



Barn Again!

Celebrating an American Icon

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Barn Again! *Celebrating an American Icon* *Teacher's Guide*

Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon is a traveling exhibition organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and the National Building Museum, with assistance from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The exhibition is circulated through Museum on Main Street, a partnership of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and State Humanities Councils. Museum on Main Street serves rural America by circulating Smithsonian exhibitions that focus on broad topics of national history. State Humanities Councils help small museums prepare exhibition-related events for and about their communities. Through these combined resources, Museum on Main Street provides high-quality cultural programs to underserved rural citizens and sparks lasting professional improvement for small town cultural organizations.

Financial Support

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Hearst Foundation

National Endowment for the Humanities
Smithsonian Institution Special
Exhibition Fund

Smithsonian Educational Outreach Fund

For more information about Museum on Main Street, visit www.museumonmainstreet.org.

This teacher's guide was created to accompany the traveling exhibition *Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon*. The Smithsonian Institution invites teachers to duplicate these lessons for educational use.

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Cover image: Double-sided barn, Illinois

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Introduction

A barn is more than a building. A factory, a warehouse, and a social gathering place, the barn was at the heart of America's farms and a vital part of rural community life for many years. The barn remains a strong symbol today, even as it disappears from our countryside.

Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon is a Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition that explores the role of barns in the American past and examines the issues shaping their future. You and your students will have the opportunity to visit *Barn Again!* as the exhibition tours your state.

The *Barn Again! Celebrating an American Icon Teacher's Guide* is designed to help your students explore the themes of the exhibition, use barns as a window to your community's past, and participate in your community's *Barn Again!* experience. The guide includes four engaging classroom lessons as well as a scavenger hunt for students to use during their exhibition visit.

The lessons promote the development of critical thinking skills by involving students in analyzing a variety of primary resources, conducting local history research projects, and synthesizing their discoveries for presentation to a classroom or community audience. Please rely on your knowledge of your students' capabilities to decide how to best adapt a lesson to their needs. The lessons will also help your students meet performance expectations outlined in the national *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* developed by the National Council for the Social Studies. (See the appendix to this guide for descriptions of the performance expectations addressed by the lessons.)

The lessons can be taught either before or after your visit to the exhibition. Most of the lessons offer students the opportunity to create products that can be shared with your entire community in the local component of the *Barn Again!* exhibition. Please contact your local *Barn Again!* hosts before the exhibition arrives to coordinate plans for your students' work to appear in the exhibition. They may also be able to provide barn-related resources, serve as guest speakers, and provide other assistance as your class pursues its barn projects.

Lesson Format

The *Barn Again! Teacher's Guide* lesson plans use readily available materials and require little preparation to teach. Each lesson is organized in the following format:

Lesson Objectives: Concepts and skills students will develop in the lesson.

Suggested Grade Levels: Grade levels for which the lesson can be adapted.

Time Frame: Approximate amount of time required to complete the lesson activities.

Social Studies Performance Expectations: National performance expectations addressed by the lesson, by grade level.

Hand-outs: Resource packets and activity sheets needed for the lesson. These pages follow each lesson and should be duplicated for classroom use.

Equipment / Supplies: Materials needed for the lesson. Schools may need to lend cameras and tape recorders to students without personal access to this equipment.

Setting the Stage: Step-by-step instructions for a brief activity that relates the lesson topic to subjects already familiar to students and/or assesses students' prior knowledge of the topic.

Activity Procedure: Step-by-step instructions for an activity that introduces students to the concepts and skills listed in the lesson objectives and allows students to apply their new knowledge and skills to meet those objectives.

Extensions: Some lessons include suggestions for additional activities that meet the lesson objectives.

We hope you and your students will find exploring *Barn Again!* a rich and exciting educational experience. For more information about *Barn Again!*, a schedule of the exhibition's tour in your state, two additional lesson plans, and additional barn-related resources and activities, visit the *Barn Again!* web pages at www.museumonmainstreet.org.



Three barns,
Richland County, Ohio
Photograph by
Paul Sewell

Lesson Objectives

- Explore the role of community cooperation in frontier settlements
- Analyze a variety of primary resources
- Interpret a historic work-play party in a presentation before the class
- Analyze the role of cooperation in your community today

Suggested Grade Levels

4–8

Time Frame

Two or three 45-minute periods

Social Studies Performance Expectations

II. Time, Continuity, & Change — Early Grades (c, d); Middle Grades (d)
V. Individuals, Groups, & Institutions — Early Grades (g); Middle Grades (g) (See Appendix)

Hand-outs

- *News Report Guidelines* (one copy per student)
- *Barn Raising Resource Packet* (one copy)
- *Barn Dance Resource Packet* (one copy)
- *Corn Husking Resource Packet* (one copy)
- *Quilting Resource Packet* (one copy)

Supplies

- Two 5-oz. paper cups per student

Built by a Community

Setting the Stage

1. Introduce the value of community cooperation with this activity using paper cups. Give each student one cup. Ask students to place their cup upside down on the floor and stand on it. Observe results. Give each student another cup. Ask students to make a square with the cups approximately five rows wide and five rows deep. The cups should be upside down and their rims should touch. Ask students what they think will happen if someone stands on the cups now. Ask for a volunteer to stand on the cups and observe the results. Explain that this activity is an analogy for the value of cooperation. The cups represent individual people. The students standing on them represent a big, difficult job. If one person tries to do the job alone, he/she might get squashed. But if a group of people work together (like the cups placed in rows), they can support the weight of the big job.
2. Explain that cooperation was an important part of survival for early American settlers and pioneers. Share the following quote from Charles Latrobe, an Englishman who visited American frontier settlements in 1835: “A life in the woods teaches many lessons, and this among the rest, that you must both give assistance to your neighbor and receive it in return, without either grudging or pouting.” Ask students to share their ideas on what Latrobe means.
3. Explain that people combined fun with their work, whenever they could. Tell students: *Work-play parties helped get a big job done quickly and gave people a chance to see distant neighbors, share news and ideas, and have some fun. Many work-play parties took place in barns because they provided big spaces to work and play. In fact, building a barn itself required a lot of help from neighbors. We’re going to explore how people cooperated in the past and how they help each other today.*

Activity Procedure

1. Explain that students will be creating an “eyewitness” news report about a work-play event to share with the class. Hand out a copy of the *News Report Guidelines* sheet to each student and review criteria with class.
2. Divide students into four groups and give a different *Resource Packet* to each group. Discuss the importance of primary resources. Explain that oral history interviewers do not correct grammar or pronunciation when transcribing interviews and ask students why this is a good policy. Instruct students to carefully review their resource materials to learn as much about their event as possible. You may wish to allow older students to conduct additional research on their topic before developing their presentation. Several resources are listed at the end of the lesson.
3. The four groups will use the *News Report Guidelines* to develop an “eyewitness” news report on their topic to act out in front of the class. Depending on the time available,

students can either prepare their presentations in class or work on them at home for a day or two. Encourage students to make props to use in their presentations.

4. Ask each group to perform its news report in front of the class. Students watching the reports should take notes on interesting aspects of the different events.
5. Ask students to imagine they lived on a farm long ago and have just attended a work-play party. Assign students to write a letter to their cousin who lives in the city explaining what happened at the event, why it was important in their community, and what part they played in it.
6. Ask students: *Do people still come together to get a big job done today?* Brainstorm a list of ideas. The list might include events like a community park clean-up or organizations like Habitat for Humanity. Ask students: *Do you think cooperation is still important in our communities today? Why or why not?* Allow students to share ideas.

Lesson Extension

1. As a class, think of a project that would help your school or community. Organize a work-play party to get it done. For example, students could host a flower planting at the town hall and celebrate with a “barn dance” in conjunction with the *Barn Again!* exhibition.

Resources

Cross, Verda. *Great-Grandma Tells of Threshing Days*. Niles, Ill.: Whitman, 1992.

This children’s book tells about the day a threshing team and all the neighbors arrive to help a family thresh its wheat.

Endersby, Elric, Alexander Greenwood, and David Larkin. *Barn: The Art of a Working Building*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992.

This “coffee-table” book includes extensive photo essays on two barn raisings done with traditional techniques in the late 1980s. The essays include many diagrams and models to explain the process.

Leffingwell, Randy. *The American Barn*. Osceola, Wisc.: Motorbooks International, 1997.

This “coffee-table” book includes a photo essay on a modern Amish barn raising.

Sherrow, Victoria. *Huskings, Quiltings, and Barn Raisings: Work-Play Parties in Early America*. New York: Walker and Company, 1992.

This book for young readers contains detailed descriptions of a variety of work-play events and includes recipes for traditional dishes similar to those served at work-play parties long ago.

Yolen, Jane. *Raising Yoder’s Barn*. Boston: Little Brown, 1998. This beautifully illustrated children’s book by a Caldecott Medal author tells the story of an Amish barn raising from a young boy’s perspective.

Seven Brides for Seven Brothers. 103 min. Hollywood, Calif.: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1954.

This musical contains a comical barn raising scene in which the barn ends up collapsing because two groups don’t cooperate.

Witness. 112 min. Hollywood, Calif.: Paramount Pictures Corporation, 1985.

This movie contains a scene of an Amish barn raising. The entire movie, however, is rated R and is not appropriate for young viewers. Be sure students’ use of this resource is monitored.

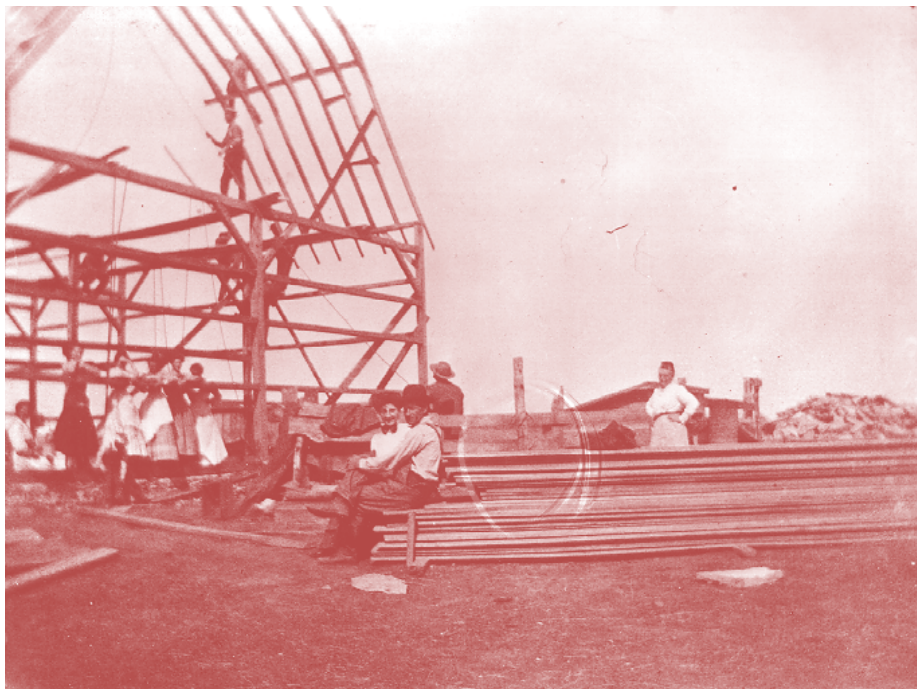
NEWS REPORT GUIDELINES

Please read these guidelines carefully and use them to help you develop an “eyewitness” news report on your event.

1. Your group will need one person to act as a television news reporter. The rest of the people in your group will play the people participating in the event described in your *Resource Packet*. The reporter will interview the people at the event during a live “eyewitness” news report which you will present to your class. Everybody in your group must take part in the presentation.
2. The materials in your *Resource Packet* describe events of the kind you are studying. Your group should use these materials to become familiar with this kind of event and then invent your own story. You can use details from the stories in your *Resource Packet*, but don’t simply copy one of them.
3. Good news reporters answer the basic journalism questions of Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. Your presentation should also answer these questions. Below are examples of questions you may want to answer in your news report.
 - a. Who is participating in this event?
 - b. Who organized this event?
 - c. Who is benefiting from this event?
 - d. What kind of event is this?
 - e. What different activities are people doing at this event?
 - f. When is the event taking place? Time of day? Time of year?
 - g. Where is this event happening? Why here?
 - h. Why is this event taking place?
 - i. Why did people decide to participate?
 - j. Why is this event important or interesting?
 - k. How does this event affect the community?
4. Be creative and have fun! Make your presentation as informative and entertaining as you can. Be sure to practice a few times before you perform in front of the class.



Barn raising in the Rainy River District, about 1900
Minnesota Historical Society



Barn raising near Plainview, about 1910
Minnesota Historical Society

THE BARN RAISING BY MONA RIDDER, 1975

The following narrative is the story of a barn building as told by George Stullenbarger to his nephew Eldred Hanlin, and retold by Mr. Hanlin, my uncle, to me [Mona Ridder]. Mr. Stullenbarger was born in 1881 and spent his entire life, until his death in 1967, on the Stullenbarger-Hanlin farm [in Mineral County, West Virginia] . . .

. . . Dad had the barn built two years later, in 1895, by a Mr. Beachy from Pennsylvania. Beachy was about 50 years old and had built barns all his life. This was to be the biggest barn he had ever built, in fact, the biggest barn in the county at that time. He came here in the summer of 1894 and we commenced cutting timber. The meadow on the hill above the barn was where the chestnut trees grew that were cut for the beams and sheathing. We also cut a few oaks from there. Mr. Beachy let the logs lay there on the ground all winter and the following spring we would skid them to where they were to be sawed.

After we got the trees down we started to work on the foundation. We dug it out with horses and a scoop. . . . Mr. Farabee, who was to lay the stones, said that would make a smooth, solid base. After the weather broke in the spring, Mr. Farabee started building the foundation. It was my job to mix and carry the mortar, which was lime and sand.

About the same time we started the foundation the sawmill was being set up for the logs that had been cut away back in the summer. . . . Beachy, who had been with us since the cutting of the trees, was now ready for what he felt was the most important job of all. He himself set the head block on [the] mill to cut some of the larger beams on an angle. As each of the pieces was cut, he marked them where and how they were to be joined.

By the first of June the foundation was ready and the timbers were all cut and marked. Dad kept saying it would never be done in time to put in hay, and Mr. Beachy had to constantly assure him that it would.

The night before the raising Beachy paced back and forth worrying whether everything was going to fit. Dad said to forget it and go to bed, but Beachy couldn't calm down and, furthermore, made me sit up all night with him, repeating, "If one piece is off, it's all off." He would punch me every little bit to keep me awake.

Finally the day came and so did the people — the Harveys and Wilsons from Short Run, Md.; the Kitzmillers, Rafters, Pools, and Pughs from Kitzmiller, Md.; and the Junkins, Dixons, and Shillingburgs from Elk Garden. . . . There were about a hundred people here that day. Some came to work and some came to watch, but everyone came to eat. Mom and some of the women had baked about a hundred pies the day before, and there was corn bread, ham, beans, and fried potatoes.

Well, the frame started going up — every piece fit perfect! They were put up one at a time with gigged poles and fastened in place with pins and wedges that had been made ready beforehand. One side was about to be fastened to another when it started to fall back. Everyone but one fellow ran. He grabbed a pole and caught the wall. The pole bent nearly double before everyone gathered their wits and helped him force it back in place.

That day the four main walls of the frame were up. The next day the rest of the frame was finished and the rafters were raised on pulleys and fastened together with no ridge board. The slated shingles for the roof weighed 16 tons and it took four or five men two days to put them on with the aid of a scaffold. . . .

By July 1 the barn was ready for hay, and it held a hundred tons of loose hay. The cost for Dad to build it was \$375 and the dimensions were 42 by 62 feet.

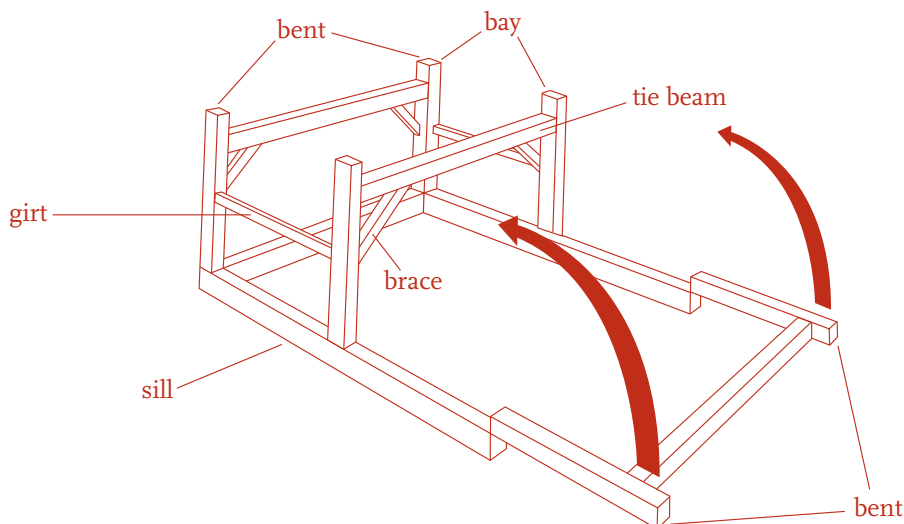
RECIPE FOR A BARN RAISING

from *This Old Barn* by Ken Wysocky, ed. (Greendale, Wisc.: Country Books, 1996)

This excerpt is from Mary Emma Showalter's Mennonite Community Cookbook, Favorite Family Recipes. The list provides enough food for 175 men for one day.

115 lemon pies	300 light rolls
500 fat cakes (doughnuts)	16 loaves bread
15 large cakes	Pickled red beets and pickled eggs
3 gallons applesauce	Cucumber pickles
3 gallons rice pudding	6 pounds dried prunes, stewed
3 gallons cornstarch pudding	1 large crock stewed raisins
16 chickens	5-gallon stone jar white potatoes and
50 pounds roast beef	the same amount of sweet potatoes

BARN RAISING DIAGRAM





Barn dance, about 1910

Brown Brothers, Sterling, Pennsylvania

BARN DANCE INTERVIEW

from Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, WPA Federal Writers' Project Collection

This interview was recorded in 1938 as part of the Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project. The man being interviewed is George Duffy. He was born in Peoria, Illinois, in 1875. The words in brackets — [] — are words the interviewer could not make out clearly. The interviewer had to guess at what Duffy said.

Perhaps I can give you a short description of a typical farm dance of the eighties or nineties [?].

The farmer boy, a brawny lad of nineteen or so, arose at daybreak the day this particular dance was to be held. He did his chores before breakfast, milking, feeding stock, etc. At breakfast the night's dance is mentioned at the table. He is asked if he plans to take Sally — he's been going steady with Sally — to the dance. Yep, he and Sally's going. After breakfast he goes out and perhaps follows a plow all day in the back forty. After putting in a good dozen hours at hard labor, he comes in for supper and stows away a hearty meal. Then comes the night chores, which are mostly a duplication of the before-breakfast ones. Chores done, he begins the process of slicking [up?] to go out — removing most of the odor of the stable from his person with [copious?] dousings of hot water from the wood range reservoir, and a lather of home-made lye soap. . . .

In a flurry of gravel flirted from the wheels of his one-seater "Democrat" buggy, our young dance [enthusiast?] drives rapidly down the lane of the home place and is soon thudding along the high road bound for Sally's home, two miles distant. . . . The dance is to celebrate a barn raising and is to be held at a farm some fifteen or sixteen miles from Sally's home. No distance at all these days in a streamlined coupe, but in those days it was quite a distance. . . .

Arriving at the dance later than many, they find a long line of horses and buggies tied to fence rails and hitching racks. The shrill tones of a rapidly bowed fiddle and the lusty commands of the "caller" break the soft silence of the surrounding countryside. Thin fingers of mellow lantern-light filter through chinks and knot-holes of the new barn in which the dance is being held. Our farm boy and his Sally enter the barn and are greeted by cheery nods of welcome and recognition all around. A quadrille is in progress. . . . The music here consists of the best available neighborhood fiddler assisted by another neighbor who can "chord" on the [melodson?] — without benefit of notes. Correct time is maintained by the thumping of the fiddler's boot on the hard floor, by the gyrations of his shoulders as he scrapes his fiddle, and by the vigorous nodding of his head in proper tempo. The fiddler's boot thumping is augmented in volume by the [concerted?] foot tapping of small boys who sit on the benches that line the dance floor.

The fiddler and dance caller were colorful and picturesque individuals who, if they excelled in their abilities, were not without considerable repute and importance in their respective neighborhoods. A colorful fiddler knew how to draw attention to himself and to liven the proceedings by clowning a bit as he fiddled. Some fiddlers could toss their fiddles into the air or flip them upside down without losing a beat. Others made a specialty of

waving their fiddles backward over their heads while playing just to prove their complete mastery of the instrument. The callers [were] more usually glib fellows of likeable personality and strong of lung. The best callers were ones who could improvise [new?] figures or movements for the dancers, though in a pinch almost any young dance [follower?] of the neighborhood could be drafted into service and do a very creditable job of calling.

There were a number of standard dances popular in the '80s and '90s — the schottische, the minuet, the polka, the Virginia reel and others, but the most popular by far was the quadrille. The quadrille had almost as many variations as there were callers to call them and couples to dance them, and new calls constantly filtered in from other localities. They all followed, however, a fairly regular pattern. The quadrille usually consisted of five figures, movements, or changes, executed by four couples, each couple occupying one side of a square, giving rise to the name by which this dance was commonly called, “the square dance.” Four couples comprised a set. There were as many sets on the floor simultaneously as the size of the floor would accommodate and each set followed the commands of the caller in unison. . . .

I give you here a few of the dance calls which remain in my memory and which I have used recently at local dances since the revival a few years ago of the oldtime dances.

Quadrille

Balance one — balance all eight,
 Swing on the corner like swinging on a gate;
 Now swing your own if not too late.
 Left alamand right to your partner and hand
 over hands
 All the way ‘round; promenade eight when you
 get straight.
 First lady out to right, swing that gent with right
 hand ‘round,
 Partner by left with left hand ‘round,
 Next gent by right with right hand ‘round,

Partner by left with left hand ‘round,
 Lady in the [center?] and seven hands ‘round. (Circle)
 Bird hop out and the crow hop in,
 Seven hands up and around again.
 Swing him out with a partner swing [?].
 Alamand left and grand right and left around.
 Come to your partner don’t be slow,
 Treat ‘em all alike with the double elbow,
 Hook ‘em on the right and back by the left,
 That is the ‘railroad swing’ [?].
 Come to your partner, promenade to place.

MUSIC FOR “STONY POINT”

from *Fiddle Tunes of the Old Frontier*, Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, The Henry Reed Collection

This popular fiddle tune is an example of the kind of songs played at barn dances. The tune was known by many names and played in many areas of the country. The name “Stony Point” may refer to a battle in the Revolutionary War. You can listen to this fiddle tune on the Library of Congress web site at <http://memory.loc.gov>. Once at the site, click on “Search” and then enter “Stony Point.” Click on “Stony Point” in the list that appears.



Corn Husking Frolic, about 1828

Alvan Fisher (1792-1863), American

Oil on panel

70.8 x 62.23 cm (27-7/8 x 24-1/2 in.)

©Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Gift of Maxim Karolik for the M. and M. Karolik

Collection of American Paintings, 1815-1865

CORN HUSKING INTERVIEW

from Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, WPA Federal Writers' Project Collection

This interview was recorded in 1939 as part of the Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project. The man being interviewed is M.T. Cragg. His family has farmed in Massachusetts for generations. The interviewer tried to capture the way Cragg spoke by spelling words the way Cragg pronounced them.

Course in the old days a farm was a pretty tough place. It's a lot better now than it was as far as amusement is concerned. What with the radio and the automobile the farm isn't half bad. But we had fun in our day, too. We didn't go through life with no fun at all, you can bet.

Prob'ly the best fun we had that the young people don't have now was husking bees. You know about them? Well, the big idea was to get somebody's corn husked. Instead of working at it, we played at it. But the work got done just the same. The idea of the game was simple enough. A bushel of the unhusked ears were dumped before each player and an empty basket was provided to place the husked ears in. 'Course, the bee was held in the barn, which was all lighted up with lanterns hanging from the beams, and the place made extry neat. If a feller found a red ear when he was husking his pile, it was a ticket that allowed him to go down the line and kiss all the girls. If a girl found one, she could go and kiss all the fellers — but she didn't. No sir, she hid it, or tucked it under some feller's pile. 'Twas dumb funny how many red ears they was in just ordinary corn. 'Course, what happened was that the fellers would save the red ears from other huskings — even kept 'em from other years — and would arrive at a husking with a bag full. The feller that was giving the husking would see to it that they was plenty of red ears in his corn, too.

I don't remember as we each went and got our girls as we did when they was a dance. Most generally we took a big wagon and put hay, or straw, in the bottom of it, with plenty of buffeler robes on top, and then drove around and got everybody. The robes come from the West. Lots of us had buffeler coats, too. Wore 'em 'til the hair was all gone in patches, and holes got worn clean through the hide. You don't see any of 'em nowadays, but they was cheap then.

After we got the corn all husked we was invited into the house to have a bite to eat. And they was always plenty — regular church sociable layout. I don't remember much what 'twas, 'cept pies and cakes and nuts and cider afterwards when we played games.

“HUSKING CORN” BY E.E. TODD (MUSIC) AND W.H. PARSONS (LYRICS), 1879

from Library of Congress, Music Division, Music for the Nation: American Sheet Music, 1870-1885

You can see a copy of this sheet music on the Library of Congress web site at <http://memory.loc.gov>. Once at the site, click on “Search” and then enter “Husking Corn.” When the search results appear, click on “Gallery View,” and then click on the fourth “Husking Corn” that appears. Click to view images of the item using the page image viewer, and then “turn” to pages three and four.

When autumn winds and hoary frosts
Have stript [sic] the leaves from trees,
And country boys and girls begin
To fix for husking bees;
‘Tis then the fitting time to go
From city life forlorn,
And join the merry country lads
In husking out the corn.

The old barn floor is polished white,
The haymow richly gleams
In radiant light, of lanterns hung
From overhanging beams;
There meet the lads and lassies, who
An idle life would scorn;
No lighter hearts on earth than theirs,
When husking out the corn.

The fun begins in earnest, when
A rosy, blushing miss
Comes on a deep red ear of corn,
And pays for it — a kiss;
Each time a ringing blast is blown
Upon the dinner horn,
And oh, how fast the blasts do come
While husking out the corn.

‘Tis twelve o’clock, the work is done;
Hurrah! now for the dance!
The floor is quickly cleared away,
And in the fiddlers prance.
“All promenade!” and “Balance four!”
Is heard till early morn,
And then, in pairs they homeward go
From husking out the corn.



Quilting party on the Siljan farm, about 1895
Minnesota Historical Society



Quilting bee, about 1925
Minnesota Historical Society

QUILTING PARTY INTERVIEW #1

from Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, WPA Federal Writers' Project Collection

This interview was conducted in 1938 as part of the Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project. The woman being interviewed is Mayme Reese. She was born in Charleston, S.C., in 1881.

Did you ever hear about quilting parties? We used to have quilting parties at least twice a year. One time we would meet at one house and one time at another; you'd keep on that way until the quilt was finished. . . . Well, say there'd be three or four ladies who were good friends. If I was making the quilt, I'd set up the frame (quilting frame) in my house and the other two or three ladies would come to my house and spend the day quilting.

I'd have it all ready for the quilting to start. . . . Maybe I'd have been sewing scraps together for a year until I got the cover all made. Then when my friends would come, the cover would be all ready and there wouldn't be anything to do but start working on the padding. If there were four ladies, each would take an end. I'd take this end, the other two would take the ends over there. You'd decide before how you were going to make the stitches. If you were going to have a curving stitch, you'd sew one way. If you were going to quilt block fashion, you'd sew that way.

The ladies who would come to help you, would come as early in the morning as they could. Sometimes you all had breakfast together. If you didn't, you had dinner together and a little snack off and on during the day. If it was at my house and nobody was coming early enough for breakfast, I'd put something on the sideboard — the buffet — that everybody could reach if they got hungry before time to sit at the table. Sometimes there'd be sweet potatoes, some smoked pork, bread, maybe some syrup, and things like that. Then when you had dinner, there'd be the regular things everybody had at home. If somebody came way in (from the country or a town 8 or 9 miles away), they'd have supper and stay all night.

Depending upon how many quilts you needed a year or just wanted to make, there'd be that many quilting parties for ladies who were intimates. If none of my friends were going to make quilts in a year, then they'd keep coming to my house maybe twice a week until we got it finished. If you worked right along and didn't stop to talk — 'course most of the time we stopped to gossip a little — you could finish a quilt in a day or two. All that depended on the pattern, too. If somebody else was making a quilt, we'd go to their house and exchange labor 'til they got their quilt done.

Whenever we had a quilting party, the men-folks had to look out for themselves. They ate cold food if they came in hungry in the day and if we finished working soon enough, they'd get their supper on time. If we didn't, they just had to wait. . . . They didn't mind. If they fussed, we'd remind 'em 'bout keeping warm in the winter.

QUILTING PARTY INTERVIEW #2

from Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, WPA Federal Writers' Project Collection

This interview was conducted in 1938 as part of the Works Progress Administration Federal Writers' Project. The woman being interviewed is Kate Flenniken. She lived in Winnsboro, S.C., and was 80 years old at the time of the interview.

I remember the quilting parties in our neighborhood. When the crops were laid by in the summer, quilting parties would begin, and they were held at different plantation homes in the community until late in the fall of the year. Generally each home had one frame of slats. To the home where the party took place, neighbors would bring their frames, and sometimes as many as four quilts were being made at the same time. The quilt frames were arranged on the floor of the room in a rectangle the size of the quilt to be made. A narrow strip of cloth was tacked to the frames all around and the lining of the quilt was sewed to this strip. The frames were then lifted up about the height of a table and rested on their backs. Then the cotton or wool was carded and spread in uniform layers on the lining between the frames. The top of the quilt was assigned to individuals. For instance, each lady would undertake to sew and make a number of squares from the material; another, so many, and so on. As the squares were finished, these were sewed together by others in attendance, until the top of the quilt was completed as a whole. Then the top was placed on the cotton, and the stitching began, from right to left of the frame, the thread going through the bottom lining, cotton, and top covering. The folds could be rolled back as the work went on.

On some occasions a "crazy quilt" would be made out of the scraps of satin, silk, and bright colored material. No cotton was used in making the "crazy quilt." Some colored cotton cloth was generally used for the lining or under part of these quilts. They were made for beauty and show, instead of warmth and comfort. Every bride in those days was presented with one such quilt.

In connection with one of the quiltings, a party was given at the home of the quilting, and, out of this social festivity, I opine that some boy was inspired, by a girl named Nellie, to write the song, "Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party."

Lesson Objectives

- Identify factors that influence building design
- Design barns to meet the requirements of two different programs
- Compare the factors that influenced students' two barn designs
- Analyze two barn designs created by classmates

Suggested Grade Levels

4–8

Time Frame

Approximately four 45-minute periods

Social Studies Performance Expectations

I. Culture — Early Grades (a, d); Middle Grades (a, d)
 III. People, Places, & Environments — Early Grades (g); Middle Grades (g)
 (See Appendix)

Hand-outs

- *Barn Photos* (one overhead and one copy per student of each page)
- *John Hafen's Barn Program* (one copy per student)
- *Floor Plans and Elevations* (one copy per student)
- *Alfred Hopkins's Barn Program* (one copy per student)

Supplies

- Graph paper
- Drawing paper
- Rulers

Barn Architects

Setting the Stage

1. Write the following question on the board: *Why do barns look the way they do?*
 Show overheads and distribute *Barn Photographs*.
2. Ask students to write a list or draw a web of all the factors that influence how a barn is designed. Remind students to think of examples from *Barn Again!* if they have seen the exhibition. If students need a prompt, give them an example like: *The crops a farmer grows* or *How much money a farmer has to spend*.
3. Ask students to share their ideas with the class and give examples to illustrate them. Record student ideas on the board. Once all the ideas have been listed, work together as a class to group the ideas together in broader categories. Categories might include: resources, function, environment, culture, technology, etc. Encourage students to limit their categories to five or six broad ideas. Each student should write down the final categories for future reference.
4. Explain that the categories students developed are called “design filters.” These filters are a tool for helping them think about why a barn looks the way it does. Divide students into groups of three or four. Each group should examine each barn in the *Barn Photographs* and identify which design filters have influenced its design.

Activity Procedure

1. Explain that students will use the design filters to help them design barns for two different farmers. Tell students that when an architect designs a building, she asks her client to develop a program. The program explains all the different activities and kinds of spaces the building must house and any other requirements or constraints placed on the project. Hand out copies of *John Hafen's Barn Program* to each student and review together. As a class, discuss the different kinds of information in the program and how they reflect their design filters.
2. Distribute copies of the *Floor Plans and Elevations* sheet to each student. Explain that architects use the program as a guide for designing a building. They represent their design ideas with floor plans and elevations. Review the information on the sheet with the class.
3. Distribute graph paper, drawing paper, and rulers. Assign students to design a barn to meet the needs of *John Hafen's Barn Program*. As architects, students will create both a floor plan and an elevation drawing for their barn. Students will also include a list of materials they intend to use on the barn and a cost estimate for the project. (For the purposes of this exercise, students can rate the cost of their barns as expensive, average, or moderate.) Students will write a brief description of how the barn they designed

meets the requirements of the program and any special features or creative solutions they developed. Make a list of the required elements of the barn designs (floor plan, elevation, materials list, cost estimate, description) on the board. Remind students to keep the design filters in mind as they work.

4. Allow students to design their barns. Monitor students and provide guidance as needed. When their designs are complete, distribute *Alfred Hopkins's Barn Program* and more drawing materials. Ask students to design a barn to meet this new program.

[Option: Allow older students to develop their own barn program. Make two copies of each program. Distribute copies of the students' programs rather than *John Hafen's* and *Alfred Hopkins's Barn Programs*. Ask students to design barns to meet the requirements of their classmates' programs.]

5. Divide students into discussion groups of three or four. Ask students to take turns in their groups explaining how the designs of their two barns were similar or different based on the requirements of the two programs. Students should also decide which of the design filters most influenced their barn designs and which were the least important for them.
6. Ask students to turn in their barn designs. Make two copies of all the designs. Then hand out two designs created to meet the same program to each student. (Some students will have two barns designed for John Hafen, and some students will have two barns designed for Alfred Hopkins). No student should receive his/her own design.

7. Assign students to analyze how the two designs they received meet the requirements of the program. Students should write a brief evaluation answering the following questions: *Did the architects develop similar solutions to meet the needs of the program or are there different solutions that work? Did the design filters influence these architects in similar or different ways?* Students should support their answers with examples.
8. Ask students: *Do you think the design filters can help us understand why other kinds of buildings look the way they do? Give an example to support your answer. Do you think the design filters can help us understand the way people in other cultures construct buildings? Why or why not?*
9. Submit your students' barn plans to the *Barn Again!* hosts in your community for inclusion in the exhibition. Alternatively, make a "Why Do Barns Look the Way They Do?" bulletin board in your classroom to display students' work.

Lesson Extensions

1. Select a barn in your community and analyze how its design reflects the design filters developed by students.
2. Ask a farmer or rancher in your community to come to your class and tell about his/her needs for a new barn. Divide the class into teams of two to three to design a barn for this farmer or rancher.



Prairie barn of pole and dirt construction, about 1880
Minnesota Historical Society

Groom in front of a barn on the Savage Estate, Savage, Minnesota, about 1910
Minnesota Historical Society





Farmstead with round barn,
about 1910

Minnesota Historical Society

Barn and hay wagon
on farm, Morrison
County, about 1900
*Minnesota Historical
Society*



JOHN HAFEN'S BARN PROGRAM

Background

My name is John Hafen, and I live in Pennsylvania. I purchased my farm in 1800, and it has been growing for ten years. My main business is growing wheat that I sell to people in Philadelphia. I also keep four horses for working my farm and two or three cows for milk and meat. I need you to design a new barn to store my crops and house my animals.

Spaces Required

Wheat Storage and Processing — I need two large, clean, dry areas for storing the wheat I grow. One area will be for wheat I have just harvested. The other will be for wheat that has had the chaff, or outer husks, removed and is ready to sell. It is important for me to be able to store my wheat for a while so I can try to sell it when the market seems best.

I also need a large space with a hard floor for threshing, or removing the chaff from the wheat. The threshing space should have a door on either side so the wind can blow through the barn and blow away the chaff. In addition, I need a way to unload the harvested wheat from my wagon easily and load the threshed wheat into my wagon.

Animal Shelter — I need an area to shelter my horses and cows during cold or rainy weather. I don't want to keep the animals close to my wheat. If possible, I would like to keep the wheat and animals on different floors on the barn. There must be a convenient way to provide the animals with food, remove manure from their living area, and get the animals in and out of the barn.

Animal Feed Storage — I must store enough hay to feed my animals throughout the snowy winter. The hay must be kept dry, but it must also be ventilated so it doesn't burst into flames.

Equipment Storage — I need a place to keep my farming tools and equipment. I would like to hang my tools on the wall.

Site

My farm is on some rolling hills. In fact, the site for the new barn is on a hillside. Could this hill be an advantage in designing my new barn? The countryside around my farm is filled with fieldstones that many people have used for building. There is also some timber nearby.

Budget

My farm is prospering and I would like to build a barn that lets everyone know it! I can afford to invest quite a bit on money in my new barn, but I want to be practical, too.

One last thing — my father came to Pennsylvania from Germany. Like many other German families here, we put six- or eight-pointed stars on our barn. Some people carve the stars into a barn's wood siding while others simply paint them on their barn. I would like to continue this tradition to show my German heritage.

FLOOR PLANS AND ELEVATIONS

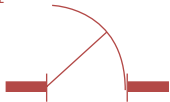
When architects design a new building, they use different kinds of drawings to help them plan how the building will work and look.

A **floor plan** shows how the building will function and answers such questions as: *What rooms are in the building? Where are they located? How do you get from one room to another? Where are the windows and doors?*

A floor plan shows what a building looks like from above if you cut away the top halfway between the floor and the ceiling. The architect must draw a floor plan for each story of a building if it is more than one story tall. Floor plans are usually drawn to scale. That means that while objects are drawn smaller than they are in real life, they are still the same size in relation to each other. A common scale used by architects is: $\frac{1}{4}$ inch on the floor plan equals one foot in the building. (Architects need to have good math skills!)

Architects begin a floor plan by making a list of all the different spaces that need to be in a building. Next they think about how the spaces should relate to each other. For example, is it more useful for the bathroom to be near the bedroom or the garage? Then architects begin to experiment by drawing different floor plans. Architects use simple symbols to make a floor plan easier to read. Here are some you can use:

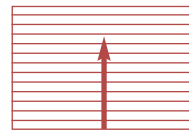
Door



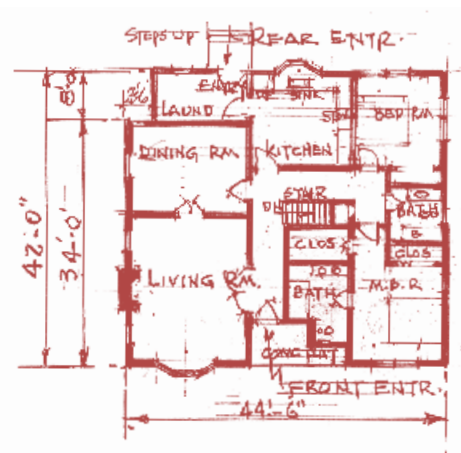
Window



Stairs

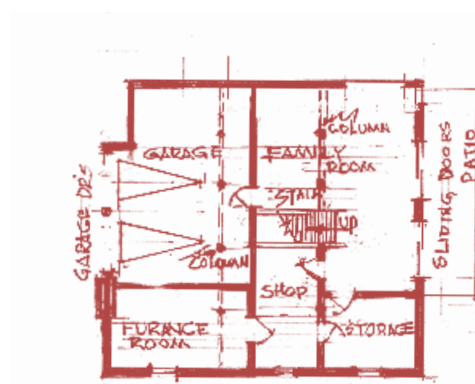


Here are floor plans for the first floor and the basement of a house. The architect has labeled the rooms on the floor plan and made notes about the overall size of the building. (In this case he used a scale of $\frac{1}{16}$ inch = 1 foot.)



First Floor Plan

$\frac{1}{16}'' = 1'-0''$



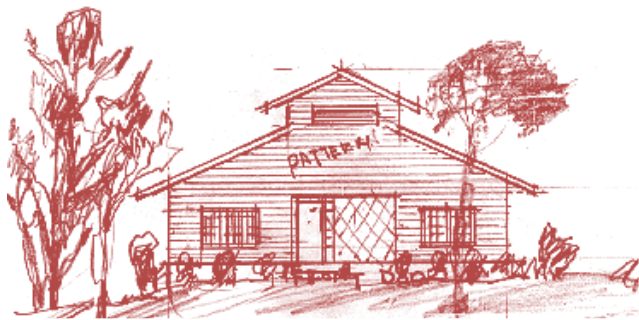
Basement Floor Plan

$\frac{1}{16}'' = 1'-0''$

Architects draw an **elevation** to show how the outside of a building will look when it is finished. An elevation is a straight-on view that shows just one side of a building. (A drawing of a building from an angle is called a perspective.) The elevation can include notes about the materials used on the exterior of the building and may show important features of the building's site. In the elevation below, the word “pattern” means that the exterior of the house is covered in horizontal siding.

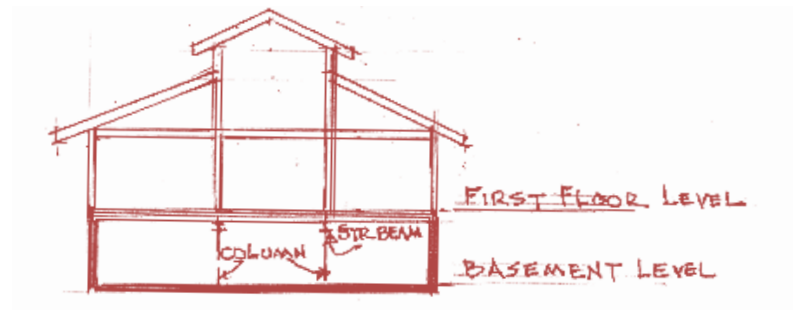
Architects draw a **section** to show the structure of the building — foundation, columns, beams, floors, walls, and roof. A section is seen from the same straight-on view as an elevation, but it's as if the outside layer has been “sliced” away.

The drawings below are of the same house as the floor plans on the previous page.



Northwest Elevation

1/16" = 1'-0"



General Section

1/16" = 1'-0"

Once the floor plans and elevation are complete, the architect's client will have a good idea of how a new building will work and look. If the client likes the plan, then the architect will start making detailed drawings called “construction drawings” that show how every part of the building will be built.

ALFRED HOPKINS'S BARN PROGRAM

Background

My name is Alfred Hopkins, and I live in Wisconsin. I have been a dairy farmer for 20 years. In this modern era of the 1920s, though, scientists are making many new recommendations for clean and efficient dairy barns. In addition, new laws are being passed to insure the safety of milk. I need you to design a modern dairy barn for me so I can stay in business.

Spaces Required

Milking Parlor — I need a space for milking 20 cows at the same time. The milking parlor must be very clean. Scientists now think that bacteria can grow on wood floors, so I would like a modern concrete floor in the milking parlor. The parlor must have stanchions that hold each cow still while she eats hay and is milked by machine. There must also be a clean and efficient way to remove cow manure. The milking parlor should also be warm and comfortable for the cows during the cold Wisconsin winter.

Milk Storage — I need a place to store the milk in a tank before I ship it. The milk must be kept cool and very clean.

Calving Pens — The barn must have several calving pens where cows can deliver their calves in the spring.

Winter Shelter — The cows must have an area where they can seek shelter and be fed during the cold winter months.

Feed Storage — I need a huge area to store enough hay to feed my herd all winter. There must be a way to load large amounts of hay into this area and a convenient way to get it from the storage area to the feeding area. I also need a place for storing the corn and grain I give the cows, too.

Materials

As I mentioned, scientists are recommending hard, non-absorbent materials like concrete for modern dairy barn floors and walls. However, a barn made entirely of concrete would be too expensive for me. Sawn lumber is not very expensive here in Wisconsin.

Site

The site for my barn is flat. There are a number of large trees nearby.

Budget

Please keep the cost of my barn as low as possible. I am building this barn to keep up with modern standards, but must be very careful with my money. Competition in the dairy business is tough. If I spend too much on my barn, I run the risk of going out of business.

Lesson Objectives

- Investigate the heritage of your community through an oral history project
- Develop oral history interview skills
- Analyze how a story about barns relates to your community's history and heritage
- Interpret the historic significance of a story from an interview
- Produce a book of interviews to include in the *Barn Again!* exhibition

Suggested Grade Levels

4–12

Time Frame

Approximately six 45-minute periods over four to five weeks. Contact your community's *Barn Again!* hosts to coordinate the completion of your students' project with the exhibition opening.

Social Studies Performance Expectations

- I. Culture — Early Grades (c); Middle Grades (c); High School (c)
- II. Time, Continuity, & Change — Early Grades (d); Middle Grades (d)
- IV. Individual Development & Identity — Early Grades (b); Middle Grades (b); High School (b)

Hand-outs

- *Interview Tips* (one copy per student)
- *Oral History Informed Consent Form* (one copy for each two-student team)
- *Heritage Questions* (one copy per student)

Equipment / Supplies

- A book from *Barn Stories Resources*
- Tape recorders (at least two, for students who don't have their own)
- Cameras (at least two, for students who don't have their own)
- Notebook sleeves (one or two for each two-student team)
- Binder
- Optional: Video camera (to record interview)

Barn Stories, Our Stories

Setting the Stage

1. Write the following statement on the board: *People build barns, but barns also shape people.* Explain that students will explore this idea today and in a project over the next few weeks. Start by reading *Raising Yoder's Barn* or another book from *Barn Stories Resources*. If these books are not available through your school library, try your local library or book store.
2. Divide students into groups of three or four. Ask them to discuss how the statement on the board applies to the story you just read and develop two or three examples. Ask groups to share their ideas with the class.
3. Ask students: *Do you think there are people in our community who have been shaped by barns, too? Do you know of any examples?* Explain that these stories are an important part of our heritage: *They can help us understand how people in the past lived or help people in the future understand us. Our class is going to collect, share, and preserve some of these stories.*

Activity Procedure

1. Share the following project description with students: In teams of two, students will interview a person in the community with stories to share about a barn. The teams will tape record the interview so it can be preserved as an oral history. Teams will select their favorite story from the interview and transcribe it for inclusion in a book that will be part of the *Barn Again!* exhibition. Teams will also write an essay explaining how the story they selected either helps us understand how people in the past lived or will help people in the future understand our lives. After the exhibition, students will submit copies of their interviews to the state or local historical society or museum for inclusion in their oral history collection.
2. Divide students into pairs. Explain that the first step in the project is to identify a person to interview about barns. As a class, brainstorm ways to do this. The list might include family members or people in your neighborhood, church, local agricultural groups, retirement facilities, etc. Assign teams a deadline for turning in the name, address, and phone number of their proposed interviewee.
3. While teams work at home to identify an interviewee, students will begin developing interview skills in class. Hand out copy of *Interview Tips* to each student. As a class, review and discuss the importance of the *Interview Tips* for conducting a good interview.
4. Assign each student to conduct a five-minute interview with a classmate using the *Interview Tips* as a guide. Select an interview topic appropriate for your students' interests and abilities. Give students five minutes to prepare for their interview. If possible, allow students to practice using a tape recorder. If not, remind students to take careful notes while they are interviewing. Students will take turns being the interviewer and interviewee.

5. Ask students to share their ideas on what they did well as an interviewer and how they could improve as an interviewer. Students may wish to conduct another practice interview.
6. Review teams' proposed interviewees to insure they have selected an appropriate person. Assign teams to write a letter to their interviewee requesting a one-hour interview. (For younger students, a half-hour interview may be appropriate.) As a class, brainstorm a list of things the letter should include (e.g., identify the team members, state the purpose of the interview, request to see photos or memorabilia related to the barn, etc.) Explain that the letter should conclude by stating that one of the team members will be calling soon to see if the interviewee is willing to participate and to schedule an interview. Review letter-writing format with students if needed. Assist teams in writing clear letters and sending them to interviewees.

Note: If sending students out to meet interviewees raises any concerns, students can invite their interviewee to meet them at the school during school hours.

7. Remind teams to make follow-up calls two to three days after sending their letters. Ask teams to try to schedule interviews within one week and inform you of their interview date so you can insure interviews happen in a timely fashion.
8. Assign each team to develop an outline of points of interest in preparation for their barn story interview. Ask teams to list other information they want to collect from their interviewee (e.g., a photo of the interviewee and the barn where the story took place, copies of any newspapers or memorabilia related to a story, etc.) Review the teams' outlines and assist them in refining them as necessary.
9. Distribute a copy of the *Oral History Informed Consent Form* to each team. Remind teams to be sure to take the form to the interview and ask the interviewee to sign it.
10. Set a deadline for teams to turn in a transcription of their favorite story from the interview. Emphasize that students don't need to transcribe the entire interview. When

transcribing their story, teams should try to write down the exact words of the interviewee. Remind students that transcribing just one barn story will take considerable time.

11. Remind students that each team is responsible for writing an essay on how the barn story from their interview helps us understand our heritage or will help people in the future understand us. Use *Raising Yoder's Barn*, or the book you selected from *Barn Stories Resources*, to help students understand how their barn story relates to heritage. Re-read the book to the class. Show overhead and distribute a copy of the *Heritage Questions* to each student. As a class, discuss the answers to these questions students found in the story. Students can use the *Heritage Questions* as a guide in writing their essays. Students don't need to look for answers to every question, but should decide what is most important in their story.
12. When the transcriptions and essays are complete, each team will exchange its work with another team. Teams will review their classmates' work for spelling and grammatical errors and note any passages that are unclear or confusing.
13. Teams will use their peers' suggestions to create a final version of their barn story transcription and essay for the *Barn Stories, Our Stories* book for the *Barn Again!* exhibition. Teams should also include any photos or other materials that relate to their story. Provide each team with two to three notebook sleeves for their materials. Then assemble the notebook sleeves in a binder and submit it to the *Barn Again!* hosts for inclusion in the exhibition. If possible, include a separate notebook where visitors to the exhibition can write comments and share their own stories. Encourage students to bring their families to the exhibition to see the class binder.
14. Assign teams to write a thank you letter to their interviewee and include a copy of their transcription and essay.
15. At the conclusion of the exhibition, share remarks from the comment book with the class. Submit a copy of the

tapes, transcriptions, and essays to the local museum and/or local or state historical society.

Lesson Extensions

1. Work with the *Barn Again!* hosts to organize a *Barn Stories, Our Stories* event. Invite community members to hear students share their barn story transcriptions and essays at the exhibition. Teams should send a special invitation to their interviewee and introduce him/her if he/she attends.
2. The *Barn Stories, Our Stories* book could be photocopied and sold for a minimal price at the *Barn Again!* host site as a benefit for the museum or another local cause.

Barn Stories Resources

Atwell, Debby. *Barn*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1996.

This story traces the life of a barn from its construction in the late 1700s to the present.

Gibbons, Faye. *Night in the Barn*. New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1995.

This book tells the story of four boys who dare each other to spend a night in an old barn.

Yolen, Jane. *Raising Yoder's Barn*. Boston: Little Brown, 1998.

This beautifully illustrated book by a Caldecott Medal author tells the story of an Amish barn raising from a young boy's perspective.



Barn, near Kennett, Missouri
©Leslie D. Bruning, 1984

INTERVIEW TIPS

Before the Interview

1. Outline the main points of interest for your interview. Professional oral historians suggest not writing out too many specific questions. They think asking an interviewee a list of questions makes the interview feel stiff and formal. They worry that the interviewee won't feel comfortable sharing information that may be very valuable, but doesn't directly answer one of your questions. Instead, oral historians like to write out ideas and phrases to help them remember their main points of interest. This allows them to make their interview more like a natural conversation, but still find out what the interviewee knows about their topic.
2. If you plan to use a tape recorder, make sure you know how to use it well. Practice using the microphone and volume controls, and changing tapes.
3. Prepare a kit of materials you will take to your interview: your interview outline, informed consent form, pens and pencils, a notebook, tape recorder, blank tapes, extension cord, camera.

To Start the Interview

1. Find a comfortable place to sit with the interviewee. Try to find a place without too many distractions or background noise from televisions, radios, etc. Remember, your interviewee might be nervous. Be friendly and try to help him or her relax.
2. Ask the interviewee to review and sign the informed consent form.
3. Place the tape recorder within your reach but where it won't be too noticeable for the interviewee. Turn on the recorder and chat for a minute with the interviewee about something not directly related to the interview. Then turn off the recorder, rewind, and check to make sure the recorder is picking up your voices at a good level.
4. Begin the interview with identification information. State the names of the interviewers, the interviewee, the date, the place, and the subject of the interview. This information will be very important to any researchers who use your tape in the future.

During the Interview

1. Listen carefully. Be alert for important points and good stories. Don't worry if the interview doesn't exactly follow your outline. Your interviewee may have great stories on your topic that you did not expect. Good interviewers know how to "go with the flow" to find out what their interviewee has to share about their topic.
2. Avoid asking too many questions that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." Instead, ask open-ended questions that will allow your interviewee to share more of what he/she knows. Useful leads include: "What led up to . . . ?", "How did you feel when . . . ?", "Why did you . . . ?", and "I would like to hear more about . . .".
3. Ask just one question at a time. If you run questions together, the interviewee may get confused, and you won't get all the information you want.
4. Don't worry if your interviewee doesn't start speaking right away when you ask a question. He/she may need time to think and remember.
5. Try not to interrupt the interviewee. If you do, you may lose valuable information. If you think of a good question while the interviewee is talking, jot it down for later. If the interviewee is wandering away from your subject, wait for an appropriate time to gently pull the conversation back on track. Try phrases like: "I want to make sure I understand what you were telling me about . . ." or "A moment ago you were telling an interesting story about . . ."
6. Take notes on important factual information mentioned by your interviewee, like names, dates, and places. Don't be afraid to ask your interviewee to repeat information or spell a name for you.
7. If you or the interviewee have any photos, newspaper clippings, or other memorabilia related to the interview topic, you can ask the interviewee to tell you about them. This may help the interviewee remember more information or clarify information in his/her story.
8. At the end of your interview, repeat the identification information on the tape: names of the interviewers, interviewee, date, place, and subject of the interview.
9. Thank your interviewee for sharing his/her time and memories with you.

ORAL HISTORY INFORMED CONSENT FORM

1. I hereby agree to participate in an oral history interview. I understand that I will be asked about my experiences relating to barns.
2. I agree that this interview may be used for research, educational, exhibition, and other purposes, including print and electronic reproduction.
3. I acknowledge that I will receive no remuneration or compensation for my participation in the interview or its use as explained above.
4. I agree that any and all materials from this interview may be donated to the

I understand that I may be asked to irrevocably assign all copyright, title, and interest in this interview to the institution above.

5. I understand that any and all reasonable restrictions I place on the use of this interview, if any, will be honored for the time specified below, as follows:

Interviewee signature

Address

Phone number

Consent date

HERITAGE QUESTIONS

What does this story tell us about . . .

How people worked?

How people played?

People's daily routines?

What made people laugh, cry, get angry, etc.?

What was important to people?

Traditions in the community?

The important events in people's lives?

How people used natural resources?

How people's lives were different from ours?

How people's lives were the same as ours?

What other Heritage Questions can you think of?

Lesson Objectives

- Explore the concept of symbolism
- Analyze the use of barns as symbols in poems
- Identify examples of barns used as symbols in their daily lives
- Create a work of art using a barn as a symbol
- Analyze a classmate's use of a barn as a symbol in a work of art

Suggested Grade Levels

7–12

Time Frame

Two or three 45-minute periods

Social Studies Performance Expectations

I. Culture — Middle Grades (c);
High School (c)
(See Appendix)

Hand-outs

- *The People, Yes*, verse 5 (one overhead and one copy per student)
- *Barn Fever*, excerpt (one copy per student)

Supplies

- Art supplies

When a Barn is More Than Just a Barn

Setting the Stage

1. Discuss the concept of symbolism with students. (Older students may already be familiar with this concept and just need a quick review.) Write the word “symbol” on the board. Explain that a symbol is a physical object that stands for ideas, values, or feelings. Illustrate this concept with several examples of familiar symbols. Ask students: *Think about the American flag as a physical object. What is it made of? Would you use a flag to scrub the floor since it's made of cloth? Why not? What ideas and values does it stand for?* Wedding rings and uniforms are also good examples of symbols that students can grasp easily.
2. Tell students that barns can be symbols, too. Ask students: *Do barns make you think of any ideas, values, or feelings?* Explain that the class will explore barns as symbols by examining two poems.

Activity Procedure

1. Explain that poets have used barns to convey ideas and feelings. Show overhead of *The People, Yes*, verse 5, and distribute one copy to each student. Read the poem to the class.
2. Discuss the poem as a class to help students understand that the barn represents farming as a way of life. Ask students: *What does the poem say happened in the barn for 60 years? What is a witness? The poem says, “The barn was a witness, stood and saw it all.” Can a barn really be a witness or really see something? What does the poet mean when he calls the barn a witness? What do you think the barn represents in the poem?*
3. Have students examine the last five lines of the poem. Ask students: *What is the condition of the barn now, according to these lines? Do you think all the activities listed in the first part of the poem are still happening in the barn? Why or why not? If the barn represents farming as a way of life, what is the poet suggesting about this way of life?*
4. Divide students into pairs. Distribute a copy of the *Barn Fever* excerpt and the questions to each student. Tell students to read the background and vocabulary, carefully examine the poem, and answer the questions with their partner. You may wish to read the poem aloud to students again. Monitor students' work and provide guidance as needed. When students have finished, discuss the questions and students' answers as a class. Create on the board a list of ideas, values, and feelings associated with barns.
5. Tell students there are many other ways that barns can be symbols. For homework, assign students to identify two examples of barns that serve as symbols. Students can look for ads, product packaging, signs, stories, poems, paintings, photos, cartoons, or websites that features barns. Students may also survey an adult to find out what ideas,

values, or feeling he/she associates with barns. Students will write a paragraph about each of their examples explaining the symbolic value of the barns. Ask students to bring their examples (e.g. ad, photo, etc.) to class, if possible. Remind students that an image of a barn may be simply descriptive and not symbolic. (Sometimes a barn is just a barn.) They must be able to explain the symbolism in their examples.

6. Ask students to share one of their examples with the class. Add new ideas about barns as symbols to the list on the board. Ask students: *Why do you think barns are used as symbols in our culture? Why don't other farm buildings, like chicken coops or silos, seem to touch us the same way? What do you think our use of barns as symbols tells us about our culture?*

7. Assign students to create a piece of art in which they use a barn as a symbol. Students can develop an ad, product packaging, sign, story, poem, picture, or cartoon.
8. When students have completed their artwork, ask students to exchange work with another student in the class. Students will analyze their classmate's work and write a paragraph about how he/she used a barn to convey ideas, values, or feelings in his/her work.
9. If possible, submit students' work for inclusion in the *Barn Again!* exhibition. Alternatively, create a bulletin board to display students' work in class.

Dairy barn, Cass County,
North Dakota, 1940
Courtesy Library of Congress



THE PEOPLE, YES (VERSE 5), 1936

by Carl Sandburg (1878–1967)

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For sixty years the pine lumber barn
had held cows, horses, hay, harness, tools, junk,
amid the prairie wind of Knox County, Illinois
and the corn crops came and went, plows and wagons,
and hands milked, hands husked and harnessed
and held the leather reins of horse teams
in the dust and dog days, in late fall sleet
till the work was done that fall.

And the barn was a witness, stood and saw it all.

“That old barn on your place, Charlie,
was nearly falling down last time I saw it,
how is it now?”

“I got some poles to hold it on the east side
and the wind holds it up on the west.”

BARN FEVER (EXCERPT), ABOUT 1980

by Peter Davison (born 1928)

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Why are our barns,
 that do not shelter anything we value,
 left standing as an emblem of the past
 when we owned things we thought more worth the keeping?
 Sometimes in summertime our younger children
 may hide and seek here to remember games
 their great-grandparents used to play in barns –
 but Malachi and Mary Brown did more than play.
 They metamorphosed grass into milk and butter,
 kernels and clamshells into hens and eggs,
 dead seeds into the brightness of beans and corn.
 Somehow the barn is all that they have left us.
 What else is lingering on the land to press
 its bristling, fading harvests in our arms?
 The smells of milk, manure, and straw, a life
 beyond the games suburban children play?
 Time and some care have spared this barn, a sign
 of the work a farm does to keep itself a farm.
 Without the barn there would be little cause
 to call this piece of land more than a piece
 of land, one corner of it fastened down
 by a yellow house where people sit and write
 about the days when the farm had farmers on it
 as well as the busiest barn for miles around.

Background

The lines above are the last section of a poem called *Barn Fever*. The author of the poem lives on an old farm in Massachusetts. The poem tells about the history of his barn and how it was once at the center of life on a busy farm. The poem also tells about some of the people who lived on the farm, like Malachi and Mary Brown, whose names appear in the section above. When the author writes this poem, the land has not been used for farming for many years. The barn, however, still stands.

Vocabulary

Emblem — a symbol

Metamorphose — to change or transform, as by magic

QUESTIONS

Please write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. The author directly calls the barn an “emblem” and a “sign” in this poem. What does he say the barn is an emblem of? What does he say it is a sign of?
2. The author uses a magical image to describe the work once done on his farm. Instead of saying “They raised cows for milk and butter,” he writes, “They metamorphosed grass into milk and butter.” What does the author’s choice of this magical image suggest about his view of farming?
3. At the end of the poem, the author says you would only be able to call his old farm a piece of land if it weren’t for the barn. Why does the barn make a difference for the author?
4. At the opening of this section, the author asks why people feel strongly about old barns, even when they don’t function as barns anymore. What is his answer to this question? Do you agree with the author? Why or why not?
5. Compare the ways the authors use barns as symbols in the *Barn Fever* excerpt and verse 5 of *The People, Yes*. What similarities do you notice? What differences do you notice?

Look for the answers to these questions as you explore the *Barn Again!* exhibition. Each group of questions goes with a different section of the exhibition. Write down your answers and return this sheet to your teacher.

i. Find a barn in an advertisement. What product is being sold? Why do you think this company decided to use a barn in its ad?

- Find an image of a barn made for children in a publication or on three-dimensional object? Does it look like a real barn? Why or why not?
- Find a picture of a farm printed over 100 years ago. What is its title? How do you think the artist wanted you to feel when you look at the picture?

What Is a Barn?

1. Describe three different farm jobs done in a barn.

2. List one advantage of each of these types of barns.

English barn

Midwest end-opening barn

Pennsylvania barn

Connected barn

3. Find a barn that reminds you of the following words. Write the name of the barn next to the words.

A work of art

A dome

A church

A skeleton

Barn Raising

1. Imagine that you need to build a new barn. What kind of shingles will you use on your roof? Why?
2. Will you use nails or mortise-and-tenon joints to connect the beams? Why?
3. How would your choices be different if you were building a barn 150 years ago?

Changing Barns

Find three types of barns that have developed because of new technologies or ideas about agriculture. Write the name of the barn and describe one of its improved features.

1.

2.

3.

Will Barns Survive?

1. Describe one reason historic barns are threatened today.
2. Describe two different ways historic barns are being preserved.
3. What do you think? Is it important to preserve historic barns? Why or why not?

Appendix

Key to National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

This key is divided into three sections to correspond to the grade levels specified in the *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* developed by the National Council for the Social Studies. Within each section are the themes, standards, and performance expectations that are relevant to the lessons contained in this teacher's guide. By comparing your state's social studies standards to these national standards, you can also use this key to identify the lessons that meet the objectives of your state's standards. Information about all of the national standards may be obtained from the National Council for the Social Studies (301.588.1800 / www.socialstudies.org).

EARLY GRADES (K–4)

I. Culture

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- a. explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns.
- c. describe ways in which language, stories, folktales, music, and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture and influence behavior of people living in a particular culture.
- d. compare ways in which people from different cultures think about and deal with their physical environment and social conditions.

Applicable Lessons

Barn Architects

Barn Stories, Our Stories

Barn Architects

II. Time, Continuity, & Change

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *the ways human beings view themselves in and over time*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- c. compare and contrast different stories or accounts about past events, people, places, or situations, identifying how they contribute to our understanding of the past.
- d. identify and use various sources for reconstructing the past, such as documents, letters, diaries, maps, textbooks, photos, and others.

Applicable Lessons

Built by a Community

Built by a Community

Barn Stories, Our Stories

III. People, Places, & Environment

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- g. Describe how people create places that reflect ideas, personality, culture, and wants and needs as they design homes, playgrounds, classrooms, and the like.

Applicable Lessons

Barn Architects

IV. Individual Development & Identity

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *individual development and identity*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- b. Describe personal connections to place — especially place as associated with immediate surroundings.

Applicable Lessons

Barn Stories, Our Stories

V. Individuals, Groups, & Institutions

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- g. Show how groups and institutions work to meet individual needs and promote the common good, and identify examples of where they fail to do so.

Applicable Lessons

Built by a Community

MIDDLE GRADES (5–8)

I. Culture

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- a. Compare similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures meet human needs and concerns.
- c. Explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.
- d. Explain why individuals and groups respond differently to their physical and social environments and/or changes to them on the basis of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs.

Applicable Lessons

Barn Architects

Barn Stories, Our Stories

When a Barn is More Than Just a Barn

Barn Architects

II. Time, Continuity, & Change

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *the ways human beings view themselves in and over time*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- d. Identify and use processes important to reconstructing and reinterpreting the past, such as using a variety of sources, providing, validating, and weighing evidence for claims, checking credibility of sources, and searching for causality.

Applicable Lessons

Built by a Community

Barn Stories, Our Stories

III. People, Places, & Environment

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *people, places, and environments*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- g. Describe how people create places that reflect cultural values and ideals as they build neighborhoods, parks, shopping centers, and the like.

Applicable Lessons

Barn Architects

IV. Individual Development & Identity

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *individual development and identity*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- b. Describe personal connections to place — as associated with community, nation, and world.

Applicable Lessons

Barn Stories, Our Stories

V. Individuals, Groups, & Institutions

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *interactions among individuals, groups, and institutions*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- g. Apply knowledge of how groups and institutions work to meet individual needs and promote the common good.

Applicable Lessons

Built by a Community

HIGH SCHOOL (9–12)

I. Culture

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *culture and cultural diversity*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- c. Apply understanding of culture as an integrated whole that explains the functions and interactions of language, literature, the arts, traditions, beliefs and values, and behavior patterns.

Applicable Lessons

Barn Stories, Our Stories

When a Barn Is More Than Just a Barn

IV. Individual Development & Identity

Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of *individual development and identity*, so that the learner can:

Performance Expectation

- b. Identify, describe, and express appreciation for the influences of various historical and contemporary cultures on an individual's daily life.

Applicable Lessons

Barn Stories, Our Stories

