

# The Holy City Discovery: A Journey Through Charleston, SC

## Materials Needed

- Printable map of Charleston (or a hand-drawn outline)
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- Construction paper and glue
- Short lengths of ribbon, dried grass, or brown paper strips (for basket weaving activity)
- Access to a computer/tablet for a brief virtual tour
- "Charleston Passport" (a small notebook or folded paper)

## Learning Objectives

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

- Identify three major landmarks in Charleston and explain their historical importance.
- Describe the unique Gullah Geechee culture and its influence on the region.
- Explain why Charleston is nicknamed "The Holy City."
- Identify key architectural features like "Rainbow Row" and "Single Houses."

## 1. Introduction: The Mystery of the Holy City (Hook)

**The Hook:** Imagine you are standing on a cobblestone street. To your left is a bright pink house, to your right is a blue one, and in front of you is a giant harbor where the very first shots of the Civil War were fired. Everywhere you look, you see tall church steeples reaching for the clouds.

**The Big Question:** Why do people call Charleston "The Holy City," and how did a city built on a swamp become one of the most famous places in America?

## 2. Body: Exploring the Lowcountry

### Part A: I Do (Instruction)

The educator explains the three "Pillars of Charleston":

- **History:** Charleston was founded in 1670. It sits on a peninsula where the Ashley and Cooper Rivers meet. We'll look at Fort Sumter (where the Civil War began) and The Battery (the defensive seawall).
- **Architecture:** Because the city was crowded, people built "Single Houses"—houses that are only one room wide to catch the sea breeze! We also have "Rainbow Row," a series of 13 colorful houses.
- **Culture:** The Gullah Geechee people are descendants of enslaved Africans who preserved their heritage. They are famous for "Sweetgrass Baskets," which are hand-woven from local marsh grass.

## Part B: We Do (Guided Practice)

### The Virtual Landmark Scavenger Hunt:

Using a map or a virtual tour tool, we will "visit" these spots together. As we find them, Olivia will add a sticker or a drawing to her "Charleston Passport":

1. **The Custom House:** Look at the big white columns. Why did they need a building for taxes by the water?
2. **Rainbow Row:** Why are they colorful? (Legend says it was so drunk sailors could find their way home, or for shopkeepers to show what they sold!)
3. **The City Market:** This is where the Gullah basket weavers work today. Let's look at a photo of a basket.

## Part C: You Do (Independent Application)

### Activity: Design Your Own Charleston District

Olivia will create a 3D or 2D "Postcard Map" of her own Charleston street. She must include:

- At least two "Single Houses" with side porches (called piazzas).
- A church steeple (to honor the "Holy City" nickname).
- A "Nature Corner" featuring a Palmetto Tree (the state tree) or Spanish Moss hanging from an Oak tree.
- **The Weaver's Challenge:** Using the ribbons or paper strips, Olivia will try a simple "over-under" weaving pattern to create a small coaster representing a Sweetgrass basket.

## 3. Conclusion: The Grand Tour Recap

**Summary:** Charleston is a "living museum." It's a place where the past (history and architecture) meets the present (the Gullah culture and the busy harbor).

**Learner Recap:** Olivia will "present" her map to the teacher, acting as a tour guide. She must explain one thing she learned about the houses, one thing about the food/culture, and why the city looks the way it does.

## Assessment

- **Formative (During):** Checking if Olivia can identify the "Single House" design during the virtual tour.
- **Summative (End):** The completed "Postcard Map" and "Charleston Passport" will serve as proof of learning. Olivia should be able to answer: "What makes Charleston different from our town?"

## Success Criteria

Success looks like:

- Correctly placing at least 3 landmarks on a map.
- Accurately describing a "Single House" (long, narrow, side porch).

- Completing a basic weave pattern.
- Explaining that "The Holy City" refers to the many church steeples on the skyline.

## Differentiation & Adaptability

- **For the Advanced Learner:** Research the "H.L. Hunley" (the first combat submarine) which is located in nearby North Charleston, and draw a diagram of how it worked.
- **For the Kinesthetic Learner:** Instead of drawing, use LEGOs or building blocks to build a "Single House" and a "Steeple," then test which one is more stable.
- **Digital Option:** Use a digital map tool to measure the distance from The Battery to Fort Sumter in the middle of the harbor.