

## **CLASS 2 INTERCULTURAL PLACE-BASED LEARNING investigation / observation**

Students, accompanied by the classroom instructor(s) will visit the chosen neighborhood, Sunset Park, for the entire class period (2 hours). At the beginning of the observation, students will note the date, time, and weather. Students will take photos, record sounds, record their own observations, possibly shoot very brief video. If desired, students are welcome to sketch or take field notes. The audio/video content will be limited to 30 seconds maximum so there is no need to edit. Students may break out into small groups to explore specific areas of the neighborhood. Students will bring back an artifact: a newspaper, flyer, non-perishable food item, or any other object that stimulates curiosity. Students will be reminded to be respectful in their observations, especially when taking photographs and shooting video as well as selecting an artifact to take back.

### **Sound prompts and questions**

Close your eyes and try to notice the dominant sounds. Record specific sounds that are typical for this place. If possible, reflect on sounds that would help someone who hasn't been to this neighborhood learn more about this place. Record the sounds. Take a photo related to the sounds if meaningful.

- Is the overall environment noisy? (note specific locations). If so, why?
- Is there a lot of horn honking or other car-related sound?
- Do people speak softly or loudly?
  - Do you observe any differences between indoor and outdoor speaking volume?
- Do you hear music? Where is it coming from?

### **Social prompts and questions**

Observe social interactions at a discrete distance. Describe these using photography, your sound-recorded vocal observation, or in writing.

- How do people greet each other?
- Do you see displays of affection between friends, family, and significant others?
- Do you get a happy feeling from the people you are observing? Do they seem harried or rushed? Do they seem guarded and unemotional? How do you think the time of day of your observation might affect your data?
- Do people hang out on their stoops or in front of their houses or in front of businesses?
  - Any specific activities such as playing cards or dominos?
- Do you hear non-English being spoken? Do you know what language(s) you are hearing?
- Observe people getting on and off the subway
  - Do they observe good subway etiquette?
- Observe sidewalk and street pedestrian traffic
  - Do people walk fast or slow?
  - Do they clog the sidewalk or does pedestrian traffic flow easily?
- How did you feel as an observer? (reflection)
- How do you think people in the neighborhood felt about you observing them? (reflection)

### **Food and restaurant prompts and questions**

Observe food and dining for the neighborhood. Describe these using photography, your sound-recorded vocal observation, or with artifacts (e.g. menus or flyers).

- Unfamiliar foods ... what are they? Where are they from?
- How and where is food displayed at markets? Indoor/outdoor
- Are there any live animals for sale, e.g. live fish, shrimp, chickens, goats?
- Signage related to religious aspects of the food, e.g. kosher, halal?
- Restaurants
  - Are there many?
  - What type of cuisine do they serve?
  - Are the signs and menus in English or another language?

### **Businesses and community organizations prompts and questions**

Are there specific types of businesses geared to certain members of the community? For example

- International wire transfer companies to send money abroad
- English-language schools and instruction
- Community organizations focused on a specific cultural group

### **Places of worship prompts and questions**

Record observations using photography or spoken audio notes or with artifacts

- What types of houses of worship are in this neighborhood?
- Services are conducted in what languages?
- Schools attached to houses of worship?

### **Media and ethnic press prompts and questions**

Record observations using photography or with artifacts

- newspapers and other print media in non-English languages
- advertising not in English

### *Optional*

#### **The built environment**

What kinds of architectural styles are used? Do any reflect any current or prior ethnic groups?

### **Homework**

Using part of the template for Learning Places, list 3-5 interesting things you observed related to how specific ethnic and immigrant groups fit into the Sunset Park neighborhood. Write 75 to 100 words about your personal and or academic insights/discoveries during the site visit. Connect observations to broader context we've been learning about. Students will email the instructor the homework for grading before these are shared on OpenLab.