

MAPPING YOUR MEMORY: NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT

SUMMARY

When it comes to our own personal lives, we sometimes don't recognize that even the most normal and seemingly insignificant of events in our memories are moments worth sharing and have an audience willing to listen. This is a simple activity that prompts both memory and storytelling, regardless of age.

MATERIALS NEEDED

large piece of blank paper
pen/pencil/crayons, etc.

WHAT TO DO

TOGETHER

Using the paper, draw a map of your neighborhood, past or current. Make the scope as large or as small as you would like. Draw streets, neighbor's homes, landmarks, places you have memories about or remember as significant to you, etc. As you do, stop and tell those listening the story(s) associated with these locations. Rather than simply state, "This is where I fell headfirst off my scooter into a tree," and move on, explain and elaborate, make connections, and share lessons learned. You may even want to record the storyteller for preservation.

INDIVIDUAL

Using the paper, draw a map of your neighborhood, past or current. Make the scope as large or as small as you would like. Draw streets, neighbor's homes, landmarks, places you have memories about or remember as significant to you, etc. Label or star places you remember for a particular reason, or have a story about. Using your map as a guide, sketch out the stories you have marked on the map. Ask yourself what details you remember: who was there; what was the time of year and time of day was it; what smells, sounds, or sensations can you recall? Write your story, incorporating those details, making connections, and reflecting on how that memory is a part of who you are or who you wish to be.

ALTERNATIVES

"When I Was Your Age"

If doing this activity with children, draw your map and share your stories from when you were the age they are. See what common stories you may have, or talk about what has changed from then till now.

"Picture This"

Take pictures of places and areas that are important or have a memory attached to them. Write captions and share with others as a collage poster, group message, or via social media. Encourage others to share their memories as well.