

Stand Up Soft City

Stand up for your city ... and say something!

art + social studies

What sort of buildings have helped shape your city to make it special? Imagine if walls and buildings could talk! A single building, whether historical or modern, can greatly affect the mood or feel of a city. Different regions are known to use different styles of architecture depending on climate and social history. For example, New Orleans was greatly affected by its French roots, which is shown through the use of French Colonial and Creole architecture. San Francisco is known for its colorful Victorian houses, just as Boston is known for its Federalist style brick buildings, and the Southwest is full of distinctive adobe buildings. Every city has its own quirks and architectural influences.

In this lesson, students will learn about the architecture of their city and choose a building or monument from their community that is important to them. Different buildings can be meaningful in various ways: hospitals help us heal, town halls provide a meeting place for people, historic monuments teach us about the past, and buildings offer a chance to learn about the different architectural styles that shaped a city.

Let students give these influential architectural forms a voice!

Students will block print the image of their chosen building on the front and write on the back of a self-standing soft pillow sculpture. Together they'll create their own stand up soft city that highlights the architectural forces within their community.

GRADES 5-8 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Show a variety of historical monuments and buildings for students to choose from. Students should make notes on the history of the building and its meaning to them personally and the community as a whole.
2. Print black and white image of buildings in reverse/mirror image.
3. Canvas should be cut to allow a 1" border on each side, doubled in length plus 3" for the bottom. For example, if the print is 8" x 10", the cut canvas should measure 10" x 23".

Process

1. Place transfer paper on the Blick Readycut with the printed image on top. Trace the image firmly with a ballpoint pen.
2. Trace the transferred image on the Blick Readycut with a Sharpie, filling in the areas to cut away.



Materials (required)

[Saral Wax Free Transfer Paper](#), Graphite, 12" x 12' (12917-2612); share one roll across class

[Blick Readycut](#), 8" x 10" (40422-0810); need one piece per student

[Sharpie Fine Point Markers](#), Black (21316-2001); need one per student

[Speedball Linoleum Cutters](#), lino set no. 1 (40203-1009); need one per student

[Speedball Fabric and Paper Block Printing Ink](#), 2.5 oz, assorted colors (40326-); share one among five students

[Speedball Soft Rubber Brayer](#), 1 1/2" (40104-1015); need one per student

[Uni-Posca Paint Markers](#), assorted colors, (19994-); share one between two students

[Aleene's Original Tacky Glue](#), 4 oz (23884-1004); share one among four students

[Blick Cotton Canvas By the Yard](#), unprimed, 7 oz, 72" x 1 yd (07334-1772); share at least three yds across class for an 8" x 10" print size

[Fiskars Student Scissors](#), 7" (57016-1065); need one per student

[Mountain Mist Fiberloft Polyester Stuffing](#), 16 oz (23949-1006); share one among four students

[Creativity Street Wooden Spring Clothespins](#), Mini Wooden Clothespins, package of 250, (62144-1250); share one pack across class

Optional Materials

[Speedball Bench Hook/Inking Plate](#), (42911-1000)

[Speedball Linozip Cutting Blades](#), (40204-)

[Dritz Embroidery Needles](#), assortment of 16 (62430-1001)

[Creativity Street Embroidery Floss Set](#), assortment of 24 (63100-1009)

[Coarse Dried Sand or Rice](#)

Process, continued

- Using carving tools of various widths, carve into the Blick Readycut until all areas that are not meant to receive ink are carved away.
- Using a brayer, evenly spread Speedball Fabric and Paper Block Printing Ink onto an inking plate or any other smooth surface.
- Roll the inked brayer evenly over the design, moving both ways across the image.
- Place the inked block face-down approximately one inch from the top of the canvas, carefully turn the canvas and block over (keeping it in alignment), and go over the inked area with a baren. If there are areas where the ink is thin on the finished print, use a brush to darken the ink and even it out.
- When dry, fold the canvas with the image side visible (lining up the top to the bottom) and cut around the image to create the desired shape.
- Turn the canvas over so the image is facing down. Use Uni-Posca Markers to write words and phrases related to the image and the community.
- Pinch the bottom of the canvas, folding it inside the front and back piece, creating an "M" shape when viewed from the side.
- Run a bead of tacky glue along the inside edge. Use binder clips to hold in place until the glue sets. Repeat for the other side, being sure to leave an opening at the top to fill the pillow with stuffing.
- Stuff the pillow with Mountain Mist Fiberloft Polyester Stuffing. Use a pencil to push the stuffing all the way to the bottom. Marbles or pebbles can be placed in the bottom for stability.
- Glue the remaining opening.

Options

- Sew the pillow instead of using glue.
- Have students choose just one building. Using a grid, each student chooses a section to carve and print collectively to create a puzzle-like effect.

National Core Arts Standards – Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Responding

Anchor Standard 8: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Connecting

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.



Step 1: Print Image on canvas.



Step 2: Fold in half and cut silhouette.



Step 3: Write on the back side.



Step 4: Glue sides and insert stuffing.