

Planning for Play

Studio Objective

Work with a design team to create a plan and a model for a themed playscape designed for people of all ages.

Architects, landscape architects, designers, and city planners often team up to think creatively about public spaces. A group based in Shanghai, China, 100architects wants to improve the experiences people have in public spaces. They imagine cities as “playgrounds” for citizens of all ages, and they design spaces for playful social interaction (**Fig. 5-48**).

Create

Your Challenge

Work with a design team to create a plan and a model for a themed playscape designed for people of all ages. Create a two-dimensional plan and a three-dimensional model, noting the playscape’s important features.

Consider Your Choices

Narrow Your Focus

- What is your theme? Consider a garden, jungle, underwater, animal, fantasy creature, or other playscape theme.
- What kinds of play areas will you include? Climbing ropes, bars, trees, or walls? Slides and tunnels?
- What kinds of “rest stops” can you plan? Mini plazas with tables and seats? Hammocks? Grassy areas? Gardens for meditation?
- How will your team consider people of all ages and those with disabilities?



5-48 This playground design was the winning entry in an international contest. The theme for this design was the mythical winged horse, Pegasus. What activity areas can you identify along the path?

100architects, Pegasus Trail, Chongqing, China, 2020.
Courtesy of 100architects.



5-49 The digital model for Pegasus Trail provides an overview of the entire playscape and notes, with symbols, its various features. What areas do you think visitors would find most exciting to explore?

100architects, Pegasus Trail plans, Chongqing, China, 2020.
Courtesy of 100architects.

Select Your Materials

- What will be the base for your model?
- What will you use to make the various activity areas? Consider cardboard, foam sheets, foam boards, and posterboard of different colors.
- Consider using found materials such as plastic, paper, and aluminum containers, straws, yarn, wire, pipe cleaners, and plastic bottle caps.
- What other materials will you need?

Think about Organization

- How will you visually unify the parts of your three-dimensional model? Consider using a color scheme and repeating materials or forms.
- What symbols will you use in your two-dimensional drawing to identify the different activity areas throughout the playscape?

Reflect and Refine

As you work with your design team, stop occasionally and reflect on your progress. What types of people would have a hard time happily engaging with your playscape? How would you alter it to make it more user-friendly?

Reflect and Present

- As your model and plan near completion, talk as a team about the progress you have made and what needs to be done before presenting your work to the class.
- Create a class display of all playscape plans and models. Plan a way to present the main ideas of your playscape. For example, you could create a video documenting your process and explaining the playscape's purpose and features.

Be Inspired by Others



5–50 Student work. Addison Walton, Avery Somers, and Layla Bors, *Fruitland Park*, 2021. Mixed media.



5–51 Student work. Averie Phimmarath and Erika Nguyen, *Natureland*, 2021. Mixed media.