

Introduction to Green Playces Sites

Main Lesson Objective: Understanding Green Playces as a repurposed space. Understanding GTECH’s process and how this playce was developed.

Number of students/adults	Goal of 1 adult to 15 kids max
Age of students	Middle school ages
Length of each session	60 minutes
Focus	Environment
Background knowledge	Assuming providers have no background knowledge
Season	Can be used during any season
Resources	Minimal cost and easily accessible

Supplies: Minimal cost and easily accessible

(all copies can be made on paper, downloaded to a device, or shown on the website, if teacher has access to a computer or tablet. If students have a cell phone and data plan, they could also be allowed to pull up the website to view on their personal device.)

- ✚ Packet of Green Playces Materials (attached)
 - Blog
 - Overview
 - Pictures of playces
- ✚ Paper (lined and/or plain)
- ✚ Pens/pencils

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn about GTECH’s process for repurposing vacant space
- Identify positive elements about the PLAYces
- Make alternate suggestions for using the PLAYce

Prior to lesson, teacher should:

- Become familiar with GTECH Strategies Green PLAYces Initiative by materials provided.
- Know what is being presented to students in Background of GTECH section.
- Know what the specific space was before it was repurposed. (Teacher can look at the GTECH website [Projects page](#) to familiarize themselves with the particular project spaces. Before and after pictures are available.)
- Gather all needed materials and know their intended purpose.

Lesson Overview:

1. **Warm-up** (8 minutes)
 - Welcome students to the Green PLAYce
 - Have students note positive/pleasing elements.
 - Turn and talk to share with peer.
2. **Introduction to New Material** (10 minutes)
 - Discuss GTECH and Green PLAYces Initiative
3. **Pre-Activity** (10 minutes)
 - Divide paper into sections
 - I do – teacher demonstration
4. **Activity** (20 minutes) (Guided and Independent practice)
 - Guide students through brainstorming list of ways to use the space in a different way.
5. **Wrap-up** (10-15 minutes)
 - Present ideas for alternate uses of the PLAYce

Detailed Lesson Plan:

1. Warm-up (8 minutes)

- Once in the Green PLAYce, allow students the opportunity to naturally find a place to sit (Ask them to find a place to sit). Don't give direction on where to sit
- Once seated, welcome students to the Green PLAYce.
- Ask them to take a short walk (~3 minutes) around the space, noting the elements that are positive or pleasing to them. "Look for things that may go unnoticed, e.g. mulch, art work, seating arrangement, etc. Find your favorite area of the PLAYce."
- Once they have some ideas, ask them to turn and talk to share with a nearby peer.
- Depending on time and size of group, take a few responses or all responses. See if there were any similarities between students.

2. Introduction to New Material (10 minutes)

- Provide students with **background of the PLAYce** that they are in. "This space was vacant and had overgrown grass and a lot of trash in it."
 - Ask students, "What is a vacant space?"
 - Take responses.
 - Tell them "many vacant spaces in Pittsburgh are abandoned, are overgrown, and full of trash. They typically have no housing structure on it. No one lives there. It is empty."
 - "The City of Pittsburgh contains over 27,000 empty, blighted lots."
 - Ask, "What do you think would happen if instead of these empty lots we saw 27,000 play spaces, parks, rain gardens, or public art installations?"
 - Take responses.
 - Make possible suggestions: "It would improve people's perceptions about neighborhoods. It could help bring back businesses to those areas. Kids would have a safe place to have fun, etc."
- Show **before pictures** for the site that they are in.
- While students are looking at pictures, give summarized GTECH background info
 - **Background of GTECH: See GTECH Background**
 - **Background of Program: See Green Playces One Pager**
 - Introduce partners for Green Playce (e.g. Propel, Bible Center) and talk about the importance of teamwork/ partnerships.
- **Share the blog with students:** [Community-driven Design isn't just for adults](#)
 - Share and summarize the steps mentioned in the blog for how this PLAYce where they are was transformed.
 - Step 1: Ask the Kids ("What would you do with this space?")
 - Step 2: Make it real (vote on ideas)
 - Step 3: GTECH architect comes up with design themes (from votes)

Lesson Plan

- Step 4: Call in the “Adults” (community members, funders and neighborhood leaders)
 - Step 5: Final Design Concept (Designers put together final concept)
 - Step 6: Build (Schedule work days to build design, utilizing community volunteers)
 - **Show after pictures** (part of blog, but may find more on website)
3. **Pre-Activity** (10 mins)
- Guide students through brainstorming a list of ways to use the space in a new or different way.
 - Tell students that **now they are going to be the designers**. Tell them that GTECH has asked you for their feedback and wants to know what they did well and what you would do to improve this space.
 - **Distribute paper and pens/pencils.**
 - Teacher demonstrates the ‘I do’ portion of guided practice.
 - **Teacher can either:**
 - have paper divided into 4 sections (headings can be listed or students can fill in the headings,
 - guide students through dividing their paper into 4 sections and filling in the headings,
 - or allow students to completely do this step independently.
 - The 4 section headings would be: **Keep (Positive - something I like/love)**, **What’s Missing? (What would make this Playce even better?)**, **Change (Something that could be improved)**, and **Notes**.
 - Give some simple suggestions as necessary - e.g. “I would keep the log seating, but I would put it in a circle instead of a semi-circle”. Then fill in this example on teachers paper in appropriate section.
4. **Activity** (20 minutes) (Guided and Independent practice)
- Ask students to once again move around the space.
 - Ask them to **make detailed observations, illustrations, and notes** about what they would **keep (positive - something they like/love)**, what they would **add (missing - something they would like to see)**, and what they would **do in a different way (something that could be improved)**.
 - Encourage students to think of as many options as possible.
 - If time, have students draw out what new and improved space would look like.
5. **Wrap-up** (10-15 minutes)
- **Present ideas** for alternate uses of the playce, and what they think is missing, as well as their favorite part of the existing space.