUESTIONS**

- When was your building built?
- What was the building's original purpose?
- Why should your building be preserved?

### **PROCEDURE**

1. Allow each group (no more than three) of students to experience the virtual tour of businesses of Georgetown, CO.
2. Assign each group one of the twelve businesses. This business becomes their building to defend the preservation of.
3. Inform students that one of these buildings will be removed to make room for a modern building.

4. Students will need to further research the historical background of the buildings.
5. Students will need to come up with a written argument as to why their building should be preserved.
6. Students will present their arguments to a simulated town council.

## **EXTENSION**

- Post pictures and written arguments on internet/intranet or web site and have others judge what buildings will remain.
- Post pictures and written arguments in internet/intranet or web site and have others add additional arguments.
- This activity could also be used with the *Cities and Industry* section by creating a virtual tour of historic downtown Denver.
- Digital photos taken during the Downtown Day in Denver field trip could be used in place of the virtual tour.