

Building Language Skills with The Seattle Times

May 19, 2016

Articles

- **“Build a moveable wall? Exhibit explores how to live small”** Monday, May 16, 2016 in the e-Edition of The Seattle Times, NW Monday, page B1
- **“Welcome to Map Your Career: Career Paths in Construction”** Sunday, May 15, 2016 in the e-Edition of The Seattle Times, Shop NW, page E3

Pre-Reading:

Draw a quick sketch of your dream apartment. What size would it be? What rooms would it have? Where would it be located? What kind of process would you need to go through to build it?

Vocabulary:

As you read, look for the following vocabulary words that appear in today’s article. Write down what you think the words mean based on the “context,” or how the words are used in the sentence in which they appear. Next, look up the definitions in a dictionary and see how close your guess was for each word.

abundance

accustomed

affordable

compact

dynamic

equate

exhibit

garnered

ingenious

inhabitants

irregular

mint

polyhedron

prototypes

unconventional

Comprehension:

1. What is the name of Garrett Reynold's architecture exhibit?
2. What do the smaller houses and apartments in Tokyo allow for?
3. What size was Graham Hill's movable wall apartment? What size is the new one he is working on?
4. What is the size of the average new house in the United States? How does this compare to European countries?
5. How much did Hill's apartment cost initially? How much does he estimate that he spent on renovations?
6. _____ of any kind are super expensive and complicated, once you figure it out, it gets better and better. **(Fill in the blank)**

Post-Reading:

Read the following passage from the article and discuss the following questions in a group:

"The ingenious 420*-square-foot apartment has a movable wall that transforms the space from a bedroom into an open, airy living room. The bed folds up Murphy-style, the wall moves back and presto! — party space. He even has the ability to "build" a guest room with two bunk beds. (He's since sold this apartment and is working on a new, smaller one — 350 square feet.)"

How was the building process of Graham Hill's apartment unique? Why do you think that Hill decided to move to a smaller apartment? What are the benefits of living small? What are some of the challenges? How big is your dream apartment? Has your idea about the size of your dream apartment changed after reading the article? What are some problems with only building large apartments in cities? Do you think larger apartments make people happy? Why or why not?

(You can view Graham Hill's TED talk here:

https://www.ted.com/talks/graham_hill_less_stuff_more_happiness?language=en)

****420 sq ft is about 20 x 21 feet, if you can find a big enough space, measure it out to get an idea of exactly how big (or small) this apartment is.***

Building Language Skills: "Welcome to Map Your Career: Career Paths in Construction"

Read and look at the **“Welcome to Map Your Career: Career Paths in Construction”** infographic. What kind of jobs are necessary for construction? How do all of these jobs work together? What education does each of these jobs require? Which of these jobs was mentioned in the article, “Build a movable wall? Exhibit explores how to live small”? What kind of skills does Reynolds have that make him successful in his career? How did visiting other countries influence Reynold’s work? How does our cultural influence what and how we build? Pick a construction job, from the graphic and research it online. Write about what an average day in this job might be like.

Extensions

- 1) Integrate math skills into this lesson by designing your own innovative dream mini-apartment. Work with a team, have each person assume a different career role in the design/construction process (for example, architect, urban planner, construction manager, and cost estimator). Take into consideration the size of your apartment. What materials you will use? What is the lifestyle of the person who will live there? Is this apartment affordable? You may need to conduct external research. When you finish, reflect on the experience – what kind of “soft skills” (personalities traits such as leadership, communication, teamwork etc.) might a person need to be successful in a construction job?
- 2) Read the article “Buildings that kill” in the May 15th, 2016 edition of the The Seattle Times on Main, page 14 by dividing it into smaller sections. How does this article relate to construction? Why is quality construction important? What roles do each of the jobs from the ‘Career Paths in Construction’ graphic play in making sure homes are safe?

Comprehension Question Answers:

1. What is the name of Garrett Reynold's architecture exhibit? **"Living Small"**
2. What do the smaller houses and apartments in Tokyo allow for? **They allow from more irregular and unconventional shapes to be built.**
3. What size was Graham Hill's movable wall apartment? What size is the new one he is working on? **420 sq ft; 350 sq ft**
4. What is the size of the average new house in the United States? How does this compare to European countries? **The average house is 2,600 square feet – in Europe it is 1,000.**
5. How much did Hill's apartment cost initially? How much does he estimate that he spent on renovations? **The apartment initially cost \$287,000 and he estimated an additional \$300,000 for renovations.**
6. **Prototypes** of any kind are super expensive and complicated, once you figure it out, it gets better and better. (Fill in the blank)