1. Building the World's Fair
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In 1935, New York City decided to hold a World's Fair in an area of Queens called the Corona dumps. The Corona dumps were wastelands with mountains of rotting garbage and marshes.

Changing this ugly site into a park was a big job. Workers had to flatten the garbage heaps, fill in the swamps and change the direction of the Flushing River. They had to build new lakes and ponds, and put down topsoil. Then gardeners planted 10,000 trees and millions of flowers.

After the grounds were ready, the workers began to construct the 200 buildings that would show the Fair's exhibits, including the Trylon and Perisphere. These became landmarks. By the time that the World's Fair opened on April 30, 1939, the old Corona dumps had been transformed into a fantasy world of trees, flowers, and beautiful buildings.
HERE YOU ARE IN QUEENS 50 YEARS AGO. WHAT IS THE MAN SAYING? TELL US IN THE BUBBLES.
2. Time Sequence

Here are five pictures of the building of the World’s Fair. They show different activities.

Can you put them in the proper time order? After you have put them in the right order, explain why you did it that way.

Photos are courtesy of the Museum of the City of New York: The Wurtz Collection; the LaGuardia Archives; and Flushing Meadows Improvement.
3. Learning About Maps

Fiorello H. LaGuardia Archives
LaGuardia Community College
of The City University of New York
31-10 Thomson Avenue, Long Island City, New York 11101
1. What river does the Queens-Midtown Tunnel cross?

2. Name two bridges that connect Queens and Manhattan.

3. How many miles is the Queensboro Bridge from the World's Fair grounds?

4. What direction is LaGuardia Airport from Manhattan?

5. How would you go from LaGuardia Airport to the World's Fair?
6. What neighborhood is north of Sunnyside?

7. List the bodies of water on the map.

8. What neighborhoods border the World's Fair?

9. When was this map made?

10. How did the Triborough Bridge get its name?
I. Introduction

This guide is designed to complement the 4th grade Social Studies curriculum in local history. This guide provides an interesting review of the physical growth of Queens, and lets students know that what is going on in their neighborhoods is history.

You may use this guide either: 1) early in the school year, as part of the section about boroughs (unit 1, chapter 1) in the textbook *New York Then & Now* or 2) later in the school year, as part of the section about transportation (unit 6, chapter 18) in the textbook.

You will find a copy of the LaGuardia Archives calendar, "The Fair of the Future," in the guide. This calendar examines the conception, construction, and popular appeal of the World's Fair. You may want to use this calendar to explain the Fair to your students. For instance, you can point out that the businessmen and civic leaders who decided to hold a Fair needed a very large area to build it and that the ash dumps of Corona Queens were a perfect site. To help today's children understand the idea of a World's Fair, you may want to compare the Fair to Disney World or EPCOT Center.
Like the Fair, these Florida attractions are popular spectacles and feature the latest technology.

II. BUILDING THE WORLD'S FAIR EXERCISE

This is a reading comprehension exercise. The three paragraphs on the left-hand side provide a narrative history of the construction of the World's Fair. To do this exercise, students need to comprehend and summarize the narrative passage and to understand pictures.

You may have to pre-teach some of the difficult words, such as "wastelands," "marshes," "landmarks," and "transformed."

Have the students read the narrative. Then ask them to turn to the cartoon on the right-hand side and describe the construction of the Fair, in their own words, by writing on the sheet.

III. Time Sequence Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to help students put events in a logical sequence and to understand cause and effect. This exercise consists of five photographs and the sheet labeled Time Sequence.

This exercise has two questions. The first question asks the students to put the five photographs in the proper time order. Ask your students to write the numeral "one" on the back of the earliest photograph, the numeral "two" on the back of the second earliest photograph, etc.
There is no single "right" answer. The correctness comes in the logic of their explanations and its match to their ordering of the photos. Most schoolchildren who complete this exercise do, in fact, choose the following order: 1) the photograph of the railroad car dumping debris; 2) the photograph of the three men looking at the map; 3) the workers; 4) the unfinished Fair; and 5) the crowds. This sequence traces the planning process from the original site to the final product. Yet other combinations are also possible. In a trial exercise, for instance, some children put the photo of the planners ahead of the picture of the dumps. In their view, the planning of the Fair started before a site was selected. This was equally correct.

The second question asks the children to explain why they put the photographs in a particular order. Use their question to familiarize students with cause and effect. You may want to point out, for instance, that the planning of the Fair had to precede its construction.

IV. Learning About Maps Exercise

This exercise aims to help students locate information on maps, read symbols in the map key, and familiarize them with important Queens landmarks.

You may want to pre-teach some of the words used in this exercise, such as "bodies of water" and "neighborhoods." You may also need to explain that the Triborough Bridge's name reflects the fact that it links the boroughs of Manhattan, the Bronx, and Queens.
Review the two maps of Queens. Familiarize your students with the map key. Ask them to answer the questions by writing on the sheet.

V. Additional Enrichment Information for Teachers

You may have an opportunity to point out that in the photograph of the three planners, the figure on the right is Fiorello H. LaGuardia, New York’s 99th mayor (from 1933 to 1945) and the man for whom LaGuardia airport is named. In the photograph of the Trylon and Perisphere under construction, you may want to explain that the road in the foreground is Grand Central Parkway, an access highway that enabled motorists to reach the Fairgrounds and that opened much of central and eastern Queens for residential development. Use the construction photo to tell your students that New Deal public works programs like the Works Progress Administration and the Public Works Administration provided jobs during the great depression and completed highways, airports, and post offices.

VI. Questions

If you have any questions or comments about this guide or want more information about the 1939-40 World’s Fair, please contact Dr. Richard K. Lieberman, Director, LaGuardia Archives, LaGuardia Community College, 31-10 Thomson Avenue, Long Island City, NY 11101. (718) 482-5065.