



Frank Lloyd Wright Trust

The Robie House Teacher Education Project Pre-Seminar Questionnaire

On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest amount, please rate your knowledge of Frank Lloyd Wright's work.

1	2	3	4	5
No knowledge				Expert

Number of Frank Lloyd Wright buildings you have toured as an adult:

None 1-3 4-5 More than 5

In the preceding school year, approximately how many times per week might you reference a building as an example in a lesson?

None 1-2 3-5 More than 5

In the preceding school year, approximately how many times have you discussed changes to the exteriors of buildings as part of history?

None 1-2 3-5 More than 5 N/A

In the preceding school year, approximately how many lessons did you teach using architecture or design as the focus?

None 1-2 3-5 More than 5

Please place a check mark next to any of the following terms that you incorporate into your teaching.

<input type="checkbox"/> preservation	<input type="checkbox"/> restoration	<input type="checkbox"/> cantilever
<input type="checkbox"/> casement window	<input type="checkbox"/> hipped roof	<input type="checkbox"/> gable
<input type="checkbox"/> scale	<input type="checkbox"/> proportion	<input type="checkbox"/> symmetry
<input type="checkbox"/> column	<input type="checkbox"/> art glass	<input type="checkbox"/> double-hung window

On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest amount, how motivated are you to incorporate architecture and design lessons into your prescribed curriculum?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all Motivated				Extremely motivated

On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest amount, how comfortable are you in incorporating architecture and design lessons into your prescribed curriculum?

1	2	3	4	5
Totally Uncomfortable				Extremely comfortable

Thank you!



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Robie House Teacher Education Project Seminar Agenda

Tuesday, August 13, 2013

Ida Noyes Hall Library, 59th & Woodlawn

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 9:00 am | Sign in, coffee, introductions, welcome |
| 9:30 am | Architecture 101
Architectural styles, concepts, vocabulary |
| 10:15 am | Discussion - floorplans, family living, lifestyle
Introduction of related humanities topics |
| 10:45 am | Break |
| 11:00 am | Presentation: History, context and significance of the Robie House
Lee Bey, architectural photographer, critic and blogger |
| 12:30 pm | Lunch |
| 1:15 pm | Hands-on design exercise |
| 2:30 pm | Idea generation for lesson plans |
| 3:00 pm | Adjourn |

Wednesday, August 14, 2013

Robie House, 5757 S. Woodlawn

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 9:00 am | Coffee |
| 9:15 am | Robie House Tour |
| 10:15 am | Break |
| 10:30 am | Recap/walk to Smart Museum |
| 11:00 am | View Robie House dining room table and other Wright objects at Smart |
| 12:00 pm | Back to Robie House for lunch |
| 12:45 pm | Presentation
David Bagnall, Curator and Director of Interpretation
Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust |

2:15 pm Hands-on printmaking activity/Robie House or architecture theme

3:00 pm Adjourn

Thursday, August 15, 2013
Ida Noyes Hall Library, 59th & Woodlawn

9:00 am Coffee

9:15 am Hands-on activities/stations
Art Glass
Model building
Timeline brainstorm
Landscape design
Neighborhood walk

Noon Lunch

12:45 pm Lesson Plan Creation
Resources available

3:00 pm Adjourn

Funded by the [Terra Foundation for American Art](#).



The Experience of Place Neighborhood Discovery Walk

Objective:

To observe, interpret, and record the elements (sensory, design, architectural, and historical) that give this neighborhood a unique sense of place.

Focusing Question:

What is your experience of place and this neighborhood?

Think about:

- What are the qualities and characteristics of the neighborhood?
- What makes it different from other places you know?
- What features are particularly outstanding?
- What are your reactions to and impressions of the neighborhood?

Elements to look for in a neighborhood

PEOPLE

SPACE

STRUCTURE

- **Sensory:** smell, hear, touch, taste
- **Design:** shape, form, color, pattern, line, texture, rhythm, symmetry, composition
- **Architectural elements**
 - **Walls, roof, floor**
 - **Openings** – doors and windows
 - **Building parts**—cornice, lintel, sill, arch, keystone, column, dormer, stoop, bracket, pediment, balcony, bay window
 - **Ornament and decoration**
- **Building function** – residential, commercial, religious, cultural, public, industrial, recreational
- **Building materials** – glass, stone, brick, terracotta, stucco, steel, wood, iron, granite, slate, concrete
- **Scale and size**
- **Views and vista**
- **Historic elements**
 - **Visual clues to “change over time”**
 - (Building size and materials, entrances and windows, decoration and written or graphic symbols are all clues to a building’s age, original function, type of technology available when it was built.)
- **People and their activities**

Adapted from an exercise in the Learning By Design Workshop, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, NY

Looking at a Building

After you have toured the FLW Home and Studio, an architectural firm, or any building, how do you talk about it? What ideas or words could help you describe what you saw? Below you will find words and questions that will do just that. Use them to talk about what you saw, to compare one space to another, or to make judgments on how you could use the ideas on your own.

When thinking about a building, you should proceed from the general to the specific characteristics:

Site – Why is the building placed as it is? What was the architect or builder trying to achieve?

- * Relationship to surrounding buildings
- * Placement on site: Centrally on large lot? Tightly fit on smaller lot? Directly on the lot line?

Massing – What is the shape of the building? What does this say about how the building is used, and who lives or works there?

- * Silhouette (line where the roof meets the sky): Simple (one major roofline) or complex (many rooflines and projections)?
- * Building massing – Simple or complex? Symmetrical or asymmetrical?
- * Handling of porches, verandas and terraces – How are they related to the rest of the building? How is the inside and outside of the building related?

Openings – Where are they located and what is their function? How does the treatment of openings affect the relationship of inside and outside?

- * Organization: Formal or informal?
- * Relationship of windows and doors
- * Solid vs. void relationships: i.e. amount of wall space vs. amount of windows
- * Entrance door: Prominent and emphasized by other architectural elements? Centrally or asymmetrically placed? Inviting or private?
- * Handicapped accessibility

Materials – What is the building made of? Are the materials different on the inside and outside?

- * Types of materials used
- * Amount – Many or few? Why?
- * Texture – Rough or smooth?
- * Color scheme – Is the building polychromatic or monochromatic?

Details – How do details reinforce the overall design goal?

- * Simple building or ornate?
- * Decorations – classical, modern, etc.

But does it work?

How do you know if an architect did a good job? How do you analyze a space to find ways that it could be improved? If you think about the **function** of the space, you will be on the right track. Try to determine if the design is doing what it is supposed to do. First ask yourself, "What is this space used for?" Then ask yourself, "Does it work? Is it an effective place to design buildings, or educate children, or house a family?" Use those questions as you think about the following additional important parts of building design:

The function of the space –

- * What was it used for?
- * Were parts especially designed for some equipment or other use?

Circulation – both into and within the building

- * Where are the entrances?
- * Where are the rooms connected?
- * What are the traffic patterns in the building?
- * How is the furniture arranged?
- * Are there places where people run into each other or the furniture (traffic jams)?

Acoustics

- * What are the sound levels?
- * Can you hear people when they talk?

Lighting (natural and artificial)

- * Where are the windows, and how much light do they let in?
- * Where are the lights located?
- * Are the lights adjustable?

Energy Systems

- * What kind of energy is used?
- * Is heating or air conditioning used?
- * Is there any air flow (fans, etc.)?



Excerpts from *The Decorative Designs of Frank Lloyd Wright*

by David A. Hanks

Whereas the Coonley House rambled over the countryside, the Frederick Robie House on Woodlawn Avenue in Hyde Park (1908) is contained within a city lot, and the more sober materials of brick and concrete replace the ephemeral plaster and tile walls of the Coonley House. The tightness of the Robie plan makes it seem more like a ship than a house. Its huge chimney acts as a mast, balancing and weighting down the rest of the house, which would otherwise seem suspended. The plan of the second floor is open and fluid, with the living room and dining room as one separated by the fireplace and the central stairs. Each of these rooms has a triangular-shaped bay, and these bays appear as bows of a ship. The family bedrooms are in a smaller area on the third floor. The ground floor reflects the first, with the billiard room and playroom beneath the living and dining rooms. Each major room has access to the porches and balconies, which are lined with flower boxes.

Although not nearly as large as the Coonley House, the Robie House also had a complete decorative scheme for the interior, which was supervised, as already noted on pages 44-45, by the Niedecken-Walbridge firm in Milwaukee. Again, George Niedecken, under Wright's direction, was responsible for supervising the execution of the interior, including developing the designs for furniture from concept sketches to presentation drawings. (pp. 105-106)



The Robie dining room table and six chairs formed Wright's most important furniture ensemble. Whereas Wright was uneasy about the disarray that a living room seemed to require, a dining room was for him "always a great artistic opportunity." The occasions of "dining" and of "living" were different. Norris Kelly Smith has pointed out the symbolic significance of this ensemble, where a family "at dining" could participate in a great oneness of purpose:

In his early houses Wright consistently treats the occasion almost as if it were liturgical in nature. His severely rectilinear furniture, set squarely within a rectilinear context, makes these dining rooms seem more like stately council chambers than like gathering places for the kind of intimate family life we usually associate with Wright's name. They declare unequivocally that the unity of the group requires submission and conformity on the part of its members. (*Frank Lloyd Wright: A Study in Architectural Content*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966, p. 74)

This type of formal family dining requiring conformity must not have appealed to the Robies, since according to their daughter Lorraine Robie O'Conner, her parents preferred to dine at the smaller table in the "prow" of the dining room, and the formal table was reserved for guests. The formal dining was Wright's idea about his family at dining, not necessarily the clients'.

The Robie dining ensemble is an impressive and moving aesthetic experience, especially when seen in the context of the original setting, where it achieves even greater power. The visual relationships between the dining furniture, conceived in its vertical and horizontal lines, and the interior architecture contributed to the overall unity of the room. The strong horizontal thrust of the extended top of the dining table and of the built-in buffet had their exterior counterpart in the cantilevered roofs. The vertical lines of the high-backed chairs were echoed in the buffet. (pp. 107-108)

Hanks, David A. *The Decorative Designs of Frank Lloyd Wright*. New York: Penguin Books USA Inc., 1979. Print.