

Block of Flats

Exploring Shared Living

Keywords:

housing, community, shared space, neighbours, conflict resolution, tolerance, common rules

Target group:

primary school pupils
(ages 6-11)

Objectives:



In this activity, pupils build a model of a block of flats using small boxes and create characters that live inside. Through this process, they explore different types of housing, discuss real-life situations related to shared living, and develop ideas for positive community relationships. The activity fosters cooperation, problem-solving, and understanding of the difference between private and shared ownership, as well as basic construction and creative skills.

General Guideline on Time Allocation:

The duration needed to carry out this activity may vary depending on the specific group of children. Teachers are encouraged to adapt the implementation according to the needs, interests, and dynamics of the group.

In the preparatory phase, teachers may use a variety of activities to introduce and contextualize the chosen topic. These can include discussions, videos, drawings, storytelling, or even a field trip, depending on the age and background knowledge of the children.

The main construction phase, during which children plan and build their urban element using LEGO bricks, should typically not exceed 45 to 60 minutes. However, this phase often stimulates further curiosity and questions among the children, potentially leading to extended engagement or follow-up activities. For more detailed instructions and pedagogical support on how to implement activities of INNO-kids project, please download the Teacher's Methodological Guide.

Materials and Resources Needed:

- LEGO bricks of various types
- Paper, markers, crayons, and coloured pencils, scissors and glue, acrylic paints, paintbrushes, water container
- 10–12 matchboxes or similar boxes per group
- Colourful paper, cardboard

Note: Encourage pupils to repurpose available materials creatively. If LEGO bricks are not available, pupils may use basic craft supplies to bring their ideas to life through drawings and handmade models.



Introduction:

Begin with the question: “How do people live in different places?” Brainstorm various housing types — detached houses, blocks of flats, trailers, shelters, etc.

Ask pupils:

- What kind of home do you live in?
- What are the good and challenging things about it?
- What happens when many people share the same building?

Explain that they will create a model of a block of flats, where each flat belongs to a different resident. Together, they will explore how to live respectfully and cooperatively in one building.

Procedure:

Preparation

In groups, pupils:

- Plan the structure of their block of flats using matchboxes or small containers
- Decide how many floors, entrances, and shared spaces (hallways, laundry room, storage, etc.)
- Think about what makes a block of flats pleasant and respectful for everyone

They also prepare simple “characters” from LEGO, drawing faces and naming them. Each resident can have a different background, interest, or daily routine.



Construction

Pupils construct their block of flats by:

- Gluing boxes together into a vertical or L-shaped building
- Decorating the exterior with colourful paper or paint
- Drawing or painting windows, balconies, and doors
- Creating entrance areas and shared spaces like stairs, corridors, bike storage, or a bench outside
- Assigning one “resident” to each flat, placing them inside

The building should be stable and reflect a sense of community life.

Details

As the model comes together, pupils add personal touches that make the building feel lived-in:

- Mailboxes with names
- Door decorations
- A mini garden, shared washing line, or scooter parking
- Rules on a signboard (e.g. “Respect quiet time,” “Clean up after your pet”)

These details open a discussion about cooperation, boundaries, respect, and how we share public and private space.

Stories

Each group invents short scenarios from the building:

- A neighbour plays loud music late at night—what happens next?
- Someone waters everyone’s plants during the holidays
- A resident organises a clean-up or celebration day

These stories allow pupils to practice empathy and peaceful conflict resolution.

Presentation

Each group presents their block of flats and explains:

- How it is structured
- Who lives there and what the shared areas are like
- What values their model promotes (e.g. care, fairness, responsibility)

Tips:

Encourage pupils to think of both the physical space and the human stories.

Ask:

- “How would it feel to live here?”
- “What can we do to improve life for everyone in the building?”
- “Is there something we all have to take care of?”



Additional Considerations:

Differentiation:

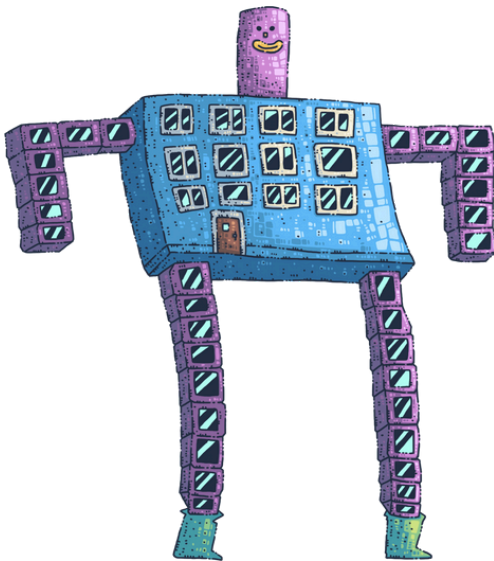
Provide additional support or simplified instructions for pupils who may require extra assistance. For advanced pupils, offer extension tasks such as researching further sustainable practices or designing more complex models.

Assessment:

Assess pupils based on their participation and engagement during discussions and hands-on activities. Evaluate the creativity, effort, collaboration, depth of understanding demonstrated in their models, critical thinking, ability to provide constructive feedback and presentation skills.

Extension Activities:

- Interview someone who lives in a block of flats
- Plan a shared event for the whole building
- Discuss how buildings can be made more eco-friendly (e.g. recycling bins, bike racks, green walls)



Curriculum Connections:

This activity integrates:

Civic Education (*community living, respect, participation*)

Social Studies (*cooperation, shared responsibility*)

Art (*design, creativity, construction*)

Language (*storytelling, discussion, presentation skills*)

Mathematics (*spatial awareness, measurement*)

SDG Connections:

- **SDG 1:** No Poverty – Pupils reflect on housing as a basic human need.
- **SDG 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities – Pupils explore how people live together in shared spaces.
- **SDG 12:** Responsible Consumption and Production – Pupils reuse materials and think about shared resource use.
- **SDG 16:** Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions – Pupils resolve small-scale conflicts and promote fair rules.