

Places Worth Exploring Curriculum Guide

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Preserve South Dakota



South Dakota State Historical Society, Historic Preservation Office

Why are historic places important? Buildings, structures, sites, and objects from the past are important for a number of educational, cultural, civic, aesthetic, and economic reasons that benefit everyone. Saving and interpreting these places is what historic preservation is all about.

- *Identity and Education:* Old places contain valuable information about a community's past. They can tell us where, how and why people lived. As more of what we build looks alike, old places are one of the few things that help define who we are. If we lose these places, we lose an authentic link to the past that can never be replaced. Knowledge of these places provides insight for the present and future.
- *Civic Pride and Quality of Life:* Prehistoric and historic places serve as community landmarks and sources of pride. New construction and modern facilities lack the variety of materials and level of detail found in historic buildings. These features are what make a building and a community unique. People enjoy learning, working, and living in historic buildings.
- *Aesthetics and Economics:* Well-preserved old places enhance a community's appearance and build its tax base through increased building values and revenue generation. Attractive communities draw and sustain new businesses and residents. Tourism also increases. Saving and interpreting old places helps South Dakota towns survive and prosper.
- *Recycling to Avoid Waste:* People of all ages want to avoid waste and recycle what they can. Historic Preservation is recycling older places. It took energy and materials to construct a building and connect it to the outside world with things like roads and power lines. Tearing down a building wastes these resources and creates the need for a place to dispose of the building materials.

This project's sourcebook supplies teaching materials and technical assistance designed to make it easy for educators to bring places worth exploring to any classroom.

The "Places Worth Exploring" sourcebook is divided into six parts, containing a total of 40 lessons, which are as follows:

- Section 1- Community Wide Activities
- Section 2- Design and Drawing Activities
- Section 3- Historic Preservation and Observation Activities
- Section 4- History Activities
- Section 5- Shelter/Making a Home Activities
- Section 6- Supplemental Information



The Drake Octagon House in Huron is featured in Lesson 16 which covers the design and drawing of floor plans.

The majority of the lesson plans can be adapted for grades 5-12. Several are appropriate for younger children. Teachers can use activities straight from the lesson plans or use the background information and suggested activities for inspiration in creating their own assignments.

Unless otherwise indicated, the background section for each lesson is taken directly from the National Register of Historic Places nomination for each site. Virtually all of the sites described and pictured in this document are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the nation's official list of cultural properties worthy of preservation. To be eligible for the Register, a property must be at least 50 years old, historically significant and still have a majority of its historic material.

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The "Places Worth Exploring" curriculum guide is available from the South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office for shipping costs of \$10.00.

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