

Learning Places Fall 2019

SITE REPORT #1

The Gowanus



STUDENT NAME: Christopher Senquiz

PART 1: SITE OBSERVATIONS

1. What are some general observations about the character of this neighborhood? What does it remind you of? How does it make you feel?

The general observations about the character of this neighborhood felt comfortable because it's a place to be able to relax and look at the waters or doing kayaking while you have free time. This bridge kind of reminds me of secret lock bridge in Paris because the bridge is over water and it's relaxing place.

2. How is the natural world contained or shaped by human activity or architecture? In what ways does the natural world invade or disrupt human activity, planning or architecture?

The water looked really dirty like you could see the water were polluted. The water did not look like blue but it's greenish. I saw cardboard and McDonalds plastic cups on the water.

3. What people did you observe in the neighborhood and what activities are they engaged in?

Business people, people who live in the neighborhood and walking their dog. I saw people riding bikes and running. There wasn't a lot of people in the neighborhood.

4. Reflect on a **specific** place you viewed in this neighborhood. A specific place means a single building, or an intersection, or an individual built structure, etc.
 - a. Insert 1 photograph and/or sketch and provide a *creative* caption for the image. The caption should be a word or short phrase that suggests a theme or conceptual association related to the photo or sketch.



Caption: A place just to relax when you are not in a good mood and want to mute yourself from everyone.

- b. What is the *program* of the space? How are people meant to interact with one another and with the environment?

The program of the space is water because most people just to relax and do kayaking. People interact with one another throughout the bridge and looking at the water or talking to their family or friends.

- c. Describe a possible creative reuse of this **specific** space for a performance:

- a) Which areas are best for performers/activists and which areas are good for observers? Do these spaces overlap? Mention specific objects and structures in your answer.

I would say the beginning of the Gowanus Bridge would be a good place for performers because of the big open space and art (graffiti) that is around it.

- b) What kinds of performance would work best (intimate or grand; processional or stationary; text and/or music; interactive or passive audience; etc.)?

I would say music performance would work best in this area whether it is pop, jazz, blues, alternative or electronica, it will bring alive the area and would be such a beautiful environment for many to enjoy. Morning, evening or even at night will bring enjoyment to adults or even children.

QUESTIONS for FURTHER RESEARCH. These should follow directly from your analysis section and be complex and specific enough to serve as the basis of a research project. Questions might relate to architectural or environmental observations, socio-political problems and/or solutions, demography, history, zoning, civic processes, performance strategy, etc.

1. Questions?

What are the overcome of pollution in Gowanus, Brooklyn?

2. Questions?

Is gentrification affecting Gowanus?

3. Questions?

Is the Gowanus Canal water drinkable?

PART 2: RESEARCH

Choose and revise one of your research questions for further research.

Revised Research Question:

Nosowitz, Dan. "What Would Happen If You Drank Water From The Gowanus Canal?" *Popular Science*, Popular Science, 18 Mar. 2019, <https://www.popsoci.com/science/article/2013-08/fyi-what-would-happen-if-you-drank-water-gowanus-canal/>.

CITATION 1:

Why did you select this source? How does it address all or part of your research question?

It discusses how the water in details about the Gowanus Canal water.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

Yes, the source credible because their are photos and proof of how the Gowanus water is very bad.

What further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for additional sources?

I would like to know more about New York City actions towards this issue.

CITATION 2:

Albrecht, Leslie. "Go Ahead and Breathe the Gowanus Canal Air, But Don't Swim In It: Report." *DNAinfo New York*, DNAinfo New York, 17 Jan. 2017, <https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20170116/gowanus/breathing-air-or-canoeing-on-gowanus-canal-wont-harm-health-officials-say>.

Why did you select this source? How does it address all or part of your research question?

I selected this source because the article talks gives good information on how living near the toxin-filled waterway could affect people's health.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

What further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for additional sources?

PART 3: Performance Reflection (after second site visit)

Write a 200 word reflection about how you felt during the second visit to the space and during the performance activities. How did this visit change your perception of the place and your relationship to the natural and built environments? Did the experience of 'performing' in the space (i.e., moving your body) teach you anything new about the landscape or architecture?

The second time I visited Gowanus in Brooklyn I was able to smell. Andrea made me realized the smell around Gowanus and the environment. When I usually walk around places or go through parks I don't really take the time to smell everything around me. She made me realize that there are different kind of smells in our environment and should smell what is around us. The second visit, I was able to smell the environment around the area, the dirty water, dirty mattress, and buildings. While I was walking back after the trip I was able to smell the building and can tell that the building has been there for years just from working down the building block. You can smell the age of the building. It was challenging when the class had to act as nature, water, sky, or plants while during the activity. It was difficult to copy something that is not human. The first visit, I saw beauty, a place of history and rich culture. A place that can be turn into a mega million dollar project. Most people did not even look at the water for a second or to enjoy the nature or to just relax their mind. I felt like I would have done the same thing I went to the site alone. To find out that the most important part of the Gowanus is actually the water. Looking at the beauty of nature surround the water was the best part because you get to feel the

views of the city and wind blowing around your body, able to enjoy the nature around. Even how the neighbor is gentrifying because there changes that are happening where you could see construction and more expensive restaurants, shops taking over. Overall, I got to experience the beauty of being able to smell.