

Homes and Their Surroundings · Conversation & classroom guide

Learning with a grown-up · Ages 4–8 · Flexible participation

What is making shade over this window?

Learning aim: Explain one visible relationship between a home feature and its surroundings, without assigning one house type to an entire country.

A five-minute conversation

Look closely at one model house. Follow the sunlight or rain with your finger and talk about what the building feature does. The poster compares useful features, rather than sorting people or countries into house types.

Start here: Match one feature with its visible effect: overhang and shade, or roof and downward water.

Explore further: Explain two features in one home and name a limit, such as changing sun position.

What is making shade over this window?

Answer cue: The overhang projects out above it and blocks some sunlight. Whether it shades the window depends on where the sun is.

Which way does the rainwater go on the sloping roof?

Answer cue: Down the roof toward the edges. A roof also needs suitable materials and drainage; a slope alone is not a promise that a home stays dry.

What makes the third home's floor raised?

Answer cue: Its living floor is above the ground on supports. Point to the space beneath it and the stairs leading up.

Keep the idea clear

One home can have all three features. Many kinds of homes work in many places; weather is only one influence on building design. Raised floors do not guarantee flood safety. These are model examples, not building instructions.

Try: Give a pretend home one useful feature

Materials: Paper and crayons.

1. Draw a pretend home beside something in its surroundings, such as sunshine or a tree.
2. Add one feature from the poster and point to it.
3. Explain what that feature can do. Add a second feature if your child wants to continue.

What this can show: The child identifies one feature and explains its visible function without making a country-wide or safety guarantee. Keep this a drawing activity. Do not climb, enter building sites, test real roofs or construct raised structures. There is no need to draw or identify the family home.

Return to it: Look again: could one of the houses have both an overhang and a sloping roof?

Homes and Their Surroundings · In the classroom

A 15-minute classroom lesson

Prepare: Paper and crayons. Read the answer cues before sharing.

Words to explore

overhang — A part that projects beyond the surface below it.

shade — An area where something blocks direct sunlight.

slope — A surface that rises or falls.

floor — The surface people stand on inside a building.

support — Something that holds another thing up.

3 min · Notice: Look together and invite one observation before introducing the vocabulary.

4 min · Compare: Use the three discussion prompts, following the picture rather than expecting memorized definitions.

5 min · Try together: Draw a pretend home beside something in its surroundings, such as sunshine or a tree. Add one feature from the poster and point to it. Explain what that feature can do. Add a second feature if your child wants to continue.

3 min · Explain: The child identifies one feature and explains its visible function without making a country-wide or safety guarantee.

Understanding check: The child identifies one feature and explains its visible function without making a country-wide or safety guarantee.

Answer guidance: The overhang projects out above it and blocks some sunlight. Whether it shades the window depends on where the sun is. Down the roof toward the edges. A roof also needs suitable materials and drainage; a slope alone is not a promise that a home stays dry. Its living floor is above the ground on supports. Point to the space beneath it and the stairs leading up.

Describe the shadows and supports aloud; let children point, choose between two features or direct an adult's drawing. Avoid asking children to discuss their own housing.

A response to keep

Draw, point or describe one idea from this picture.

One clue I can explain now...

Something else I wonder...

<https://kiddos.ai/learn/olivia-the-globetrotter/homes-and-surroundings>

Related story: Olivia and Doudou in Paris — Olivia and Doudou notice buildings on their travels. This model workshop extends that habit of close looking; it is a new teaching scene rather than an invented episode from a shipping book.

Our discovery record

Use words, marks, a drawing or an adult's notes. Keep this page with you; nothing needs to be uploaded.

Date / time (if useful): _____

My question or idea

What I noticed

What I think now

What I want to explore next

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