



DESIGN THINKING

DRAWING ACTIVITY

The following Design Thinking activity is recommended for the first classroom visit as a way to initially stimulate broad ideas about design and creative thinking.

This activity is designed to help students start thinking creatively about the built environment. It requires that they make design decisions quickly, and commit them to paper.

DURATION: 20 minutes

OBJECTIVES – Students will:

- Practice communicating their design ideas quickly by sketching and drawing
- Demonstrate creative thinking about the built environment through an iterative design process

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS:

one sheet of 11 x 17 paper for each student,
pencils to draw with

DRAWING ACTIVITY:

Divide students into four groups.
This activity works smoothly when students are arranged in four rows to facilitate rapid passing of papers from one row to the next.

Preselect four common building typologies for the students to work with. These should be buildings that each student would be reasonably familiar with. Each student will interact with each building typology once during this activity. Some common buildings include:

- School
- Grocery Store
- Museum
- Restaurant
- Fire Station
- Recreation Center
- Stadium
- Skyscraper

Assign one building typology to each row to begin the exercise. Students have 4-5 minutes to begin to design a building of this type on their page. Encourage students to spend the entire 4-5 minutes drawing.

At the end of the first cycle, have students pass their

designs to the left (group 1 to group 2, group 2 to group 3, etc.). No communication of ideas is allowed during the handoff – students must work only with the ideas on the page. Each designer now has a design-in-progress in front of them, in a different building typology. Begin another cycle of design, and encourage students to use the full 4-5 minutes drawing and designing – adding their own ideas and clarifying what is on the page.

Continue through two more iterations of this process, until each student has had an opportunity to work on all four of the building typologies. This exercise becomes difficult in the third and fourth rounds, as students may feel that there is little left to contribute to the design-in-progress. Encourage them to continue drawing and adding to the design, as there is always something creative that can be added.

Pass the papers back to their original owners to finish the activity.

DISCUSSION: This is a great opportunity to reinforce ideas about the creative and spontaneous nature of design and working collaboratively. Consider questions such as:

- Did the final design of your building end up looking like you thought it would when you started?
- What elements were added that you would never have considered?
- How easy / difficult was it to work on someone else's design without any communication about what was already on the page?