

# History in Literature

Tiffany Clark

Our place in Time –Urbana local history  
Overview of what may have been here before us

The children should begin to recognize that they are part of a living, ongoing history. They are the latest chapter in our town's book.

## Materials:

The House on Maple Street  
By Bonnie Pryor  
New York: Mulberry Books, 1987  
A Teacup and Arrowhead

## Supplemental Extension Materials:

Who Came Down That Road?  
By George Lyon  
New York: Orchard Books, 1992  
Our House  
By Emma and Paul Rogers  
Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 1993  
Home Place  
Crescent Dragonwagon  
New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1990  
Long Ago and Today A Home Album  
By Peter Roop  
Illinois: Heinemann Library, 1999  
Prairie Town  
By Bonnie and Arthur Geisert  
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998  
A Street Through Time  
By Dr. Anne Millard  
New York: DK Publishing

Rationale: After having doing the map lesson so children can see how the area has changed, I wanted to bring it home. Literally. We will be looking at a specific piece of land and how it has changed over time by reading this book. The follow up should include speculation of what was on the land where their home stands now. This lesson is a bridge between general and personal history.

Purpose Setting: Pull out an old teacup and arrowhead for the children to see. Explain that it was found in my garden when I was planting a Lilac bush. (Make up your own story if it suits you better) Have the children write about how they think it got there. Prompt: Write a page story speculating why I found this teacup and arrowhead in my yard last year. How did it get there? Who left it? Why? Tell the story of these artifacts.

Read the book *The House on Maple Street* to the children. This is a simple whole class read aloud and discussion. Question the children to have them draw conclusions about the changes that went on and how we know that. Again, the discussion and questioning are the critical elements of this lesson.

Questions should include (but not be limited to):

- What changes happened?
- When did it start looking like something modern?
- What new technologies did you see?
- How many different groups of people lived on this spot?
- Why do you think the groups of people choose this spot?
- Which one of the past eras would you like to live in?
- What might have been at the location where your home is?
- Have you ever found any evidence of people before you?

Assessment is taken from discussion. It is mostly for my benefit. Do the children understand the concepts well enough or do we need to do another lesson? Any of the books listed under “supplemental materials” can be used as further practice and extension.