

Designing Learning Paths

Sequences of formal & informal experiences in which learners develop competencies through dwelling, connecting & exploring with places & people in the local community and surroundings.

Where are some *interesting or unique places* in your community, neighborhood or local environment? Do an inventory of sites you think could offer rich experiences for your students' learning. Consider what cultural wisdom does your community current hold? Where can it be found and learned? Every community has cultural wisdom, history, and resources, we just need to look for it.

What are some *topics or learning goals* you hope your students will understand? As you scan your curriculum, look for some units or lessons for which a place could deepen their learning. Not every topic or goal you teach may connect to a place, but perhaps there are some that resonate with the interests and resources in your community. Getting clear on goals and topics can help spark possible ideas.

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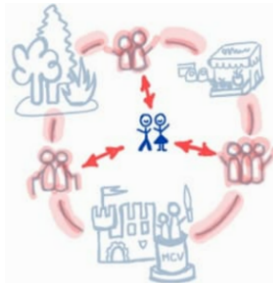
Learning **AT** place: Place as setting.



- ✓ The place is a *different environment*—calmer, healthier, more inspiring, etc.—to support learning.
- ✓ The learning goals are *not related* to the place or its elements.

Example: Hold a writing class in a nearby outdoor garden with sunlight, fresh air, quiet areas for focused writing and tables for better group discussion.

Learning **WITH** place: Place as partner



- ✓ The place and its people become a *real environment for collaborative projects* aimed at co-creating social, environmental, or local solutions.
- ✓ The learning goals include values and/or principles that are *learned through collaboration* with the place and people.

Example: Students collaborate with community garden workers to identify problems and co-create solutions that will improve it — such as planting trees, creating public awareness, or developing a public composting area.

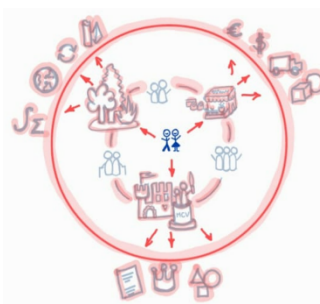
Learning **OF** place: Place as object



- ✓ The learning goals are *the place itself* and its specific historical, natural, architectural, or cultural elements and qualities.
- ✓ The place and its elements and/or features are *the object of study* or investigation.

Example: Visit a nearby garden to study its native plants, trees, birds and insects and learn how they form an interrelated ecosystem.

Learning **THROUGH** place: Place as bridge



- ✓ The place and its elements act as a *bridge or medium* for acquiring other types of knowledge.
- ✓ The learning goals involve objects, concepts, or systems for which the place and/or its elements serve as a means or a specific case;

Examples: Visit a nearby garden to study its ecosystems of flora and fauna. Compare findings to ecosystems found at a plaza or park, looking for similarities and differences. Or make connections from the garden's ecosystem to the larger topic of sustainability or climate change.

How will the place support your students' learning? With goals and topics in mind, and potential places found, consider the pedagogical role the place can play in your students' experience. Why this place? How will it support the learning? Consider and choose the from the above that seem best aligned to your goals. Remember not all places need to play the same role.