

Lesson Plan: Building the Great Wall of China

Subject: Social Studies / History & Engineering

Age Group: 5-7 years old

Time Allotment: 45-60 minutes

Materials Needed

- Building materials: LEGOs, wooden blocks, magnetic tiles, couch cushions, pillows, empty cardboard boxes, or any other building toys.
 - Paper (large sheet if possible) and drawing supplies (crayons, markers, colored pencils).
 - Optional: A globe or world map.
 - Optional: A few small toy figures (like soldiers or animals).
 - Optional: A short, age-appropriate video clip of the Great Wall of China.
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Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the learner will be able to:

- Explain in simple terms why the Great Wall was built (to protect people).
 - Describe one or two features of the Great Wall (it's very long, it has towers).
 - Construct their own model of a long wall and explain its purpose.
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Lesson Structure

I. Introduction (5-7 minutes) - Hook & Objectives

1. Hook: The Biggest Fence Ever!

- Ask the learner: "Have you ever built a fort with pillows or a castle with blocks? What was it for?" (Guide them to answers like "to keep things out," "to be safe inside," "for my toys to live in.")
- Say: "That's awesome! What if I told you that a long, long time ago, people in a country called China built the biggest, longest wall in the whole world? It's so long it's like a giant stone dragon sleeping on top of the mountains!"
- If you have a map or globe, show them where China is.

2. State the Objectives (in kid-friendly language):

- "Today, we are going to be amazing explorers and builders! First, we'll learn **why** people built this super long Great Wall. Then, we will become master builders and create our **very**
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own Great Wall!"

II. Body (25-35 minutes) - I Do, We Do, You Do

A. "I Do" - Story of the Great Wall (5-10 minutes)

1. **Tell the Story:** Use a storytelling voice and simple language. Show pictures or a short video clip if you have one.
 - "A very long time ago, in China, there were kings called emperors. The emperor wanted to keep all the people in his land safe from enemies who might try to come and cause trouble."
 - "So he had an idea! He said, 'Let's build a giant wall!' It wasn't just a small wall like in a backyard. It had to be super strong, really tall so no one could climb it, and super, super long to protect the whole country."
 - "Lots and lots of people worked together for many, many years to build it. They used stone, brick, and dirt. It was very hard work!"
 - "They also built special tall parts called **watchtowers**. Soldiers would stand in the watchtowers to look out far away. If they saw enemies coming, they would light a fire to make smoke signals. The smoke was like a text message telling the other soldiers, 'Be ready!'"
2. **Check for Understanding (Formative Assessment):**
 - "Why did the emperor want to build the wall?" (To keep people safe).
 - "What was the special tall part called where soldiers looked out?" (A watchtower).

B. "We Do" - Let's Walk the Wall! (5 minutes)

1. **Movement Activity:**
 - Say: "The Great Wall is very long and wiggly, just like a snake. Let's pretend our room is a mountain range. Follow me and walk along our own imaginary Great Wall!"
 - Lead the learner in a single-file line, winding around furniture and through the room.
 - Occasionally stop and say, "We're at a watchtower! Climb the stairs!" (pretend to climb). "Now look out far away! Do you see anything?" (pretend to use binoculars).
2. **Plan our Wall:**
 - Take out the large sheet of paper. Say: "Before we build our wall, let's draw a plan. Where should our wall go to protect our toys? Let's draw a long, winding line for our wall. Where should we put our watchtowers?"
 - Draw a simple, winding path together on the paper. Mark a few 'X's for watchtowers.

C. "You Do" - You're the Master Builder! (15 minutes)

1. **Instructions:**
 - "Okay, Master Builder, it's your turn! Your job is to build a Great Wall to protect your favorite toys (or this part of the room)."
 - "You can use any of these blocks, pillows, or boxes. Use our drawing as a map to help you."

- "Don't forget to make your wall long and strong! And see if you can add at least one watchtower where a toy soldier can stand guard."

2. Creative Work Time:

- Allow the learner to build freely. Offer help if they get stuck, but encourage their own creative problem-solving.
- Play the role of an interested visitor: "Wow, your wall is getting so long! Tell me about this part. Is that a watchtower?"

III. Conclusion (5-10 minutes) - Show & Tell and Recap

1. Builder's Tour (Summative Assessment):

- Ask the learner to give you a tour of their Great Wall.
- Prompt them with questions that link back to the objectives:
 - "Tell me about your amazing wall. Why did you build it?"
 - "Can you show me a special part, like a watchtower?"
 - "Who is your wall keeping safe?"

2. Success Criteria Check:

- Review what makes a great wall model: "You did it! Your wall is super long, it looks strong, and you have a watchtower for your guards. You are an official Great Wall Master Builder!"

3. Recap Key Learning:

- "So what did we learn about the real Great Wall of China today? We learned it was built a long, long time ago to... (let them fill in 'keep people safe'). And it's super... ('long'). And it has... ('towers'). You did an amazing job learning and building today!"

Differentiation

• For Learners Needing More Support:

- Build the wall together, taking turns placing one block at a time.
- Provide a very simple model for them to copy.
- Use sentence starters for the show-and-tell: "My wall is for..." or "This is my..."

• For Learners Needing a Challenge (Extension):

- Challenge them to build gates into their wall that can open and close.
- Ask them to draw a picture of a story happening on their Great Wall. Who are the guards? Are they protecting the toys from a dragon or a toy monster?
- Have them try to build the wall using only one type of material (e.g., only pillows) to encourage creative problem-solving.