FREE TEACHING RESOURCE / K–2 / 01

Neighborhood Color Stories

CULTURE & SOURCES • context, care & extension

Why this place, why this lesson?

New Orleans has many visual languages: painted houses, porches, neighborhood signs, public murals and everyday gathering places. Teach the city through lived neighborhood experiences, not only its tourist images.

Broader perspectives

Welcome examples from many neighborhoods, rural Louisiana, moving between homes, apartment living, and multilingual signage. Never require a student to disclose a home address or personal history.

A culturally responsible teaching protocol

Name the makers — Identify artists, communities and cultural bearers by name where sourced and relevant.

Differentiate study from appropriation — Students may analyze techniques and contexts without copying sacred, ceremonial, or culturally restricted imagery.

Avoid a single story — Offer multiple identities, geographies and points of view, including everyday life rather than only festivals.

Give students agency — Students can choose a different relevant subject and retain the same artistic learning goal.

Check the record — Distinguish primary testimony, museum interpretation, observation and speculation; cite the actual source.

Ask permission — Obtain permissions for interviews, photographs, student work displays and public sharing when required.

Lesson-specific caution

Use photographs with consent; do not frame any neighborhood as deficient. Invite students to identify meaningful public spaces without asking for personal addresses.

Verified starting points for teachers

• **Preservation Resource Center: neighborhood architecture and community preservation**
https://prcno.org/

• **Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Arts Content Standards**
https://doe.louisiana.gov/docs/default-source/academic-curriculum/louisiana-arts-content-standards.pdf?sfvrsn=4

• **Studio Thinking framework: Eight Studio Habits of Mind**
https://www.studiothinking.org/the-framework.html

Student reference log

Who created the image, object, quote or source?

When and where did the work or event occur?

What does the source actually say or show?

Which elements are my own interpretation?

Do I have permission to reuse the material?

Extension for advanced or returning artists

Make a paired scene showing how two neighbors might experience the same place differently; discuss why both stories matter.

About the instructional design

This lesson is a free original adaptation of the teacher-provided 2026 Artistic Investigations document. Its ten-stage inquiry structure and reflective goal-setting are preserved. The accompanying author resource, Fostering Artistic Growth: A Teacher's Guide to Instilling Studio Habits of Mind, informs the studio-habit emphasis. The full text of that published book was not supplied or reproduced.

The eight Studio Habits of Mind originate with Project Zero / Studio Thinking research. This independent resource does not imply endorsement by the book publisher, Louisiana Department of Education, cultural organizations, or Studio Thinking.