

On-line, on-site education

## *Lesson Plan*

**[Recommended for seventh grade; adaptations for fourth grade available]**

### *Learning Center 3. Citicorp Center*

#### **[A] Outline for Teachers:**

#### **1. Theme of this Loop for Students: The First Half of the Twentieth Century**

**2. Site:** Citicorp Center, Sutter and Sansome, near Market, on the Commercial Loop of the Gold Rush Trail

The spacious plaza was created here when the Citicorp Center was built in the 1960s, replacing the Holbrook Building. The Anglo and London Paris National Bank, built after the Great Earthquake and Fire of 1906, was part of this building.

When large highrises such as this were erected in San Francisco in recent years, the owners created public spaces as a condition of being allowed to build such large structures. In some cases, as older buildings were torn down, the new buildings were required to keep some architectural features of the old. In this way, the leaders of the City hoped to preserve some reminders of the past.

#### **3. Historical Landmark: *The Great Earthquake and Fire, 1906***

All around the downtown area, you will notice from history books that numerous buildings were erected from 1909 to 1912. This is because almost all the downtown was destroyed by this great earthquake and the fire that resulted from it. Since it took from three to six years to design and build the structures that replaced those lost, the period from 1909 to 1912 was very active in new construction.

Many of these buildings simply duplicated the ones that were destroyed in the disaster. So it's not surprising that these buildings became outdated over the next fifty years. That's why the Holbrook Building, completed in 1910, was considered obsolete and in need of replacement by 1960.

#### **4. The Great Celebration: *The Opening of the Panama Canal. 1914***

As San Francisco started to rebuild, the leaders of the City decided to show the world how the disaster of 1906 had been overcome. They planned a great

world's fair for 1915, to be held in the Marina District of the City. The theme for this fair was not just the new San Francisco, but a new way for the world to come to the Pacific ocean.

As it happened, another great project had been under way since 1904: the Panama Canal. After many false starts, the United States finally took charge of creating this waterway between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. After ten years of enormous work, the canal opened in 1914. So San Francisco called its fair the "Panama Pacific Exposition," and invited East to meet West on its shores.

The only building that remains from this gigantic party is the Palace of Fine Arts, now restored to what it was like in 1915. Inside this structure is the Exploratorium, a wonderful place for playing with science. The Palace of Fine Arts is just beyond the Marina on the way to the Golden Gate Bridge. As its name suggests, it is where paintings and sculpture from around the world were exhibited.

#### **5. The Citicorp Center's Tribute to the 1915 Exposition: *The Star Girl***

In the plaza is a large bronze sculpture, a replica of the theme of the Panama Pacific Exposition. A world-famous sculptor, A. Stirling Calder, created this statue to symbolize the hope of a new world: a young woman with her arms raised up to the stars, welcoming visitors to the City. Mr. Calder's son turned out to be a world-class sculptor in his own right. The hundredth anniversary of his birth, in 1898, is being celebrated by an exhibition of his particular form of sculptures -- mobiles -- now on display at the Museum of Modern Art opposite Yerba Buena Gardens.

See how this statue, which we would call classical, or 'old-fashioned', fits in well with the very classical architecture of the plaza. Notice the high ceiling, the ornate columns that support the ceiling, and the plain granite surfaces of the walls and floor. In many ways, this is a dignified building that shows us what architecture of the past tried to be.

#### **6. A Tribute to Another First for San Francisco: *The United Nations***

We think of the United Nations as being in New York -- where its headquarters are -- or in Europe -- where the World Court and most conference sites of the UN are held. What is often forgotten is that the United Nations was founded in San Francisco, just after World War II in 1945. Lesson number one: look for surprises in history, right here.

At the Citicorp Center is a marvelous display of flags to commemorate this event. In fact, all 185 flags of the nations represented at the UN are flying from the ceiling of this spacious plaza. There are information sheets at the plaza that identify all these countries.

The value of the United Nations is sometimes debated, and in its fifty or more years it has not prevented several devastating wars. But the UN is supported by virtually every nation in the world and offers hope for settling disputes and problems by peaceful means.

## **6. What Happened in the First Half of the Century:** *The technology of the times*

Before the beginning of this century homes were lighted by gas lamps -- there was no electricity from power companies.

At about the beginning of the century, automobiles began appearing -- and in another ten years, airplanes!

With the automobile came the great bridges -- the Golden Gate and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay bridges. And that was the end of the ferry boats!

To celebrate the great bridges, San Francisco put on another party -- the World's Fair of 1939 at Treasure Island. We don't hear much about world's fairs any more, or expositions -- the information comes to us by radio, television, and now the Internet! But the great fairs of years past were the ways that cities called attention to their products and hoped to encourage commerce and visitors to come to them.

The buildings grow taller, and people come to San Francisco to work from places farther and farther away, but a lot of old San Francisco remains. Just walking around the City, we can see some of the past. And if we can't learn about the past from what we see, we can find it in books. Lesson number two: whatever you see here that excites you, find out more about it by going to the library.

## **7. Next: Things to Do in the Citicorp Center**

First: Ask your students to ask questions!

- Why is this plaza here? And just what is a plaza?
- Why is the ceiling so high? And who thought of doing this?
- What kind of building is next to this? What work is done there?
- Why are so many 'old' things on the walls? Why do we like history?

Second: Explore!

- Find out how a big building like this works -- where are the elevators?
- Peek in at the restaurant -- would it be fun to eat here some day?

- Look up at all the flags -- how many can you identify? (one or two is enough!)

- Look out at the building across Sutter Street, and the one across Sansome Street -- how different are they, in age, in style?

Third: Write something!

- Take a pad and a pencil and write today's date and time
- Write your name, your class, your location (remember the cross streets, Sutter and Sansome; remember the name of the building, the Citicorp Center)
- Write a word or two about this place, this building, this location.
- Write a word or two about what you like or dislike about this place
- Write a word or two about the history you see here
- Write a sentence about what you have learned or felt here

Fourth: Have fun!

- Pretend you are a great actor, and make a pretend speech toward a crowd on Sansome
- Pretend you are a dancer, and gallop around under the Star Girl statue
- Pretend you are an author, and make notes for something you will write in the future about this place
- Pretend you are a teacher, and think up lessons to be learned from visiting here
- Pretend you are an artist, and imagine a painting or a statue you would like to see instead of the Star Girl, or in addition to that statue
- Pretend you are a business person, and prepare a plan for getting more people to come here and learn more about Citicorp
- Pretend you are a Gold Rush miner, brought back from 1849 to this date, and imagine what you would feel about the City that is now here

## **[B] PRE-TOUR PREPARATION**

*1. Review some basic vocabulary words (see next page)*

2. Draw a basic map of the site:

- draw Sutter Street as a line coming from top of page
- draw Sansome Street at bottom of that line, as a line going off to the right at a right angle from Sutter
- draw Market Street as a line just touching the point where Sutter and Sansome meet, and NOT parallel to either Sutter or Sansome

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**Concepts:** explain perpendicular (or right angle) and parallel in connection with this map

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3. Draw the Citicorp Center into the corner formed by Sutter and Sansome
4. Look at photographs of this area. These will be supplied in connection with this lesson plan.
5. Ask students to estimate the size of the buildings in this photograph. Count the stories in the photographs

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**Concepts:** explain how buildings are measured in terms of height (stories) and square footage. Explain square footage in terms of a baseball or soccer or football field.

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6. Show overall photos of the City. Pick out the largest buildings.
7. Try to find the Citicorp Center in the overall photos.
8. Define what a restaurant is, and what a coffee shop is, and what a plaza with tables for those who want to sit down is, and what a lunch site is.
9. Explain what a newsstand is, and what out of town newspapers are.
10. Use the word 'amenity' and show how many ideas this covers.

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**Concepts:** show how the City is a complex thing, with very small shops (newsstand) and very large businesses that are almost invisible (corporation names atop buildings)

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### **[C] School-to-work Ideas**

Examine a list of occupations that can be glimpsed at this and surrounding sites.

1. List at least ten such jobs or professions
2. Guess what ages are involved, whether men or women
3. Find pictures in magazines to identify the occupations, prepare a scrapbook
4. Be prepared to list what occupations are seen on site
5. See if the website gives any clues about occupations

### **[D] Afterward: Thoughts about the Citicorp Center Trip**

*A Checklist of What Was Seen and Experienced:*

1. Review of papers and notes from 'Things to Do in Citicorp Center'
2. Volunteers who want to say things about what they saw
3. Any great surprises? Any great disappointments?
4. Would you want to go again, in three months?
5. Would you like to see more places like this in downtown San Francisco?

*Projects for the classroom based on this trip:*

1. Maps: start from this site and work outwards
2. Statues: make a list of other public statues in the downtown area
3. Plazas: how many other plazas of this type, open to the public, are there in the City?
4. Newsstands: where else can one buy an out-of-state newspaper?
5. Flags: are there many flags on display anywhere else in the City? In the country?
6. The Calder who made this statue is the father of the Calder who created the mobiles now on display at the Museum of Modern Art. How often do artists run in families? Are their mothers and sons, fathers and daughters, mothers and daughters who are involved in art?
7. How has the Panama Canal changed the world since 1915? What has happened to the canal and Panama in recent years? Who now owns the canal?

8. What are the great Worlds Fairs in history? What cities have been the hosts of these fairs in the United States?
9. What will happen to Treasure Island, the site of the 1939 World's Fair?
10. Contrast these fairs with the county fairs that go on all over the country. Have you ever been to a county fair? What was it like?
11. What did you see at this location that this lesson plan did not mention?
12. Do you have an idea for another visit you would like to make?

[End]

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