

# Activity 7:

# Building Miniature Houses

GRADES 3-12

GSE

GSE Standard  
Alignment: Social  
Studies



45 - 60 min.



This activity can be a stand alone activity or in conjunction with Who is Food Insecure and Family Budgets.

## Student Learning

Students will explore how to work on a team to complete a task.

They will also have an opportunity to explore what it feels like to have fewer or more resources than someone else.

Students will also experience unequal access to resources and be able to articulate both the opportunities and challenges this inequality creates.

## Objectives

Students will be able to explain the impact of unequal resources.

Students will be able to discuss different ways we can respond to the needs and challenges faced within our community.

## Materials

You can be flexible and creative with the materials you use. The following list is a good starting point.

- 3-5 large pocket folders
- 1-2 manila file folders
- 6-10 sharpened pencils
- 6-11 pieces of construction paper -different colors.

- 2-4 pieces of cardstock/manila folder material
- 6-15 colorful markers
- 2-4 pairs of scissors
- 1-3 rolls of scotch tape
- 1-2 staplers

**Envelope #1:** 1 piece of construction paper and 2 pencils.

**Envelope #2:** 2 pieces of construction paper, 2 pencils, and 2 markers.

**Envelope #3:** 2 pieces of construction paper, 2 pencils, 4 markers and 1 pair of scissors.

**Envelope#4:** 3 pieces of construction paper, 2 pencils, 4 markers, 1 pair of scissors and 1 roll of tape.

**Envelope #5:** 3 pieces of construction paper, 2 sheets of cardstock/1 manila folder, 2 pencils, 5 markers, 2 pairs of scissors, 2 rolls of scotch tape, 1 roll of masking tape and a stapler.

## Performance Tasks

### Part One

Have the class work in small groups of two or three.

Explain that each group will have about 10 minutes to build a 3D miniature house with the materials they will be given.

Explain that their constructions will be judged on 3 criteria:

- Beauty and style
- Form and function
- Stability

Explain that the only rule is that they can't use their large pocket folders as part of their house construction.

Do not tell groups that they can share or collaborate. If they ask you if they can, tell them it's up to each group to decide.

Give each team one of the prepared envelopes.

Facilitator should move around the room and encourage each group of students and answer questions.

Facilitator should give everyone a 5 minute warning and tell them to be thinking about how they will present their houses to the other teams.

## **Part Two**

Go around the room and allow each group 2 minutes to present their houses to the class. The Facilitator will comment on whether each house fulfilled the 3 criteria.

Then bring the focus back to the full group to discuss the following questions.

## **Discussion Questions**

- Are there any initial thoughts about this experience that you would like to share?
- How did it feel to have too few materials or lots of materials?

- Was there anything else (beyond the materials you had) that impacted your ability to build a house?
- How did your materials impact the size of the house you built and/or its stability?
- Did anyone ask to borrow materials or offer to share any materials? What was the outcome?
- If you didn't share materials, why did you make that decision?
- What materials had the most impact on your ability to build a stable and secure house?
- Did you feel a sense of pride in the house you built?
- Which house would you rather live in and why?
- What did you feel was most important: beauty and style, form and function or stability? Why?
- Is it possible to judge the houses fairly when the resources were so different?
- What are some different ways you could have helped each other create more stable houses?
- What parallels can you draw between this activity and our community at large?
- What do you believe are the parallels between this activity and the unequal food resources that lead to food insecurity and hunger?