



Objective:

Students will be able to communicate the value of public green spaces in urban areas, learn about the importance of land management and minimal impact design, and the advantages of parks with interpretive trails and



Materials:

Popsicle sticks	Artificial grass
Wooden blocks	Rubber bands
Craft glue	Paint
Scissors	Paintbrush
Small pebbles	Tape (variety)
Molding clay	Construction paper
Ruler	Artificial plants (assortment)
Drawing paper	
Ribbon or string	
Cardboard box	

Time:

3-4 hours

Age:

5th-12th grade

Sources:

Modified from: "Creating Microparks at the Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, March 2007"

"Educating trail users: advice for planning interpretive trails signs and exhibits." Laura Westrup. California Parks. 2002

Design Strategies for Urban Parks. http://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/Meetings_and_Events/2010_Annual_Meeting_Handouts/SUN-B9_Design%20Strategies%20For%20Urban%20Parks.pdf

Outcomes:

- Understand the importance of minimal impact design.
- Gain appreciation for access to public green spaces.
- Think about ways to maintain public green spaces and the importance of park amenities.
- Learn the processes of park design.

Preparation & Instructions:

Gather materials and review activity.

Break students into groups of 3-5 students and have them come up with a team name. Hand out drawing paper and have each group discuss, plan and draw blueprints of what their park will potentially look like.

Inform the groups that their park must include an interpretive trail and a visitor's center. (Explain to your class what an interpretive trail means.)

After each group has developed blueprints have them collect a variety of art materials and build their park into the box (diorama). Give groups about 2 hours to complete their dioramas.

Upon completion each group must elect a "park representative" to present their design to the entire group.

Some questions to ask:

1. How did your group come up with this design and what makes it a great public space? What were some things you all agreed or disagreed on?
2. Why are trails necessary in parks? How do they impact the way people use the park?
3. Why should we appreciate public green spaces? What do these spaces provide for local communities and its wild life?
4. If you could build your park in NYC, where in the city would you build it and why?