

A Bird's Eye View of a City

Grades 2 & 3

New Bedford's historic district and the panoramic view of the city's harbor, as seen from the Museum's observation deck, introduce students to geographic ways to describe a place.

Learning standards will be met as students:

- Observe historic buildings and sites (place, location)
Key words/phrases/thoughts
Museum and its purpose, National Park, Centre Street, ferry terminal, State Pier, Acushnet River, Fairhaven, hurricane barrier, Buzzards Bay, ...
- Gather geographic data to make a map
Key words/phrases/thoughts
Harbor, port, river, highway, compass rose, landmarks...
- Increase their understanding of the interdependent relationship between location and place
Key words/phrases/thoughts
Location - where a place is located. Also relative location = the interaction between places – the way places are connected, by water (Fairhaven to New Bedford), by land (Southcoast to the rest of the state)
Place – characteristics that distinguish one place from another
- Compare and contrast New Bedford's geographic features to those of their own community between location and place
Key words/phrases/thoughts
What makes New Bedford different from other cities, communities, etc.

Note:

Second grade students learn about places and landmarks from long ago.

Third grade students learn the history of their own cities and towns and about famous people and events in Massachusetts history.

Preparation

- Set up easel with vocabulary chart in designated area.
- Prepare clipboards with map. Have more pencils than expected number of students.
- Do not have the children hang up their coats.
- Review program vocabulary and strategy for presenting.

Materials

- Carrying case for materials
- Clipboards with folded Bird's Eye map on each
- Bird's Eye maps
- Pencils
- Vocabulary chart
- Easel
- New Bedford presentation map & for Grade 3 Dartmouth students a Dartmouth map.

Welcome and Introduction

Greet children in the Museum Plaza. Lead a brief discussion comparing the “look” of the museum neighborhood to their school neighborhood - (types of buildings, streets – note the Belgian paving stones, etc.)

Procedure

Escort the group to the west side of North Water Street and gather them in single or double file facing Centre Street. Tell them the name of the street “Centre Street.” Standing in the street facing the group, ask them, “without talking or sharing,” to take a careful look at the street trying to remember all that they see. Give them about a minute to look and then have them describe what they see (buildings, stores, cars, lampposts, a highway, etc.) After the group has described the view, ask them what is **in front of** the green building? – (lamppost). **How many** lampposts are on the opposite side of the street? (5) What is the building with the “be jeweled” sign made of? (brick and stone) What is **between** Centre Street and the water? (highway) What is **beyond** the highway? *Use these two questions to help students later when after drawing the two parts of their map they “see” how the highway divides to area.* Continue questioning and “seeing.”

Ask the group to describe Centre Street in two sentences. Then, what is **between** the top of Centre Street and the sidewalk they are standing on? (North Water Street) What do they see on N. Water that is **different** from Centre Street? Use their observations to talk about some of the following: **in front of, across from, beside, next to, close to, in back of, farther away from, on the other side of and behind.**

What is **behind** them? (the museum)

Ask the group to turn around and face the Museum building. Tell them you are going to ask them questions about what they have just seen. Without peeking or turning around you want them to raise their hands if they know the answer. “What is between Centre Street and the water?” “The brick building had what kind of walls on the side?” “How many lampposts were on the right side of Centre Street?” Continue with additional questions. Have the students turn around and look again at the street scene. Suggest to the group that all they see in front of them could be called a **landscape** (a portion of land which the eye can take in at a single view) or a **cityscape** (a view of a section of a city). *Use one term or the other depending on grade level and maturity.* Tell them they will now be going back into the Museum and going to a special place where they will draw a map of what they have just seen.

Unpredictable Obstacles

- Cars parked in observation area across from Centre Street.
Solution: Move down to museum loading dock area

- Rain/Snow/Cold
Solution: Look out at the neighborhood - Water St. - from the lower Jacobs Gallery

Escort the students to the designated area and have them sit on the floor. Jackets, etc. can be taken off and placed next to students. Tell them that they have just looked at a street that is part of their city. “What city?” “**New Bedford**”

Vocabulary Discussion

Repeat that when they look at the city scene they should try to remember all that they see. Ask students to close their eyes and recall the street scene they just saw. When they can picture the view in their mind’s eye raise their hands. Select a few students to share what they “see” and remember.

Place the vocabulary chart on an easel in order for all the children to see it easily. They will need to remember what is **next to** something, what is **in front of** something, what is **close to** something else, ... Continue down the chart either giving examples of what each word/phrase means or having the students give examples, i.e., “I am sitting **near** the chart. What does that mean?” Discuss. Or have students fill in the blank “A **sidewalk** is where people walk and a **highway** is where _____” Discuss.

Mapping the Street

How much do the students remember about the street scene they just viewed? Distribute the clipboards with the Bird’s Eye map, folded in half, attached and the pencils. Show the students how to position the clipboard so that the Museum logo is closest to them. Have each student write his/her name next to the logo. Tell them to imagine that is where they were standing outside. Remind students that they are only drawing what they saw from where they were standing to the highway.

Now ask them to close their eyes and remember or see in their mind’s eye all the things on Centre Street. Tell them, “without talking or sharing,” to draw what they remember. If needed, ask them to remember what was to the right of, to the left of, in front of, behind, etc. After a few minutes, select some students to “show and tell.”

In preparation for moving to the Davis Observation Deck, have the students put their clipboards, maps, and pencils on the floor.

Observation Deck

Escort children to the observation deck. Leave some separation between the students as they spread out along the railing. Give them a minute or two to just look and discuss with each other what they are seeing.

Gather the students together and suggest that they are seeing the view as a bird would see it – **a Bird’s Eye View**. Notice the buildings on the street they just viewed and drew.

Help the group locate and see Route 18, a **highway**. What is a highway? How is it different from a road or street?

Ask students to name some of the things they see **between** the **highway** and where they are standing on the observation deck – **streets** (Centre and Union), an intersection (Water and Union), buildings, roofs, treetops, etc. Make a verbal list.

Ask the students to look at all the things **beyond** the highway (the side farthest from you). Mention the **river** (Acushnet River) and the **harbor**. See how the river/harbor joins a larger body of water, a **bay** (Buzzards Bay) that leads to an **ocean** (Atlantic Ocean). Talk about, and make a verbal list of all the things they see – ferry terminal, fishing boats, bridge, trucks, cars, islands, hurricane dyke (barrier), buildings, Fairhaven, etc. Depending on the group, you might want to make a game of it – “I see an island with a lighthouse, where is it?” or give hints. Use as many vocabulary words and phrases as possible.

Now ask them to turn away from the view, close their eyes and remember or picture in their mind what they just saw.

Escort them back to their clipboards, maps, and pencils. Once all the students are settled, have them turn the map over to “discover” the highway. Ask them, “without talking or sharing,” to draw everything they remember seeing **beyond** of the highway. Give them a few minutes to do this. Then select students for “show and tell.”

Concluding this portion of the program, remind the students that they have drawn a picture map of a part of a city. “What city?” “New Bedford” They saw and drew pictures of fishing boats. Conduct a brief conversation about how the location of New Bedford, near the Atlantic Ocean, is a place where many people earn their living in the fishing business. The salary (money) received for the work done provides for the needs (food, clothing, shelter) and some of the wants (extras – TV sets, vacations, restaurant meals) of the family. Define the fishing business as all the people who work on the fishing boats, fillet or processing houses, and the trucks that transport the fish to the stores, as well as the stores and restaurants.

For students attending schools outside of New Bedford, conduct a discussion about how their town/community looks in comparison to New Bedford.

Ask the students to remove their maps from the clipboard. Collect maps and give them to the teacher.

For New Bedford or Dartmouth students Grade 3:

Distribute the map of New Bedford or Dartmouth. Discuss differences between a bird’s eye map and this one. Have students write their names on the paper. Using the poster board version of the map, help the students locate the Museum, their school, (Buttonwood Park or Round Hill Beach) and other landmarks, as time allows. Mark each location on the poster map as students do the same on their maps. Ask the students to remove their maps from the clipboard. Collect maps and give them to the teacher.

Collect clipboards and pencils. Return to carrying case.

If there is more than one class, each class will be one group and the program proceeds as follows: Group I begins at Centre Street, Group II at the Davis Observation Deck. Group I then draws their maps in San Francisco room and Group II draws their maps in either the Sperm Whale gallery or some other designated area. Then the groups rotate and Group I observes the view from Davis and Group II observes Centre Street.

As the students depart from the Museum, stop to visit the *Lagoda* and/ or the sperm whale. What you do in each area will depend on the number of students, the time remaining and the number of groups in the Museum.

Escort group to the mezzanine level of the Jacobs Family Gallery near the windows. With your back to the windows and the group facing you, use some of the words and phrases they have heard during the program.

Either urge them to continue to learn about their city. “What city?” “New Bedford” **Or** for Non-New Bedford students talk about how they can map their community.

Escort to departure area.

Bird's Eye View

Next to

In front of

Close to

Across

Near

Beside

In back of

Farther Away

Highway

Harbor

Beyond

Sidewalk

Acushnet River

Street

Port

Other side of

Landmark

Glossary

Including some of the Bird's Eye View program vocabulary,
plus other helpful definitions.

Coast	The land that borders the ocean.
Compass Rose	A drawing that shows where north, south, east and west are on a map.
Harbor	A protected area of water where ships can safely stay near land.
Island	A body of land with water all around it.
Landmark	An object, either natural or made by people, that helps you find or recognize a place.
Map	A drawing that shows what the earth looks like from above.
Natural Resource	Something in nature that is useful to people.
Ocean	A very large body of salt water on earth.
Physical Feature	A part of earth. Rivers, lakes, seas and mountains are examples of physical features.
Port	A place where ships come and go, dropping off and picking up things to be traded.
River	A long, flowing body of water.
Wharf	A structure that ships can dock alongside of while they load and unload goods.

From Comparing Communities
A third grade textbook