



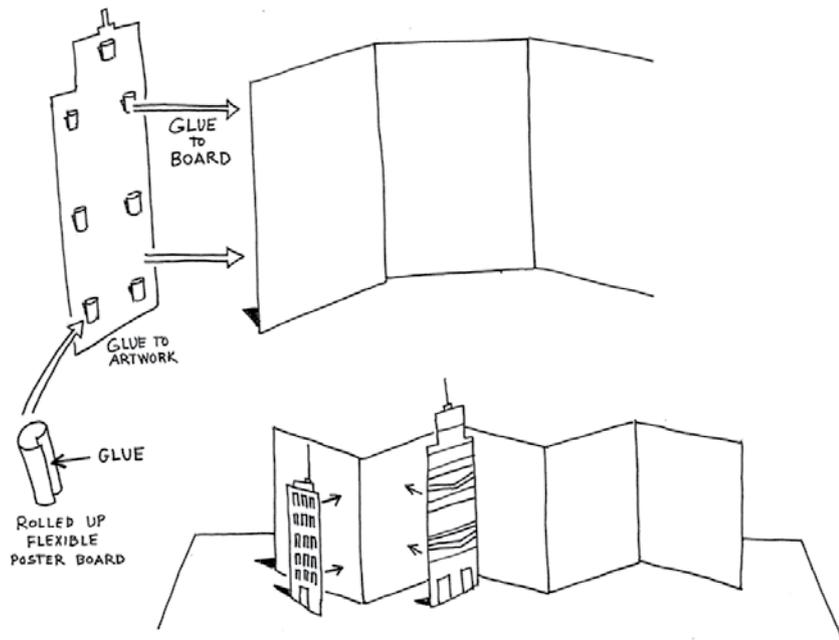
## Second-Grade ARCHITECTS

**Ken Klopck**

**W**ith the historically rich architecture of Chicago right outside our classroom window, the students of my second-grade visual arts class tackled the project of interpreting our famous skyline in line, color, and composition.

To begin this task, students became familiar with Chicago architecture. Books and pamphlets showing photos of city buildings were discussed and used as reference. Students were taken on a tour of interesting buildings in our city.

Students created folders of pictures, resources, and information about the subject. After considering their options, they selected the buildings they wanted to create on paper. Pencil sketches were next made on 9 x 12" (23 x 30 cm) paper.



### Working Side-by-Side

After sketches were approved, students moved to large kraft paper. Each student was given a section of the paper to use, and worked side-by-side as if they were creating a mural.

Working so closely, students used each other as catalysts to inspire ideas. They could see each other's work and discuss what they were doing. This approach

**The students of my second-grade visual arts class tackled the project of interpreting our famous skyline in line, color, and composition.**

### Completing Our City

After all the structures were completed, we proceeded to assemble our city. Working together, students cut out the artworks. I then hot-glued

them to poster board using small, rolled-up strips of poster board to slightly separate the artwork from the board and give a three-dimensional quality to the city. Each building was identified with a plaque along with the name of the architect.

motivated students to make thoughtful choices about the work at hand and helped to create successful artworks.

My job was to keep students focused and on task during this open process. I encouraged students to look closely at the shapes of buildings, windows, and decorative elements. They could interpret the buildings as desired and work outside the box of conventional architectural fundamentals. The results were often surprising, imaginative, and exciting.

Other items such as kites, birds, people, clouds, and cars were drawn, cut out, and placed for effect around the buildings to complete the urban landscape. Finally, photos were taken of each student artist, printed, cut out, and placed throughout the city. Our dynamic city exhibit was displayed in the hallway for all to enjoy.

From this lesson, students had a new understanding of the relationship between art and architecture. Second graders usually do not see buildings as art or art as buildings. This exercise opened their eyes to the architectural structures around them.

I love to see this grade level take off on projects like this. Their instincts and creativity are at such a pure and uninhibited state. The work they produce is absolutely imaginative and original. 🌀

*Ken Klopach is a visual arts consultant for the Chicago Public Schools in Chicago, Illinois.*

### NATIONAL STANDARD

*Students explore and understand perspective content for works of art.*

### WEB LINK

[caf.architecture.org](http://caf.architecture.org)