

HISTORY OF THIS SPOT /MAP YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Objectives

- Students will share a favorite place with the group
- Students will reflect on what makes a place important or meaningful
- Students will research and share the history of their favorite spot
- Students will reflect on who and what was there before

Materials needed

- Scrap paper and markers

Activity

The themes of place, the past and ancestors are important ideas in the play *Alma*.

1. Ask the students to think about their favorite place in Southern California. It can be anywhere they like to go and spend time – their room, the beach, a place to get coffee. Anywhere they love to be in Southern California.
2. Pass out scrap paper and pens.
3. Invite the students to draw or somehow visually represent that place on paper. You do not need to draw well! Draw anything that represents the place for you.
4. Using the school as the center of the map, ask students to place their drawings to the north, south, east or west of the school around the space. Geography doesn't have to be exact, just their best guess!
5. Take a walking tour of the space and stop at each drawing to learn more about it from the artist. Who is the artist? Where is the place? Why do you love this place? Why does it matter to you?
6. Ask the group: Does anyone know the history of your favorite place? Do you know what was there before? Do you know who was there before? If you don't know and you are curious, research the history of your place. See what you can discover.
7. Ask the group: Do you know the history of the land where our school is? What was here before? Who are the original inhabitants of the land? This could be a great research project for the class.

While you watch the play *Alma*, notice how the ideas of land, place and ancestors are woven into the story. How does the past impact the lives of the characters we meet in the play?