



Curating the City: Wilshire Blvd.

Lesson 9: Adaptive Reuse

What You Need to Know:

- Grade Level: All Levels
- Curriculum Connections: English—Language Arts
- Kids' Guide Correlation: Use this lesson in conjunction with pages 16-17 and 19 of the Guide. As students explore Johnie's Coffee Shop on Miracle Mile and the Wadsworth Chapel at the Veterans Affairs West Los Angeles, use this activity to help students understand the issues and possibilities surrounding adaptive reuse. You can modify this activity by having students consider adaptive reuse options for other buildings in your own community.
- Website Correlation: Go to laconservancy.org/wilshire. Under "Explore Wilshire Blvd.," use the keyword search to find the pages for Johnie's Coffee Shop and Wadsworth Chapel for photos and background information. You can also search for these additional examples of adaptive reuse: Pegasus (formerly General Petroleum), Bullocks Wilshire/Southwestern Law School, and May Co./LACMA West.

Focus Questions:

- What is adaptive reuse and how does it serve as a tool of preservation?
- What are the benefits of adaptive reuse?
- How can people adaptively reuse historic buildings in a way that best serves the surrounding community?

Expected Learning Outcomes:

- Students will be able to define adaptive reuse as an important element of historic preservation.
- Students will be able to describe the benefits of adaptive reuse.
- Students will be able to suggest ways to adaptively reuse buildings that are sensitive to the needs of the surrounding community.

Assessment:

Write a proposal suggesting an appropriate adaptive reuse of Johnie's Coffee Shop or Wadsworth Chapel.

Essential Vocabulary:

- Adaptive reuse

Materials:

- Lesson 9 worksheet
- Poster paper
- Paper
- Colored pencils and markers
- Pencils



Procedure

Motivation:

Write the phrase adaptive reuse on the board. Invite students to break down this term into its component parts. What does the word adapt mean? What happens when you reuse something? Use student contributions to generate a class definition for this term. Help the class understand that adaptive reuse is the act of modifying an existing structure for a new purpose.

Making Connections:

Ask students to think of examples of adaptive reuse that they see in their own lives. Do they know about any older buildings that are being used for new purposes?

Guided Instruction:

1. Distribute the Lesson 9 worksheet and direct students to read the information about Johnie's Coffee Shop and the Wadsworth Chapel. Review key facts with the class and make sure that students understand the original purpose and use of each building.
2. Have students consider the communities living and working near each structure. What are the specific needs of each community? How could these needs affect their ideas for each building's adaptive reuse?
3. Invite students to brainstorm a list of potential other uses for each building. Encourage them to use their imaginations – they shouldn't limit themselves to uses that are related to the building's original function.
4. Have students use their worksheet notes to select an idea that they like best. Have them use this idea to write a persuasive essay that proposes an adaptive reuse of either Johnie's Coffee Shop or Wadsworth Chapel. Review the key elements of persuasive writing with your students in order to prepare them for this assignment.
5. You can modify this activity based on the age and ability of your students. Younger students can work together in small groups to create a poster design with a brief accompanying paragraph. Older students can use what they know about each site to write a persuasive piece using traditional essay form.

Assessment:

Have students create a persuasive piece proposing an adaptive reuse of Johnie's Coffee Shop or Wadsworth Chapel that takes into account the needs of the surrounding community.

Reflection/Critical Thinking:

1. What are the benefits of adaptive reuse? What are the challenges?
2. Why might a business owner be interested in adaptive reuse? What might serve as incentives to make a person more interested in it?
3. Why might some people think it important to preserve and protect historic buildings through adaptive reuse?



Enrichment Opportunities:

1. Explore downtown Los Angeles to see other exciting examples of adaptive reuse. Go to laconservancy.org/resources/youth-and-family-activities/kids-guide-broadway, and download the Los Angeles Conservancy's *Kids' Guide to Broadway* as a starting point for examining how older buildings can be used in new ways.
2. Consider sharing excerpts from *The Powers of Preservation: New Life for Urban Historic Places* by Arthur Cotton Moore (McGraw Hill, 1998) for additional photographs and examples of adaptive reuse in action.
3. Johnie's Coffee Shop is recognized as a terrific example of Googie architecture. Challenge students to do online research to find out more about the history of Googie architecture, its connection to the development of automobile culture, and prime examples in Los Angeles and Southern California.

Worksheet Answers:

Answers will vary.

California Standards:

English—Language Arts (Reading):

- 3.2.3 Demonstrate comprehension by identifying answers in the text.
- 3.2.4 Recall major points in the text and make and modify predictions about forthcoming information.
- 3.2.6 Extract appropriate and significant information from the text, including problems and solutions.
- 4.2.3 Make and confirm predictions about text by using prior knowledge and ideas presented in the text itself, including illustrations, titles, topic sentences, important words, and foreshadowing clues.
- 5.2.3 Discern main ideas and concepts presented in texts, identifying and assessing evidence that supports those ideas.
- 5.2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.
- 9&10.2.5 Extend ideas presented in primary or secondary sources through original analysis, evaluation, and elaboration.
- 11&12.2.3 Verify and clarify facts presented in other types of expository texts by using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.

English—Language Arts (Writing):

- 2.1.0 Students write clear and coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea. Their writing shows they consider the audience and purpose. Students progress through the stages of the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing successive versions).
- 2.1.1 Group related ideas and maintain a consistent focus.
- 3.2.2 Write descriptions that use concrete sensory details to present and support unified impressions of people, places, things, or experiences.



- 4.2.1 Write narratives:
 - a. Relate ideas, observations, or recollections of an event or experience.
 - b. Provide a context to enable the reader to imagine the world of the event or experience.
 - c. Use concrete sensory details.
 - d. Provide insight into why the event or experience is memorable.
- 5.2.4 Write persuasive letters or compositions:
 - a. State a clear position in support of a proposal.
 - b. Support a position with relevant evidence.
 - c. Follow a simple organizational pattern.
 - d. Address reader concerns.
- 6.2.2 Write expository compositions (e.g., description, explanation, comparison and contrast, problem and solution):
 - a. State the thesis or purpose.
 - b. Explain the situation.
 - c. Follow an organizational pattern appropriate to the type of composition.
 - d. Offer persuasive evidence to validate arguments and conclusions as needed.
- 7.2.4 Write persuasive compositions:
 - a. State a clear position or perspective in support of a proposition or proposal.
 - b. Describe the points in support of the proposition, employing well-articulated evidence.
 - c. Anticipate and address reader concerns and counterarguments.
- 8.2.1 Write biographies, autobiographies, short stories, or narratives:
 - a. Relate a clear, coherent incident, event, or situation by using well-chosen details.
 - b. Reveal the significance of, or the writer's attitude about, the subject.
- 9&10.1.2 Use precise language, action verbs, sensory details, appropriate modifiers, and the active rather than the passive voice.
- 9&10.2.6.a Report information and convey ideas logically and correctly.
- 11&12.1.3 Structure ideas and arguments in a sustained, persuasive, and sophisticated way; support them with precise and relevant examples.



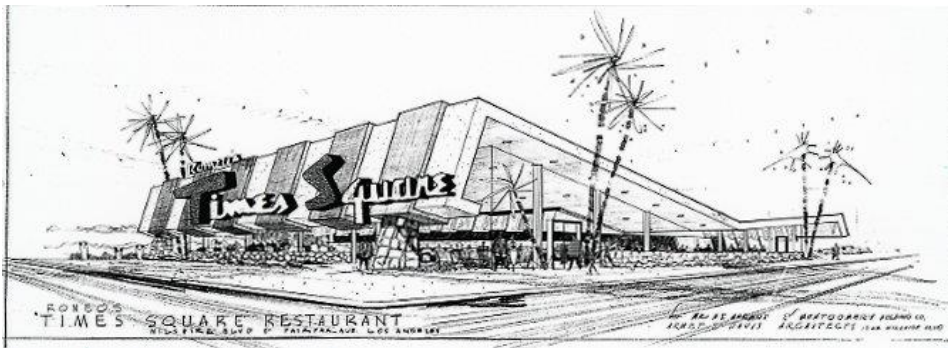
Student Worksheet

Name _____

Adaptive reuse is when people find new purposes for old buildings. Take a closer look at these two historic structures on Wilshire Boulevard. Use your imagination: how could each building have a new life?

Johnie's Coffee Shop

This coffee shop opened in 1955, when Americans were interested in space travel and anything having to do with the future. (It was originally called Romeo's Times Square.) This futuristic style of architecture is called "Googie" architecture. The unusual name comes from a coffee shop named "Googie's" that used to be on Sunset Boulevard and that was designed in a similar style. You can find all kinds of coffee shops, motels, and bowling alleys from the 1950s that were designed in this way. Look for the upward-sloping roof – it makes the building look like it's hanging from the sky!



Romeo's Times Square, later renamed Johnie's Coffee Shop (Courtesy Armet Davis Newlove Architects)

Wadsworth Chapel

This is the oldest building on Wilshire. It's a chapel – a place for people to pray and worship. When it was built in 1900, the architects designed it to have two chapels inside. One side is a Catholic chapel, and the other side is Protestant. If you look closely, you can see two kinds of windows on the chapel. Some are Romanesque, with rounded arches. Others are Gothic, with more pointed arches.



Wadsworth Chapel (Security Pacific Collection/Los Angeles Public Library)



Consider the Needs

Think about the community that lives and works near each building. What kind of business or building would best serve the needs of this group of people? Write your ideas below.

Needs for Johnie's Coffee Shop

Needs for Wadsworth Chapel

Consider the Possibilities

Use the lines below to brainstorm a list of possible new uses for each building. Don't limit your imagination – the sky's the limit!

Ideas for Johnie's Coffee Shop

Ideas for Wadsworth Chapel

Create a Proposal

Look at the needs of the community. Look the possibilities. Now come up with a proposal for one of the buildings that describes in detail what you'd propose for its adaptive reuse. Make sure your proposal includes the following elements:

- A detailed description of the new business/organization
- How this adaptive reuse will benefit the community
- What you think needs to be done to the structure to make the changes work