LITTLE MISS UMBRELLA

E/D

Dialogue between the towers of the old and the new city hall, 2010, © aut

1. TOPIC

All buildings have their story. They came to being at a certain time, have their own character and style, are related to other buildings and influence a location and its surroundings.
How can we understand a building's structure and character? How can we comprehend the impact a building has on its surroundings? We assume the role of the buildings. We let them introduce and present themselves and plunge into astonishing stories of old walls, new steel constructions, love affairs or rivalries.

2. LEARNING OUTCOME

- Improving perception of one's own built environment
- Advancing communication and social skills
- Creative use of verbal skills

3. METHOD

A playful and imaginative approach with role playing and comics gives insight into the world of architecture with all its historical, stylistic, social, technical, formal, functional and modern benchmarks. The key aspect of the workshop "Little Miss Umbrella" is to link visual and social skills. The topic "OLDtimesNEW" is made more comprehensible for the students by imperso-nating the buildings. Either a teacher or a student takes on the role of "Little Miss Umbrella", who functions as mediator between the houses and the students. By asking questions she gives the buildings a chance to explain themselves and the students the possibility of under-standing them. The dialogues that develop are recorded as speech bubbles.

4. LESSON PLAN

English/Deutsch (2 double periods)

1 Introduction: A stroll through the city or village 100 min

Learning method: excursion; Material: download "setting", cameras

Together with Little Miss Umbrella the students explore the centre of their city or village. They form small groups and each group chooses one old and one new building. They then take pictures of each building from various perspectives and record the most important features on a fact sheet (see download "setting"). Little Miss Umbrella asks questions concerning structural features such as date of origin, cubature, material, functionality and character. The location of the houses is marked on a sketched map. Back in the classroom the sketch is transferred to brown paper in a larger scale.

2 Step 1 – Buildings and character (Who are you?) 30 min

Learning method: group work; Material: copies of the pictures of traditional and modern, old and new buildings, taken by the students

The pictures from the stroll through the city/village are printed out. The photos of the buildings are combined with the features noted on the fact sheets and all houses are assigned particular characteristics and are named (see download "building character").

3 Step 2 – Location (Here I am) 50 min

Learning method: teamwork; Material: copies of the pictures of traditional and modern, old and new buildings, taken by the students, street-map, poster markers in various colours, scissors, brown paper, glue etc.

The photos of the buildings are glued onto the street-map according to their location. Questions and answers lead to dialogues between the houses and the stories that evolve from this are recorded in speech bubbles. If the houses start to quarrel Little Miss Umbrella settles the argument. By walking from house to house asking questions she also establishes ties between them (see download "questionnaire").

4 Step 3 – Collage (That´s us) 20 min

Learning method: teamwork; Material: photocopies (you need several copies of each building photo in different sizes)

The houses on the sketched map are embedded into their geographical surroundings. Streets, squares, trees, benches and friends of Little Miss Umbrella are drawn or cut out of the photos and added to the sketch so that a collage of the setting evolves.

Downloads: BKK3_OLDtimesNEW_LittleMissUmbrella_setting (pdf), BKK3_OLDtimesNEW_LittleMissUmbrella_buildingcharacter (pdf), BKK3_OLDtimesNEW_LittleMissUmbrella_questionnaire (pdf)
Autorin: Mag.arch. Monika Abendstein, aut. architektur und tirol

Dieses Modul und alle Downloads sind online ebenfalls auf Deutsch verfügbar.