Your City: Then and Now
Tina Loos
East Memorial Elementary School
Greeley, Colorado

OVERVIEW

To have students compare past and present-day photographs of historical buildings in your city.

STANDARDS

• History Standard 2.2: Students know how to interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.

• Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
• Locate historical photographs of their city
• Identify buildings in historical photographs that still exist
• Make sketches or take photographs of historic buildings
• Explain how the preservation of historical photographs contributes to our understanding of the communities in which we live

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

• How has your city's "landscape" changed over time?
• Where can you find historical photographs that show how your city used to look?
• Which buildings in your community that were photographed in the 1880s or 1890s still exist?
• How can you help preserve historic buildings?

PROCEDURE

1. Make arrangements with your local historical society, public library or other repository of historical photographs for a field trip for your students, or order prints of historical photographs from such institutions to show in class. Select street scenes that include buildings that still exist. A great place to start is the Denver Public Library Western History Collection (online at http://gowest.coalliance.org/click on “search” and you’re on your way!).
2. Provide the necessary background information about the photographs being studied. You may want to invite a local historian to class for the students to interview.

3. Take your students on a field trip to the area depicted in the photos so that they can photograph and take notes about the present-day site.

4. Have the students write several small paragraphs comparing the historical photos to their present-day photos. What has changed? What has remained the same?

5. Save the set of photos by making a classroom archive on your computer. If you did not use a digital camera to take the present-day photographs, you may scan them and the historical prints into the computer.