

Migration

LEVEL: MIDDLE GRADES
Source: Gibbs, Virginia G. *Latin America: Curriculum Materials for the Middle Grades*. Center for Latin America, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. 1985. 1989.

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CATEGORY: BRAZIL: NOW

CONCEPTS: URBAN/RURAL, social class, migration, life style

ACTIVITY: MAKING A FLOATING CITY. One of the major characteristics of Manaus, an important city in the interior of the Amazon region, is its conglomeration of floating houses which make up a "cidade flutuante" or floating city. In the beginning, these houses were constructed by poor immigrants to the city who could not afford to rent a house on dry land while they looked for work. Now, commercial establishments and small storage facilities make up some of these floating buildings. They are simply made of inexpensive materials, so students can reproduce them easily. Some of the more recent floating houses and stores have been painted bright colors.

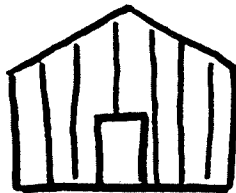
OBJECTIVES: Students will recreate the floating city of Manaus and learn of a different type of home.

MATERIALS: construction paper
blue, green and brown tissue paper
popsicle sticks, tongue depressors, balsa wood or cardboard
tin foil
paint or crayons
clay or playdough
tape and/or glue
small stones, sticks, dried vegetation, moss, etc.
pipe cleaners, colored yarn or clay for small human figures
table to set up display

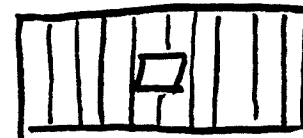
PROCEDURE: Explain the floating city to students. Be sure to locate Manaus on a map. Then:

1. Make the balsas or rafts on which the houses will float. Use popsicle sticks or tongue depressors glued together, or even a rectangular piece of light wood or cardboard.
2. The sides of the houses can be made with popsicle sticks, tongue depressors or any material from step #1. Put in windows and doors.

front and back



sides

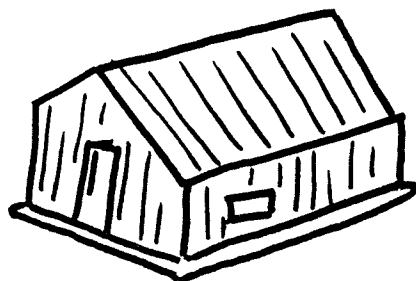


3. Manaus residents use anything cheap and available for the roof, just like for other parts of the house: sheets of zinc, cast-off wood, palm leaves, plastic, etc. Roofs can therefore be simulated with cardboard covered with foil, popsicle sticks, pieces of balsa, or even straw.

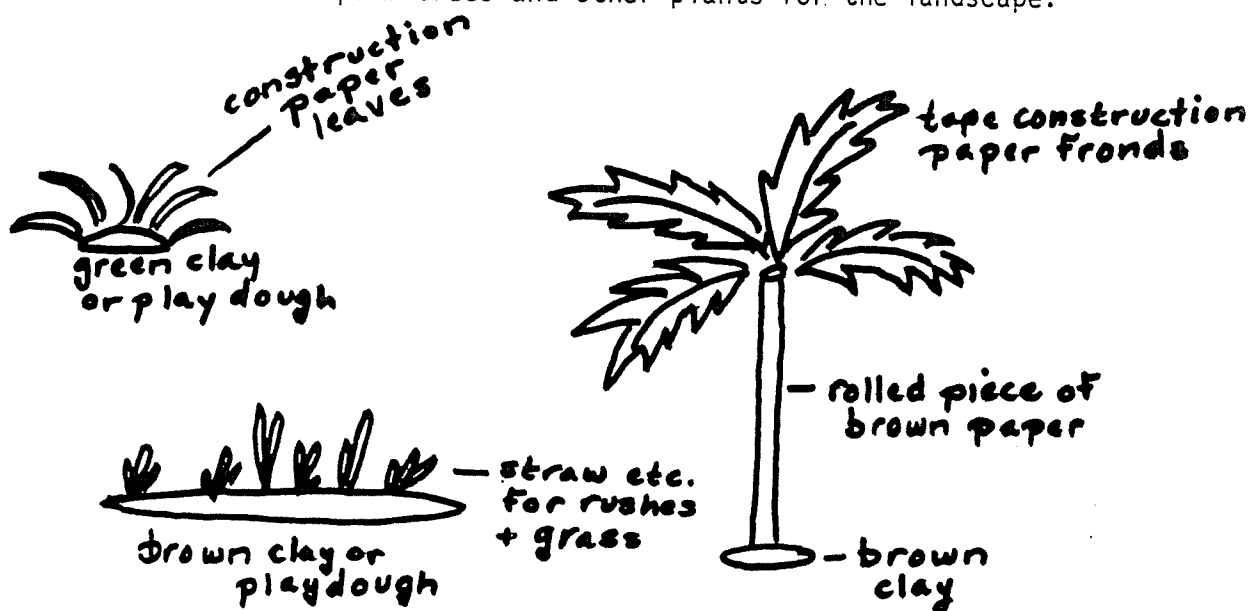


Occasionally, roofs are flat.

4. Glue all the pieces together. The houses should look like this:



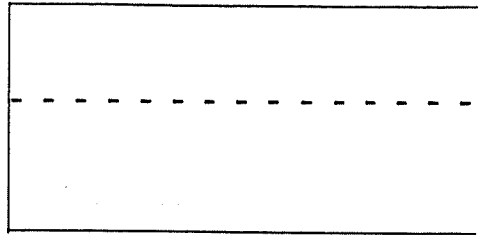
5. Some of the houses can be painted bright colors.
6. A scene can be set up on a table to simulate the completed city. Blue tissue or construction paper can be water and green and/or brown paper can be used for land.
7. Students can make palm trees and other plants for the landscape.



Also include small stones, dried vegetation, moss, sticks, etc. to set the scene.

8. Small figures can be included (see directions in exercise on Mexican retablos).
9. The little canoes people use to go from house to house and to land can be made with construction paper:

a) Cut piece this size:



- b) Fold in half length-wise and tape or glue ends together. Push from both ends toward center to open; be sure to pinch ends. Also flatten bottom

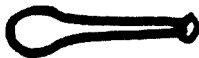


top



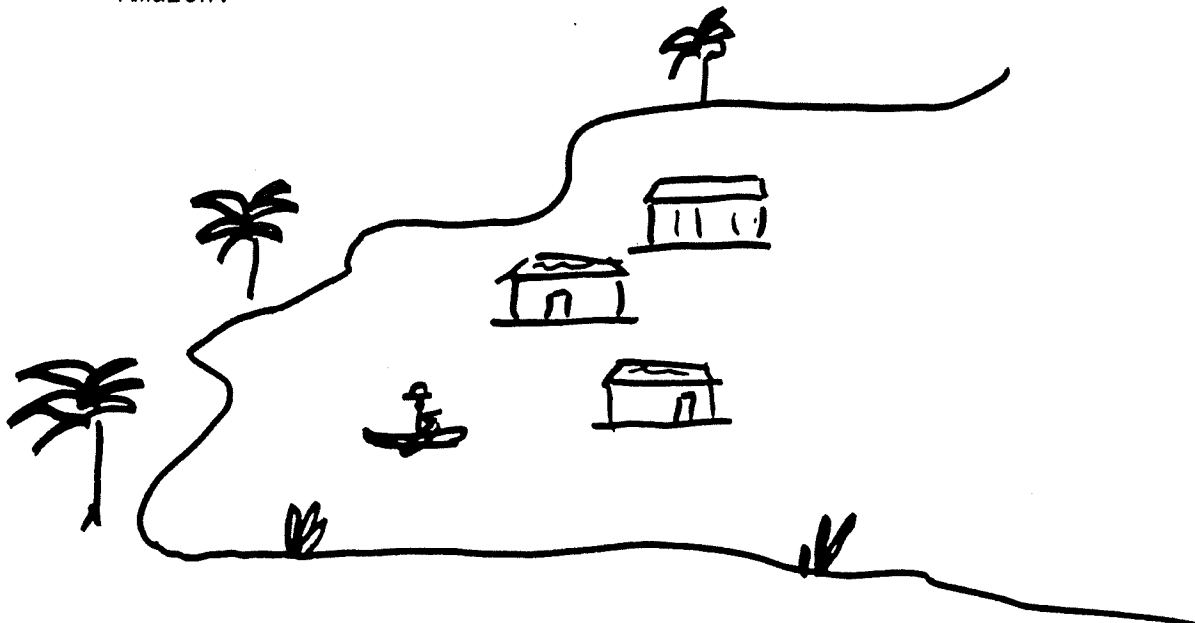
side

- c) Cut out small paddles used to propel boats.



- d) A small piece of rolled tape on bottom of canoe will help it remain upright on river.

10. Set up the completed houseboats, plants, human figures, etc., as a table display. The floating city should be in an inlet of the Amazon:



HELPFUL HINTS: These facts will be interesting to know about Manaus.

1. Not all people live in the floating city. Manaus also has modern streets, apartment buildings, offices, factories, etc., on dry land.
2. For many young people in the floating city their dream is to grow up and get an outboard motor, instead of a car as here in the United States.
3. The people who live in the floating houses are the poorest in Manaus. There are no bathrooms or electricity in most of these dwellings.
4. The government of Brazil has been trying to put an end to floating cities since they are unsanitary and also difficult to police and tax.

