



Inside **OUT MY WINDOW** Exploring Urbanization

Out My Window: Interactive Views From The Global Highrise provides students with an opportunity to look *in* the window of selected highrise apartments and see and hear the people who live inside. It also gives students the opportunity to join those people in looking *out* those same windows at a variety of urban settings that reflect the process of urbanization, one of the defining features of our day. The 360-degree interactive “documentary” invites students to hear the stories of those who dwell in the highrises of four of these cities, too. This personalizes larger issues of urbanization and helps students move from a consideration of the particular to the general. The following activities are intended to help students explore the hopes and challenges of the inhabitants of highrises and the causes and consequences of the urbanization phenomena.

Getting started:

Firstly, students are invited to go to outmywindow.nfb.ca and watch the **Out My Window** web stories from the four cities for which there are learning activities in this guide: Havana, São Paulo, Phnom Penh and Toronto. They will also find a “How-to” demo there, to show them how to navigate the **Out My Window** website. Students can select a city or individual to investigate by clicking on a world map, a collage of highrise apartments or the portrait of an apartment dweller. Once inside the selected apartment, students can use the drag-and-click feature to look into the daily lives of the inhabitants.

After viewing stories on the main **Out My Window** website, students should go to the **Inside Out My Window: Global Education Lab** website. This site features four selected collage interface screens where they can explore the four cities via hidden pop-up text capsules, which serve as sidebars that students can search while a counter tracks their findings. These pop-up text capsules contain interesting facts related to the images, as well as links to relevant NFB films. The capsules are intended as a catalyst for students to investigate relevant topics in greater depth and enrich their learning experience. This guide offers teaching suggestions and activities that help students to further explore the information presented in **Out My Window** and in the pop-up capsules.

The following activities have been designed to teach global issues. They will help students discover the hopes and challenges of the inhabitants of highrises around the world, as well as the causes and effects of urbanization.

Collectively, the activities support curricula related to global citizenship. Individually, the activities assist in the exploration of curriculum outcomes related to topics such as economic and cultural globalization, sustainable development and the limits to growth, social justice and human rights – topics central to courses in World Studies, Geography, Economics and Political Science. The technology represented by **Out My Window** also presents an opportunity to explore a variety of topics and outcomes common to courses in Media Studies, Media Literacy and Visual Arts.

The curriculum links below are identified because of the content of these particular courses. Process outcomes such as critical thinking, creative and collaborative problem-solving, decision-making, research and effective use of technology are relevant to most subject areas. **Out My Window** provides many opportunities for students to develop these skills. As foundational technology skills become increasingly important in our society, students will be expected to apply them in authentic, integrated ways to solve problems.

The activities consist of two sections.

Section 1 – Looking In uses stories to teach about various people and issues and may be adapted as required for grades 7–12.

Section 2 – A Window on the World uses case studies to investigate broad issues related to the rise of cities as a global phenomenon. It is appropriate for grades 10–12.

Four **Out My Window** web-stories for discussion:

1. Havana – Cuba
2. São Paulo – Brazil
3. Phnom Penh – Cambodia
4. Toronto – Canada

Disclaimer:

Please note, some of the interactive locations in this guide contain explicit language and references to mature subjects. Please visit and interact with the site before integrating material into your lesson plans. Furthermore, this interactive tool connects with unmonitored global Flickr feeds, which can result in inappropriate findings if the facilitator does not carefully instruct students on how to use the site. Please consult your department or administrative privacy policy regarding the use of images that may include your students before use.

Classroom Use:

1. Experience the **Out My Window** website as a group (with one computer, in a group setting). Using a projector or large screen, facilitators can explore the site with a group and focus the discussion on a particular subject. The facilitator can ask for suggestions while exploring the site together with the students.
2. Experience **Out My Window** in small groups or individually (on multiple computers). If multiple computers are available, facilitators can allow students to explore the website individually using a predetermined set of objectives.

Closing:

After completion of the **Out My Window** exercise, students can reconvene with the entire group and discuss their thoughts. The results can be briefly presented, or an activity can be assigned (written exercises, artistic interpretations, crafts, further online interaction with the Participate portion of the site, etc.).

Havana, Cuba

Modules

- a. **Alamar** – Information on public housing projects
- b. **Cradle of Hip Hop** – Music creation
- c. **360° Music Video**
- d. **Underground Music Festival**
- e. **Wing of the Sea** – Nature surrounding public housing

a. Alamar

* NOTE: This section of the site contains explicit language. *

Description:

We learn from **Alamar** about project-housing – the conditions, connections and realities of this “New Man’s” land.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

After watching the **Alamar** clip, students can write their thoughts on their own living conditions. What do you see when you look out of the windows where you sleep at night? Do you know how your building was constructed? What materials make up your home? What construction materials were used to build your living area – modern or traditional ones? Why was your neighbourhood built? What are the safety or security concerns within your neighbourhood? What are some of the realities that you have in common with other students?

Subject Links: Technology Education (Construction Technology, Communication Technology), Social Studies (Global/World Issues) and Humanities (Geography, Modern History, Political Science)

b. Cradle of Hip Hop

Description:

The roots of hip hop are deeply entrenched in the Cuban experience. From this perspective, we get a glimpse of the importance of hip-hop culture in and around Alamar.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

After watching the **Cradle of Hip Hop** clip, students may engage in a creative poetry writing session. Can you write about a significant musical experience through poetry? Do you know the historical significance behind your favourite music genre?

Subject Links: Language Arts, Arts (Music, Dance)



d. Underground Music Festival

Description:

Music. Culture. Creation. Expression. Sharing. This clip discusses the difficulty in celebrating music publicly in Alamar.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Discuss the topic of Music. Do you have the freedom to express yourself musically in your neighbourhood or school? How many different genres of music do you know? How many different instruments can you name? Can we all connect musically? Music is one language that is universal – is that because of musical factors, or biological factors (i.e., the human heart beat and pulse connection to frequency distribution in musical composition)? Has technology helped music creation, or harmed it? What is the historical background of musical creation – public performance, the cassette tape, the phonographic record, the compact disc, MPEG player 3 (MP3), FLAC files and other forms of technology?

Subject Links: Arts (Music), Social Studies (World/Global Issues), Communications

Pop-up capsule activity: SOUND OFF or WORD UP

Many of those who opposed the US's involvement in the Vietnam War relied on music to reach their audience. In groups, prepare presentations for the class in which you introduce some of the leading artists involved in the struggle, play representative songs and analyze their lyrics.

Subject Links: Arts (Music), English Language Arts, Communications, Social Studies (World/Global Issues), History

e. Wing of the Sea

Description:

Nature. Beauty. Breathing. Meditation. This clip describes a spiritual connection to nature through physical connectedness.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Explore nature in your area. How is the nature in your surroundings different from the nature shown in this clip? Discuss humanity – does spirituality divide or connect people? What about religion? Discuss astrology. How do planetary cycles connect with different aspects of human existence? Are we connected to the earth at all?

Subject Links: Health and Science, World Religion, Mathematics



- a. **Highrise Squat** – Squatting in an unoccupied apartment complex
- b. **Everybody's Baby** – “Community,” an adopted baby
- c. **Neighbours** – Community living/sharing/squatting
- d. **Picture of my Past/Future** – Past, present, poverty

a. Highrise Squat

Description:

The Prestes Maia was the largest vertically squatted building in South America, serving as home to over 400 families. This clip depicts some of the harsh realities of squatting as it relates to this particular building in Brazil.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Discuss the resources available in your country to lower income families. Make a list of all of the social structural benefits that you can access based on where you live. What is squatting? Is it legal?

Subject Links: Family Studies, Technology Education (Design and Drafting)

b. Everybody's Baby

Description:

A mother with a drug problem drops her baby off to be taken care of by a community for a couple of nights. She never returns.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

In groups, draw a timeline displaying the results of substance abuse on the human body, using pictures or lists of statements. Which drugs have the most transformational effect on the brain, breathing, physical ability, etc.? What are the consequences of substance abuse? What are the effects of casual use?

Subject Links: Health, Social Studies (Global/World Issues), Family Studies



c. Neighbours

Description:

This clip introduces the Downtown Homeless Movement, a group responsible for the reclamation of over 30 buildings since 1998, and one of its women leaders – Ivaneti.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Write scripts in groups discussing what a typical community meeting would sound like, if members in the group lived in the same living area. Be prepared to present your community meeting at the end of this session. What happens in your community at home? Is a community made up of only one culture? What are the differences between a community and a culture?

Subject Links: Language Arts, Communications, Media Literacy, Social Studies (World/Global Studies)

d. Picture of My Past/Future

Description:

Pictures help Ivaneti to connect with her present, by reconnecting with her and her mother's past to gain insight into how their future may look.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Bring pictures into the classroom of you as a child. Write about why this particular photograph is important to you. How does this picture connect with your past and present and future? Post students' pictures up in a collective area so everybody can share stories.

Subject Links: Media Literacy/Studies, Family Studies



- a. **Live/Work** – Construction working conditions
- b. **Horn Reborn** – Life after the Khmer Rouge regime
- c. **I Call Him Nephew** – Group construction living
- d. **Khmer Style** – Perspective on modern living

a. Live/Work

Description:

Worker Horn describes her lifestyle as a construction worker, in which the lines between living and working are indistinct.

Level: Grades 10–12

Activity:

In groups, make a list of the preferred occupations of all group members. Allow each member to describe the importance of their selected occupation as it relates to their own lifestyle. Would you like to work to live, or live to work? Where would your job be located relative to your home? What would your life be like if your place of work was the same as your place of rest?

Subject Links: Social Studies, Business Studies

b. Horn Reborn

Description:

Horn describes her beautiful surroundings, as seen from her elevated view of the city, as she remembers that she is a survivor of the Khmer Rouge regime, responsible for over 2 million deaths.

Level: Grades 9–12

Activity:

In groups, research and record the history of Cambodia, specifically the Khmer Rouge regime. What happened during this time period? What were some of the reasons behind the deaths of over 2 million people?

Subject Links: History, Social Studies (Global/World Issues) and Humanities



c. I Call Him Nephew

Description:

Working with a group of people is sometimes challenging, particularly when you are living with the same individuals and dealing with different lifestyles and personalities. Tola, a.k.a. Nephew, describes his take on the life that he has in Phnom Penh.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Individually create a family tree that stems as far back as you can remember. Try to group the tree relative to the members of the family that you live with, and connect other branches with people whom you consider your family. These people do not necessarily have to be tied to you by blood. Who is your family? How do you define family? What are the reasons behind Tola's idea of family? Where does he live? Tola is known by Horn as Nephew; how do those two connect as a family?

Subject Links: Economics, Family Studies

d. Khmer Style

Description:

Tola recollects his decision to pursue construction as opposed to an educational path. While recalling his past, he compares life under the Khmer Rouge regime with his current situation.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Draw a concept map (a two-dimensional graphic display of textual ideas in nodes) outlining how far you believe your current educational journey will take you. Try and extend out to many possibilities, to see what your full range of options is.

Subject Links: Social Studies (World/Global Issues), Humanities (Modern History), Arts (Visual Arts, Arts and Design)



- a. Yak** – The nature of Toronto
- b. My Music** – The Dranyen
- c. 360° Music Video**
- d. 1000 Towers** – Tenant rights

a. Yak

Description:

Amchok describes his view of the differences between Tibet and the West, taking the Tibetan yak as a starting point. He recounts his childhood.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Individually, or in groups, students can select an animal that represents some sort of change in their lives. This can relate to a moving experience or a situation where a major life change has taken place. Compare the results. What does your view of family involve? What materials were used to construct the building where you live? Do animals understand the effect that humans are having on the planet? Why did Amchok relate to the land through the yak?

Subject Links: Social Studies and Humanities (Geography)

b. My Music

Description:

Amchok describes his connection to life through his *dranyen* (lute). He is thankful for many experiences and describes the importance that music signifies in his life.

Level: Grades 7–12

Activity:

Make a list of the different instruments that the classroom collectively can play. From there, try and find some links to songs that most people can play on their instrument. Organize an event to celebrate music in your classroom. Allow each musician to explain the significance of their instrument to their lives. Those who don't play can clap and describe the significance of music to their lives.

Subject Links: Arts (Music), World Religion

d. 1000 Towers

Description:

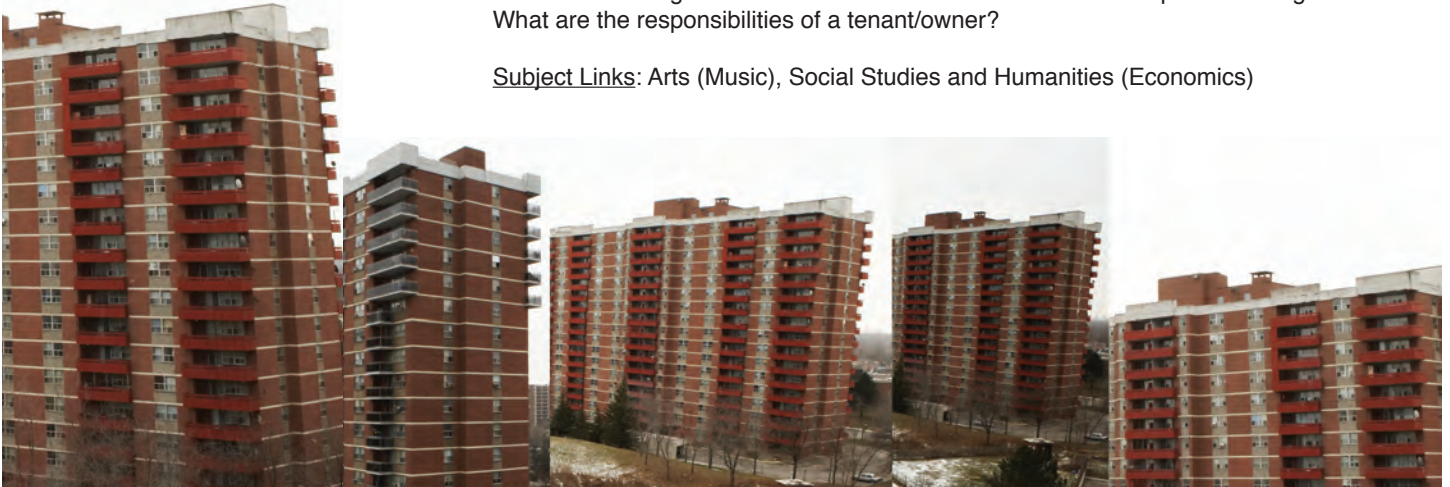
McCandy describes his love for drumming and describes his struggle to find a home in Toronto, where there is a shortage of subsidized housing.

Level: Grades 10–12

Activity:

Discuss tenant rights. What actions can lead to eviction from a place of living? What are the responsibilities of a tenant/owner?

Subject Links: Arts (Music), Social Studies and Humanities (Economics)



Section 2

A Window on the World



The Basis of Life – Food, Water and Energy

Students

• Examine the concept of urban communities as “nested ecosystems” that represent a web of production and consumption analogous to a natural ecosystem. Compare:

- 1) The requirements for both types of ecosystems (soil, water, energy) and their source;
- 2) The interdependence in each ecosystem;
- 3) The by-products of each ecosystem (waste) and their impact on the ecosystem.

• Construct graphs to compare the average urban footprint (average amount of land, water, fossil fuels required to maintain an individual) in selected cities.

• Discuss the concept of the “hinterland” – the region of land (local or global) needed to provide a city with required resources.

• Describe the impact of urbanization on surrounding farmlands, wetlands, green spaces, air and water.

• Identify the problems of inadequate urban draining and sewage systems on local and regional water systems.

• Explain the following diagram (circular cause-and-effect format):

Urbanization – Consumption of Productive Land – Less Food – Displaced agriculture workers – Migration to city – Urbanization

Urbanization, Cultural Diversity and Homogeneity (McWorld)

Students

- Identify the mix of cultures represented in the Toronto highrise, making reference to furnishings, music, food, entertainment and art.
- Identify within the Toronto profile the tensions between efforts to maintain traditional culture and the culture of the adopted country, making reference to such examples as religious or spiritual activities, birth rituals and the use of henna.
- Outline the relative advantages in each of the following policies in response to ethnic migration:
 - 1) Integration;
 - 2) Assimilation;
 - 3) Separation.
- Discuss examples of a creating a sense of neighbourhood and of extended family as a response to the city's lack of support, as seen in São Paulo's "Everybody's Baby" and "Community."
- Compare the view that Amchok had from his Tibetan tent with the one that he now has from his Toronto Highrise.
- Examine the role of music as an agent for unity and cultural continuity, as illustrated by McCandy in Cambodia's "1000 Towers," as an agent for political protest, as illustrated by David's efforts in Havana, and as an example of globalization in "Cradle of Hip Hop."
- Indicate what suggests that Horn is living in an Asian city when she looks out the window of her apartment in Phnom Penh.
- Indicate how the vignette "Horn Reborn" offers evidence that both the city and the individual serve as symbols of rebirth, of new beginnings.
- Debate the extent to which architectural features in selected cities represent evidence of cultural homogeneity.

The Web of Economic Integration

Students

- Identify the push-pull factors that lead to urbanization, making reference to Tola in Phnom Penh, Amchok in Toronto and Horn in Phnom Penh.
- Research the global and local hinterlands that supply selected cities.
- Examine the concept of "rust belts" in North America and the movement of jobs to other cities in the developing world because of labour costs, environmental regulations, and improvements in transportation and communication.
- Compare and contrast the settlement pattern in urban centres in the developed and developing world by noting where the wealthy and the poor live in each case. (Developed World – wealthy in suburbs and poor in inner city; Developing World – wealthy in city, poor in barrios on fringe.)

Sustainable Communities

Students

- Explore the concept of sustainable communities, making reference to the economic, environmental and social conditions that are required for healthy communities.
- Provide examples from selected cities of how the growth of city populations and the inability of the city to provide the necessary infrastructure (water, sewage, education, housing and policing) represent unsustainable growth.
- Research and develop charts that illustrate birth rates, mortality rates, education levels and income in selected cities. Relate these to the concept of sustainable communities.
- Outline the environmental impact of the following factors relating to the growth of suburbs on agricultural land:
 - 1) Road construction
 - 2) Use of fossil fuels
 - 3) Loss of green space

And discuss the effectiveness of the creation of greenbelts to check suburban growth.

- Measure the requirements of sustainable communities against the descriptions of the quality of housing in McCandy's Toronto and the renewal projects therein; David's housing project in Havana; the "Highrise Squat" movement in São Paulo.
- Examine the efforts at urban revitalization in São Paulo as outlined in "Pictures of My Past and Future."

Media Education and the Digital Community

Students

- Evaluate the **Out My Window** documentary project as an effective means of educating viewers about the causes and consequences of urbanization.
- Evaluate the documentary as a means to educate the participants about their lives and those of their neighbours, and to help effect change in their lives.
- Discuss why David in Havana referred to the highrise in which he lived as “their space” and as “the underground.”
- Debate the extent to which the Alamar in Havana is a symbol of both the success and failure of the Cuban Revolution.
- Write an editorial in which one argues that the Highrise Squat movement in São Paulo is an example of direct democracy

Gender Issues

Students

- Write an article entitled “Women as Agents of Social Change,” in which you use the examples of the:
 - 1) Female construction worker in Phom Penh;
 - 2) Downtown Homeless Movement led by the women from the squats in São Paulo;
 - 3) Revitalization efforts represented by Pictures of my Past and Future in São Paulo.
- Discuss the apparent absence of fathers and male role models in the Toronto highrise and the possible effects this might have on the children in this community.



PHOTOGRAPHY

HAVANA
SAO PAULO

Lazaro Saavedra
Julio Bittencourt
Titiana Cardeal Furlaneto – Additional Photography

PHNOM PENH
TORONTO

Martin Potter
Jaime Hogge
Kate Schneider – Additional Photography

Notes on Screening NFB Films

We have provided web links to NFB films, available online, relating to topics and issues raised in the pop-up text capsules within the visual screens of **Inside OUT MY WINDOW**. We encourage students and youth to view these films at <NFB.ca> on their own. However, educators will need to purchase a subscription to <NFB.ca> to show online NFB films to students as a group on educational institution premises. The subscription to **NFB.ca** ensures that you have public performance rights. Click here at <NFB.ca/education>, to find out more about purchasing a subscription for institutional usage.