

Night City

Companion Text: I Lost My Sock, by Lin Jakary & Ryan Olson

Subject Area & Grade Level: Social Studies, 4th Grade

Materials: Butcher paper, markers or paint

Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Use brainstorming to generate ideas
- Identify establishments that serve the local community at night
- Describe factors influencing the location of businesses in their community

Introduction

Read the story once through without stopping. Then, ask students to name the places where the boy imagined his sock might have been. See how many they can name, and then return to pages 24 and 25 and ask “What is an all-night diner?” Explain that a diner is a kind of restaurant that usually has a fairly extensive menu, and often serves breakfast all day. Diners tend to have a casual atmosphere and inexpensive food, and a feature of many diners is that they are open all night. Ask students to brainstorm who might be eating at the all-night diner with the sock. Explain that brainstorming is a way to generate a lot of ideas quickly, and that it is not a time to evaluate the ideas. Make a list on the board of all the people that students suggest might eat at an all-night diner, and accept all ideas.

Procedure

Explain that of course we can’t really know exactly who is out at night, but that it is important to realize that while many businesses might not be open, their city (or town, village, etc.) does not close completely at night. Again, chair a brainstorming session for students to list as many places as they can that stay open all night to serve the community. Remind them of the ground rules of brainstorming, and prompt them with questions such as, “What if you broke your arm tripping over a toy on the way to the bathroom in the middle of the night?”, “What is a red-eye flight?”, “Does anyone have a parent who works at night? What do they do?”

Discussion

Have students work in groups of 3 or 4 to evaluate the list of places brainstormed by the class, and come up with a list of establishments they agree function to help the community at night. If they think of more places, they may add them to their lists. Then, have each group create a mural of a “night city,” paying attention to which businesses might be near each other and why. For example, the all-night diner might be right near a hospital, or large airport, with many people needing to eat at different times of day. In addition to the places mentioned above, each mural could include: a grocery store, a pharmacy, a truck stop, a gas station, a post office, a subway station, a police station, a fire station, a copy center, a university sleep research lab, a major post office hub, an urgent care medical center, a factory, a NASA mission command center, or any other night businesses or governmental agencies. Post murals as part of a lesson on community.

