

Discover and describe your city, town or village.

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Each town (village) has features making it recognizable and, sometimes, unique.

How you can read a city, a town, a village.

Let us know our (town, village.....)

The form:

- Take a map of your (city, town, village) and draw its boundary.

Is the bounded surface like a geometrical one?

Yes, it is like to : (specify)

No, but it is like a known form : (specify)

No, it is an irregular form

The location:

It is situated in a :

- flat terrain

- hilly or mountainous terrain

- partly flat, partly hilly terrain

Near :

- the sea

- a lake

- a river (or a river crosses the village or town)

The center:

- it is like a nucleus, where the main buildings (the town hall, the principal church, the main square, the market) are concentrated

- is spread

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Generally towns grow in concentric form. Some towns, as Turin, are like a mesh, others, as Genoa, are expanding in a linear form.

Could you realize how your town has grown up? (use old map, consulting a Library) And how is now growing up? (use, if available, the town-planning scheme)

The colour:

old center:

- the prevailing colour of the fronts is:

- the prevailing colour of the roofs is:

- there is no prevailing colour.

new center:

- the prevailing colour of the fronts is:

- the prevailing colour of the roofs is:

- there is no prevailing colour.

Do you know or could you investigate which are the reasons for any prevailing colour in the old town?

Remark and describe the peculiarity of the following architectural elements:
(you could take pictures)

- balconies and other ornamental elements
- chimneys, chimneypots and ridgecaps (sometimes these elements are a special characteristic of a country, as chimneys in Britain or Portugal)
- other decorative elements as murals, fresco facades (in some European sites as Alsace, Lorraine, Tyrol painting, fresco... are decorative elements par excellence; in Italy the most important buildings of Genoa had painted facades, like St. George's Palace), trompe-l'oeil
- loggia, verandah, open gallery, arcade, porch, colonnade....
- ornaments of the main floor's outer surface

Are the previous elements a feature of a defined historic period?

Describe the prevailing architectonic style of the old center (general style as baroque, liberty or local style...)

Describe dimension and form of the streets (both old and new streets).
Which kind of informations these elements give? (about the orography);

Describe the paving of old streets.

Tipology of houses.

- form and material of roofs:
mansard, platform, stepped, spire, lantern....roof
slated, tiled, thatched....roof
(extremely sloping roofs became decorative elements as spires and pinnacles)

- window:
type: simple, double, triple
form: French, sash, rose, attic, dormer, bow window, fanlight....
closing: curtains, shutters, roller shutters, venetian blinds.....
dimension: small, wide, large window...

Could you evaluate advantages and/or disadvantages (such as heat loss, air circulation) of these characteristics taking into account the features of the local climate?

- building materials:
brickwork, concrete masonry, stonework, wood, or mixed (wood and brick or stone or masonry.....)...
- covering materials:
slate, reinforced concrete, stone, wood, hurdle, brick....

Investigate about raw materials near your town (village):

- are there many woods in the neighbourhood?
- are there any quarry (stone, marble, slatequarry)?

-.....

Are you able to evaluate if the old center (or the village, ...) is harmonious?
Try to define the harmony (homogeneity, uniformity of style, proportions etc.)
Could you give an example of a harmonious village (or center or other) and of a disharmonious one? (use pictures...)

Describe the main or the most famous monument of your town. Explain why it is famous.
Give your personal valuation (if the monument is attractive ...), justifying it.

If you live in a village, describe the shops, their features (department stores, craft shops, typical shops.....) and, if relevant, their architecture (for example, a liberty style shop).

If you live in a town, describe some of the main shops or stores in the center, their features (department stores, craft shops, typical shop.....)and, if relevant, their architecture (for example, a liberty style shop).

In your town:

- many architecturally valuable buildings and monuments need restoration
- only few monuments need restoration

Municipality takes:

- good care

- poor care

of monuments and historical buildings

- no care

In which form people participate in taking care of monuments and historical buildings?

- by pointing out any occurring damage to the Authority
- by collection of money
- by making aware citizens of the cultural wealth through information campaigns

-.....

Choose a town quarter and go for a walk.

Could you distinguish a prevailing smell (scent...) and describe it?

Do you notice stray animals (cats, dogs)?

Do you notice any people taking care of stray animals (for instance, feeding them)?

Do you know if in your town (village) there are kennels or shelters (private or public) for stray animals?

Do you know in your town (village) “green” organizations (WWF....)?

If that is the case, are you involved (or a member of your family)?

Could you describe any activity that you have carried out as member of “green” organization?

What is to be done if people ill-treat animals?

Do you think that in your town (village) citizens respect animals or not?

What do you think it should be done to improve sensitivity of citizen towards animals? (You could specify or suggest the role of school, green organizations, local authorities and individuals).

Have you animals in your house?

Do you take care of avoiding them disturb or soil public way?

Are there containers for recycling materials ?

No

Yes, for:

- glass
- paper
- plastic
- battery
-

In your school or at home are you usual to make compost?

Do you know the treatment of waste materials? No

Yes :

- they are put in a municipal dump
- they are burnst
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Through the demographic service you could know the population of your town or village.

Draw in a town map (being its scale known) the boundaries of the public parks and gardens.

Compute :

- the percentage of public parks and garden (related to the town area)
- the amount (pro capite) of public parks and gardens

Comments: (do you think satisfactory the results or not? Why?.....)

Choose a public park and go for a walk.

Public parks and garden

- Are there public parks and gardens in your city, town or village?
- Do you know how many m² of public parks and gardens per habitant there are in your town?

Parks and gardens:

- Are they in good conditions?
- Are always open or do they have fixed visiting hours?
- Do they have benches and areas for children?
- Do they have equiped athletic paths?
- Do they have areas for dogs?
- Do they have toilets and wastepapers?
- Do they have bars, cafeteria, restaurants?

Plants.

Especially in a large city we are used to have always fewer trees around us and fewer trees typical of our country.

In public parks and gardens there are very beautiful ornamental plants with coloured and gaudy flowers, but they come from exotic countries. Magnolias, robinias, agaves, so frequent in our gardens, come from exotic countries and we can see them beside holm-oaks, olive trees, etc., typical of our regions.

It is very difficult to distinguish a local plant and an imported one, also because often “import” is not recent.

It is possible, however, to awaken children stimulating them to observe plants in public gardens and asking them if they saw those plants out of the parks.

- describe what you can observe in the park:

i) predominant plants and trees and their characteristics (evergreen or deciduous; local, exotic...;); have you ever seen them in the

wood close your school, house?

ii) predominant flowers

iii) presence of lawns.

- do you think they are in good conditions?

- describe the shrubs in the park.

- do you think the grass in good conditions?

- do you know which flowers there are in the meadow in spring-summer?

- are there cultivated roses or other flowers?

- are there flowering shrubs or trees all year round or only in spring-summer?

If allowed, let children pick some flowers (do not plunder the meadow?) and put them in herbarium.

Animals.

Often in public gardens or in town you could have unexpected encounters: wild animals close to us are many more than we can imagine and we are not used to observe them.

It is important to observe and stimulate children to observe nature around us, and looking up (or down) we could have encounters with wildlife also in the less green part of the town.

Birds:

- do you see nests on the trees?

Describe form and size of them.

- which birds do you see?

If possible, teacher and pupils could make photos and record sounds.

In many parks it is possible to see many “urbanized” species: doves, redbreasts, blackbirds, etc...

Moreover you can see also some predators: tawny owls, barn owls, etc.

Obviously in not all the parks (or in town center on the trees of avenues, or on roofs, chimneypots, belltowers, domes, etc.) you can find all species, but with a bit of attention you can see some of them.

Mammals:

You could observe squirrels and other little mammals, especially if you are silent. Describe your observations or make drawings.

Do you remark a difference between the microclimate of the park and the one of the building center?

If yes, the difference is in : temperature, humidity, air pollution.....

Describe the prevailing smells.

Listen to the sounds and describe them (chirping of birds, rustling of fronds, noise of traffic).

Express your feelings (pleasure, calmness or nuisance, irritation...).

LANDSCAPE; DISCOVER YOUR CITY