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# City Street Beat

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a teacher's guide

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Created by marcie colleen

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**Nancy Viau, Author**

***City Street Beat***

**Nancy Viau**, a country girl at heart, also enjoys the bright lights, loud sounds, and rhythmic hustle and bustle of a busy city. Living not far from Philadelphia, she often visits there, but she's been spotted skipping down the streets of New York City, San Diego, Paris, and Lima, Peru. Find out more at [www.nancyviau.com](http://www.nancyviau.com).

**Barbara Bakos, Illustrator**

***City Street Beat***

**Barbara Bakos** grew up on the edge of Budapest next to a little forest. She enjoys traveling to faraway places to see new things—always with lots of ideas in her head and lots of pens in her pocket. But whenever she's not at home, she misses having her big ginger cat by her side with Johnny Cash records playing in the background.

**Marcie Colleen, Curriculum Writer**

This guide was created by Marcie Colleen, a former teacher with a BA in English Education from Oswego State and a MA in Educational Theater from NYU. In addition to creating curriculum guides for children's books, Marcie can often be found writing picture books of her own at home in Brooklyn, NYC.

Visit her at [www.thisismarciecolleen.com](http://www.thisismarciecolleen.com).

## **How to Use This Guide**

This classroom guide for *City Street Beat* is designed for students in preschool through second grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

This guide offers activities to help teachers integrate *City Street Beat* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as teaching tools throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

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# English Language Arts

## **Reading Comprehension**

Before reading *City Street Beat*, help students identify the basic parts of a picture book: front cover, back cover, title page, spine, end papers, and jacket flap.

The Front Cover:

- Describe the cover illustration in your own words. Look for the fun details. Can you find:
  - Dogs chasing a pizza man?
  - A sunbather on a roof top?
  - A boy playing basketball?
  - A skateboard with no one to ride it?
- The book is called *City Street Beat*. Can you predict what the story is about?
  - Where do you think the story will be set?
  - The word “beat” refers to the rhythm of music. How many examples of music can you find in the cover illustration?

Now read or listen to the book.

Help students summarize in their own words what the book is about.

- The two girls have quite an adventurous day in the city. Help students define the plot arc within *City Street Beat*. Note: The story starts on the copyright page.

<b>Beginning</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>End</b>
<p><i>The little girl and her mom drive to the city to meet their friends.</i></p>	First	<p><i>After an eventful day, it's time to say goodbye. The little girl and her mother get back in their car and drive home.</i></p>
	Then	
	Next	
	After that	
	Finally	

Let's talk about the people who made *City Street Beat*.

- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What kind of work did each person do to make the book?

Look closely at the following illustrations:

"Say hello and hold an end."

- Kids always find ways to have fun. What are these girls doing?
- Do you ever jump rope? Draw with chalk? Play hopscotch? Roller-skate? Where do you usually do these things?

"Teach the flock the chicken dance."

- Do you know the chicken dance? Have students take turns showing what they think the chicken dance is. Use the illustration a hint.
- There are so many pigeons! Can you find:

- Two pigeons in love?
- Pigeons eating a donut?
- A pigeon with a mustache?

“Sing-a-ling a city song.”

- Bakos uses purples and pinks for the city in this illustration and blues and purples for the following illustrations. Why do you think she does this? What time of day does it look like?
- What are some other clues that it’s getting to be dark outside? (Hint: Look at the lamps and lights.)

### **Writing Activities**

#### **Everyone Has a Story**

A city is made up of many diverse people and each person has a story to tell.

- Show several illustrations and have students point out the people.
- Ask students to choose one person and write a story about him/her, answering the following questions: Who are they? Where do they live? How did they come to live in the city? What is their typical day like? As in *City Street Beat*, the story can begin in the morning and end in the evening.

#### **Down the Manhole: The Mouse City**

When the two girls look down a manhole, they see a whole mouse city.

- The mouse city has so many similarities to the people city. Compare the cover illustration to the mouse city illustration. In both illustrations, find:
  - A picnic on a rooftop.
  - A traffic cop.
  - A train.
  - A hot air balloon.
  - Someone riding a bicycle.
  - A music band.
  - A water tower.

- Discuss what might happen if the girls could get through the grate and visit the mouse city. What would they see? Who would they meet? What would they do?
- Using the text in *City Street Beat* as a guide, have students write a short poem about the mouse city.
- Inspired by the mouse city illustration in *City Street Beat*, students can illustrate their poems.

### **Getting From Here to There**

When traveling to any new area, it's important to be able to follow directions and get from place to place. Here are a few activities to introduce maps and directions.

- Show several maps and discuss how big cities, small towns, and rural areas are presented on maps.
- Show a map of the immediate neighborhood.
  - Mark an X where the school is.
  - Identify names of familiar streets, points of interest, and intersections.
  - Choose a destination.
  - Together, write directions from the school to the destination. Simple instructions like "walk 3 steps" or "turn right" should be introduced.
- Create a map of the classroom or of the inside of the school.
  - Have students take turns hiding simple objects.
  - Ask them to write directions for others to follow in order to locate the hidden object.

### **Speaking and Listening Activities**

Picture books are written to be read aloud. Here are some ways to bring *City Street Beat* to life in the classroom and have fun with speaking and listening skills.

### **Choral Reading**

- Using the text of *City Street Beat*, take the role of the narrator while students chime in with the city sounds.



- Turn *City Street Beat* into a script. Read the script out loud together. Emphasize memorization of the students' parts as well as good vocal expression.

### **Mime**

- Ask students to silently act out a page from the book, exaggerating body motions and facial expressions. See if others can identify the page that goes along with the mimed action.

### **Drama**

- Create a TV commercial to encourage people to visit the city or to read *City Street Beat*.
- In small groups, act out *City Street Beat* as an opera, a western, a "breaking news" story, a thriller, etc. The rest of the class guesses what "style" is being presented.
- Make and record a radio version of *City Street Beat*. Students decide what to use for the sound effects to create a mental picture of the story.

### **Language Activities**

#### **Onomatopoeia**

Onomatopoeia is an imitation of a sound in words. In *City Street Beat*, onomatopoeia is used to describe the many sounds found in the city. Some examples include "tippy, tappy, CLACK!" for the sound of heels on the sidewalk and "flippy, flappy, COO!" for the sound of the pigeons.

- Discuss why writers use onomatopoeia, and perhaps why author Nancy Viau chose to use onomatopoeia when writing about the city.
- Create a list of onomatopoeia from *City Street Beat*. What are some other sounds you can think of?
- Read *Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?* by Dr. Seuss, *The Listening Walk* by Paul Showers, and *Listen, Listen* by Phillis Gershator and Alison Jay. Ask students to identify onomatopoeia.

#### **Sounds of the \_\_\_\_\_**

- Through class discussion and research, create a list of onomatopoeia.

- In groups of 2-3, students choose 5 of the sounds from the class list and write a rhythmic story filled with onomatopoeia. Encourage the use of non-city settings like a barnyard, jungle, amusement park, etc.

### **Chit and Chat a City Song**

When everything is happening in the city at once, think about how it must sound!

- As a class, create the sounds of the city. For example: Assign some students to smack their heels on the floor, flap like birds, make traffic noises, sing, play instruments, and so on.
- Demonstrate how conductors use hand motions to set the tempo and noise level of an orchestra. Conduct the class in a musical symphony of city sounds.
- For continued exploration, students can create onomatopoeia “soundscapes” for the country, the zoo, a barnyard, the beach, etc.

## Math

### **Word Problems**

- 1) The pizza man is delivering 5 pizzas on his scooter. When he isn't looking, 3 pizzas fall off the scooter. How many pizzas does he have left?

$$5 - 3 = ?$$

- 2) A drummer on the street has 6 boxes to use for drums. If the drummer adds 2 metal trashcans to the set, how many drums does he now have?

$$6 + 2 = ?$$

- 3) The girls want to take the train to the park, 6 stops away. They pass 1 stop. How many more stops until the park?

$$6 - 1 = ?$$

- 4) There are 7 bags of garbage on the curb. The garbage collectors take 5 of the bags of garbage. How many bags of garbage are left on the curb?

$$7 - 5 = ?$$

- 5) Jordon has 8 coins in her pocket. She throws 1 into the fountain to make a wish. She gives 1 to her friend so she can make a wish, too. How many coins does Jordon have left in her pocket?

$$8 - 1 - 1 = ?$$

- 6) Each child buys 3 donuts. If there are 4 children, how many donuts are there in total?

$$3 \times 4 = ?$$

- 7) There are 5 children and 30 coins to throw in the fountain to make a wish. If the coins are divided equally among the children, how many coins does each child get?

$$30 \div 5 = ?$$

### **"Wildlife" Versus People: Counting and Comparison**

The city is not known for its wildlife, but in many areas the mice and pigeons outnumber the people.

- As a class, create a table to record how many pigeons/mice and how many people appear in each spread of *City Street Beat*.

<b>Spread</b>	<b>How many pigeons and/or mice?</b>	<b>How many people?</b>
Ex: Title Page	11	5
Jump Rope spread		
Chicken Dance spread		
Fountain spread		

*Additional Challenge:* Compare the numbers of pigeons/mice and people on each spread using these symbols:

> (is greater than)

= (is equal to)

< (is less than)

*Example:* On the title page, the number of people is < pigeons/mice.

## **Free Versus Fee**

Taking a trip to a city can be expensive, but there are lots of *free* things to do, too.

- Look at every page of *City Street Beat*. List the activities the girls participate in. For example:
  - Jumping rope with friends
  - Listening to a band play on the street
  - Riding the train
  - Eating a bakery treat
  - Feeding the pigeons
  - Making a wish in the fountain
  - Taking a bus
- Which activities on the list are free and which ones require a fee?
- Assign a monetary value on each of the paying activities. Have pairs of students plan a day trip and calculate the cost.

## **Teaching Patterns**

Patterning teaches similarities and differences, in addition to the order, or sequence, things occur. And patterns lead to rhythms and music.

To teach pattern recognition:

1. Build a simple pattern on the table using M&Ms, buttons, or pieces of paper. Start with an alternating pattern (called an AB pattern): One red candy, one green candy, one red, one green, and so forth. Repeat the pattern at least once.
2. Challenge the students to identify the pattern.
3. Next, students continue the pattern by building a sequence that's exactly like the initial pattern. Ask: How did you know to start with a red? or Why should a green be here?

Some more difficult patterns to practice are: AAB, ABB, AABB, and ABC.

Using sounds create:

- An AAB pattern of traffic sounds.
- An ABB pattern of footsteps on the sidewalk.
- An AABB pattern of coins being thrown into the fountain.
- An ABC pattern of horse hooves.
- What other fun patterns can be created from the book *City Street Beat*?

### ***Tippy, Tappy, CLACK!*: Creating Patterns through Music**

Several different rhythm instruments are required for this activity. Drums, blocks, and cymbals work really well. If instruments are not available, teach students to use body percussion to create the sounds below.

- Students select an instrument and play a sequence of four beats.
- After the students have practiced groups of four beats on various instruments, ask them to suggest a pattern for the instruments to play in.

For example:

*Pat, pat, clap, stomp.*

The pattern is played in sequence over and over again.

- Compose a variety of patterns as a class. Play at different tempos and volume for extra fun.

### **Who Switched the Rhythm?**

- With the class sitting in a circle, everyone begins a simple rhythm of two pats on their thighs and one clap: *Pat, pat, clap. Pat, pat, clap.*
- Students keep eye contact with those in the circle. Whenever they hear a switch in the pattern, they should follow the switch.
- Anyone can switch the rhythm. Try to be sneaky! The goal is to get the entire circle to switch the rhythm without ever realizing who switched it.

# Science

## **Homes Are Habitats**

Everyone requires clothing, food, and shelter. Having basic needs met is different depending on your habitat.

- Have students study the back cover illustration. Ask the following questions:
  - Where do people in the country buy their clothes?
  - Would people in the country grow or buy their food, or do both?
  - What types of homes are found in the country?
- Have the students study the front illustration. Ask:
  - Where do city dwellers buy their clothes?
  - How do they get their food?
  - What types of homes are found in the city?
- Discuss how the two habitats support each other. How does one provide for the other?
- Discuss natural resources and how they are used in the country and in the city.

## **My Habitat**

- Lead a discussion about the students' habitats and what items in their homes or neighborhoods support good health and the well-being of their families.
- Have each student create a drawing or model of their own habitat.

## **Sense and the City**

- Review the five senses.
- Read *City Street Beat* and encourage students to be sensory detectives, uncovering which senses the girls use on each page.
- Embark on a class field trip to the playground, library, art room, etc. Have students look for ways to use all five senses and record their findings.

- As an independent activity, students record how they've used their senses in another place like a home, zoo, or doctor's office.
- Additional activity: Students write a story or poem about the above place incorporating the five senses, so readers can experience the environment.

### **Make Your Own Musical Instrument**

If you look very closely at the cover illustration of *City Street Beat*, you will see a man sitting by the fountain making music using glasses filled with water.

Here's how to make similar music using several glasses of water and a pencil.

- 1) Take 5 glasses and line them up next to each other.
- 2) Fill them up with different amounts of water. The first should have just a little water, while the last should be almost full. The glasses in between can vary in amounts on this scale.
- 3) Using a pencil, tap the glass with the least amount of water in it and observe the sound. Then hit the glass with the most water in it and observe the sound. How are they different? Which one is a higher pitch? Which one is lower?
- 4) Tap the other glasses with the pencil and observe the sounds.

Each of the glasses has a different tone because of the vibrations created by the pencil tap. Small vibrations are made when the glass is hit; this creates sound waves which travel through the water. The more water means slower vibrations and therefore a deeper tone.

- 5) Experiment with creating different tones using the glasses.

For several other ideas on how to make musical instruments, visit [www.bashthetrash.com](http://www.bashthetrash.com).

### **Building a Greener City**

Treehugger.com says, "...with 180,000 people moving to the world's cities every day, 75% of the global population is expected to be living urban lives by 2050. Therefore, it is more important than ever to make cities more efficient, which will make the world more sustainable."

There are several ways to make a city more "green."

- Build parks.

- Provide efficient public transportation to get more cars off the street.
- Establish safe bicycle lanes to encourage people to travel by bike.
- Grow rooftop gardens.
- Have a citywide recycling and composting program.
- Install solar panels on buildings.
- Harness wind and water for power.
- Celebrate the farmer with farmer’s markets.

Through brainstorming and an Internet search, explore other ways to create a greener city.

- Take a close look at the city in *City Street Beat*. How green is it? The wind turbines on the final spread give a hint.
- Using knowledge from brainstorming and research, students take on the role of city planners to identify ways to make the city in *City Street Beat* more eco-friendly.
- Together, create a presentation in which you propose at least 3 new green initiatives for the city.

## Social Studies

### **We’re Going on a Road Trip!**

- Students decide where they’d like to go on a road trip. Locate the destination on a map. A topographical map works best to show mountains and streams, etc.
- Brainstorm things they might see on their trip and what they might pack.
- Start the trip in Call-and-Response fashion. Add exciting hand gestures.
  - In response to, “*I see a \_\_\_\_\_!*” individual students come up with a personal response, say it out loud, and act it out.

**Leader:**

*Group:*

**Leader:**

*Group:*

**Leader:**

***We’re going on a road trip!***

*We’re going on a road trip!*

***We’re headed to \_\_\_\_\_!***

*We’re headed to \_\_\_\_\_!*

***I’ve packed my camera!***



<i>Group:</i>	<i>I've packed my camera!</i>
<b><i>Leader:</i></b>	<b><i>Start your engine—vroom!</i></b>
<i>Group:</i>	<i>Start your engine—vroom!</i>
<b><i>Leader:</i></b>	<b><i>Drive down the road!</i></b>
<i>Group:</i>	<i>Drive down the road!</i>
<b><i>Leader:</i></b>	<b><i>I see a _____!</i></b>

- Play continues until arrival at the destination.
- For extra play, reverse the trip on high speed.
- Additional activity: Students can create a scrapbook and draw the “photos” they’ve taken on their road trip.

### **Who Are the People in My Neighborhood?**

A city is made up a people. A group of people make up a community. There are several ways to make a city more “green.”

- Ask the students who are the people in their community.
- Each student chooses one person in the community to interview. Encourage students to think beyond the people they already know and choose people who own businesses, hold public office, police officers, firefighters, doctors, or others.

Questions can include:

How long have you lived here?

Why do you choose to live here?

Describe some of the things you do in the community? What is your average day like?

If you were mayor, what is one thing you would change about the community? What is one thing you would celebrate?

- Each student can create a poster highlighting the person he/she interviewed, including photos or drawings that depict the answers.

### **Hometown History**

- Plan a field trip to a local library, historical society, museum, or town clerk’s office to learn more about your hometown.

- As a class, prepare questions to ask the person in charge.
- Upon arrival, spend time studying old photographs, maps, and documents.
- Ask students to think about the following:
  - How has your hometown changed?
  - What are some of the highlights of the town's history?
  - Did anything memorable happen here?
  - Did anyone famous live here?
  - What from the past is still visible today?
  - What plans does the town have for the future?
  - In your future, would you prefer to stay in this town or go live in another place?