

-History from Buildings Activity and Primary Source Set-

Third Grade | SS.3.1.1

Essential Question

How do we know what we do about historic buildings?

Background Knowledge

Historic buildings can be found in towns all across the country and world. This activity and primary source set explores examples of historic buildings in the Louisville, Colorado area as a way of learning history. Historical buildings can be studied like historical artifacts. They can share stories about past owners, historic trends, environmental considerations, societal developments, and much more. Some of these stories may not be obvious upon first looking at a historic building. This activity and primary source set will help students tease out these stories using contextual clues.

Students should first watch [“Railroad Depot now Louisville Preschool.”](#) This video provides a local example of a historic building that was repurposed but still shares stories of the past. Students should think about buildings as places where history happens and as historical artifacts. Lead students through a discussion about where to learn about historic buildings, such as newspapers, journals, photos, year books, city directories, etc.

Supporting Questions

1) Why were buildings repurposed in the past?
2) What kinds of stories can a building share?
3) How can buildings help connect people in the present to people in the past?
4) What sources can we look to in order to learn more about a historic building?

Activities

This resource packet includes Lesson Ideas to help extend lessons and further student understanding.

Primary Source Analysis



[Louisville Railroad Depot](#), 1910-1914

- 1) According to the “Railroad Depot now Louisville Preschool” video, why did the people of Louisville move and repurpose this building?
 - a. How did this building change to fit a new need?
 - b. Is this a primary source or secondary source?
 - c. Are photos a good source of information about historic buildings, why or why not?



[Inside the Louisville Railroad Depot office](#), 1920

- 1) What does this photo tell us about how the depot building was used?
 - a. Who worked there?
- 2) What can this photo tell us about what materials were used to build the depot?
 - a. What do you think they saved or changed to make this building into a preschool?
- 3) Is this a primary source or secondary source?

Group Analysis

In groups as small as two, have a teacher read the following passage out loud and then have students discuss the questions within their group. If this is to be achieved during distance learning, students can write or type their responses or discuss this in a breakout room.

“Historic preservation is a conversation with our past about our future. It provides us with opportunities to ask, "What is important in our history?" and "What parts of our past can we preserve for the future?" Through historic preservation, we look at history in different ways, ask different questions of the past...” National Parks Service	1) How does the Louisville Preschool remind us of the past? 2) Are there other buildings that you can think of near your house that might be good reminders of the past? Why?
“W. D. Clark retired October 30 after 42 years of service with the Colorado & Southern railroad. He was cashier and freight rate clerk at the Boulder station at the time of his retirement. He had worked mostly in the clerical department but had done some telegraphy work. During his years of work, Mr. Clark saw many changes and development of this area and railroading. He started work February 10, 1917 at the Louisville depot, which was a busy place at that time he said with six men working there, W. D. McCulloch, the agent, three telegraph operators and two clerks. They handled from 1,200 to 1,500 cars of coal a month for nine months of the year, and people traveled by train then and there were six passenger trains through Louisville daily on the C & S and two round trips a day to Lafayette by trains that came to the Louisville Junction south of town.” Louisville Times, November 13, 1959.	1) What does this newspaper article share about the Louisville Train Depot, even though the main subject is not the Depot? 2) What kind of source is this, primary or secondary?

Comparisons

This prompt, read by the teacher or presented to students, will ask students to compare the experiences of miners with the experiences of strike breakers. Students should respond with at least three complete sentences.

Comparisons prompt:



This is the Louisville Railroad Depot as Louisville Preschool in the present day. You can see that a lot of thought has gone into how to use the doors, windows, and exterior of the building to best suit the needs of the children at the Preschool.

- 1) How has the outside of the building changed from its original form?
 - a. What sources could we look at to back up our answer?
- 2) Why do communities value historic buildings?
- 3) Why is it a good idea to have reminders of the past in our communities?

Answer:

Terms

Built environment: noun - Man-made structures, features, and facilities viewed collectively as an environment in which people live and work.

Train depot: noun - A terminal or building where trains load or unload passengers (people) or goods.

Historic preservation: noun - Historic preservation is the practice of protecting and preserving sites, structures or districts which reflect elements of local or national cultural, social, economic, political, archaeological or architectural history. Preservation

has many diverse purposes and rewards, including the strengthening of local economies, stabilization of property values, the fostering of civic beauty and community pride, and the appreciation of local and national history. Historic preservation as a public purpose that advances the education and welfare of citizens, while providing economic and aesthetic benefits as well.

Renovation: To restore to a former or better state, by cleaning, repairing, or rebuilding.

Relocation: To move to a new location.

Primary source: noun - A primary source provides a first-hand account of an event or time period and are considered to be authoritative. They represent original thinking, reports on discoveries or events, or they can share new information. Often these sources are created at the time the events occurred.

-primary source examples-

- diaries, correspondence, ships' logs
- original documents e.g. birth certificates, trial transcripts
- biographies, autobiographies, manuscripts
- interviews, speeches, oral histories
- case law, legislation, regulations, constitutions
- government documents, statistical data, research reports
- a journal article reporting NEW research or findings
- creative art works, literature
- newspaper advertisements and reportage and editorial/opinion pieces

Secondary source: noun - Secondary sources offer an analysis, interpretation or a restatement of primary sources. They often attempt to describe or explain primary sources.

-secondary source examples-

- journal articles that comment on or analyze research
- textbooks
- dictionaries and encyclopedias
- books that interpret
- political commentary
- biographies
- dissertations
- newspaper editorial/opinion pieces