

Immigrant Architecture

How did architecture constructed for immigrants to Chicago help remind them of buildings in their homeland?

Theme

This lesson challenges students to carefully observe four community structures associated with Chicago immigrants and to see those buildings as a reflection of the people who came from different regions of the world.

Student Objectives

- hypothesize what immigrants might be feeling when they come to a new country and why the structures they built made them feel more comfortable
- locate the four countries discussed in this lesson on a world map
- compare historic and modern photographs of four Chicago-area structures with similar structures from around the world

Activities

- make a list of five things students would take in their suitcase if they were moving to a new country
- complete **Handouts A–D**
- design and draw pictures (or build a model of) a new American school in an international city

Type

- indoor, desktop activities
- *optional*: field trip extensions

Timeframe

four class sessions of 40 minutes each, plus time to research, draw pictures or build a model

Materials

- **Handout A** - St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral, Chicago
- **Handout B** - Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, Chicago
- **Handout C** - Midwest Buddhist Temple, Chicago
- **Handout D** - Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago, Northbrook
- **Handout E** - map showing the four sites
- **Handout F** - architectural vocabulary words in Ukrainian and Spanish
- **Handout G** - architectural vocabulary words in Japanese and Arabic
- a world map or globe
- small slips of paper, each listing an international city
- a “hat” for students to draw these slips of paper out of
- *optional model-building materials*: recycled cardboard boxes and containers, egg cartons, pipe cleaners, string, construction paper, crayons, scissors, glue



Vocabulary

immigrant a person who leaves one country and moves to another country

migrant a person who leaves one part of a country and moves to another part of the same country, usually to find work

cathedral the home church of the bishop who leads the area's churches

icon a picture of a saint

arch a curved structure over a door or window opening

cupola a small dome with windows, on top of the building

stained glass window glass of different colors in a window

cornerstone a large stone in the bottom corner of a building often carved with the date of the building and laid in a special ceremony

A.D. “Anno Domini”, Latin for “year of our Lord”; often written with the date in cornerstones

dome a large structure shaped like half a ball

bell tower a tower for church bells

Buddha Hall a large room where people gather together for worship in Buddhist temples

temple a building used for worship

roof a structure that covers the top of a building

side wing of building next to the main hall and under the roof

minaret a tall thin tower with small balcony, from which Muslims are called to prayer

mosque a building used for worship



Discussion Points

- Have your students ever been away from home or their families for a long period of time? What did they miss?
- Invite any students who have recently moved to Chicago from another city or country to share how they felt about coming here.
- What buildings look very different here?
- What things in Chicago remind them of their original home?
- What do they wish they could have brought with them?
- If they are lonely for their original home, what brings them comfort here?
- What similar shapes and forms can the students see in the immigrant-built structures in Chicago and the international structures?
- If the titles on the photographs in the handouts were covered up, could the students know which building was in Chicago and which was in another country? Why or why not?
- What clues made them think that way?
- Do students think these Chicago buildings made the immigrants feel more comfortable here? How?

Teacher Prep

- photocopy **Handouts A–D** (*one per student or student pair*)
- photocopy or scan **Handouts A–G** for display or projection
- prepare a “hat” containing names of international cities so that students can randomly select a city to research; try to choose cities with architectural traditions quite different from those of the United States (*one city per slip, one slip per student*)

Background Information for Teacher

Chicago is a city of immigrants and migrants. Since the city was incorporated in 1837, people from other areas of the United States and other countries around the world have come to this region seeking economic opportunities and political and religious freedoms. Construction of a religious center is often the most obvious way that an immigrant or migrant group expresses its identity in their new land. Such buildings give the group an opportunity to exclaim to the city, “Here we are” and “We are here to stay.” This lesson examines four of the boldest examples of buildings constructed in the Chicago area by or for immigrant populations. Regardless of where your school is located, you and your students will be able to find buildings that reflect a transplanted culture and place.

name and address of structure	homeland of first immigrants	year of completion
St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral 2238 West Rice Street, Chicago IL	Ukraine	1913
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church 3200 East 91 st Street, Chicago IL	Mexico	1928
Midwest Buddhist Temple 436 West Menomonee Street, Chicago IL	Japan	1971
Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago 1810 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook IL	Yugoslavia	1985

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral, 1913

Located in the Ukrainian Village neighborhood on Chicago's West Side, St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral stands as one of the city's most dramatic examples of immigrant architecture. Ukrainians began arriving in the city in the 1880s, and by 1913 this multi-domed church was completed at the corner of Rice Street and Oakley Boulevard. It was the first Ukrainian church in Chicago.

The Chicago architecture firm of Henry Worthmann and J.G. Steinbach designed the structure to be reminiscent of the 11th Century St. Sophia church in Ukraine's capital city of Kiev. Although St. Nicholas is not a literal copy of that church, it has many elements that would have reminded immigrants of their homeland. Here in Chicago, the cathedral's thirteen green copper "onion domes" rise more than 100 feet into the sky. These domes boldly stand out in stark contrast to the brick two-flats and three-flats of the surrounding neighborhood. The cathedral's cream-colored brick is accented with colorful tiles in zig-zag patterns. Beautiful mosaics and icons inside and outside the building help to tell a story about the history of the church. Pictures of the St. Sophia church in Kiev and the St. George church in Lviv (another large Ukrainian city) on the main arch above the front altar would remind members of their homeland each Sunday.

(Information obtained from the *Commemorative Book on the Occasion of the 75th Anniversary of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral Parish*. Chicago: n.p., 1981 and from *Chicago Churches and Synagogues: An Architectural Pilgrimage*, George A. Lane. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1981.)

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, 1928

Mexican immigrants began arriving in South Chicago neighborhoods before World War I to work on the railroads. Increasing numbers of Mexicans came to Chicago and settled around East 91st Street and Commercial Avenue, as the steel mills needed more workers. By 1923, Our Lady of Guadalupe was organized as the first Mexican-American church in the city. Their first building was a small white wooden frame chapel at 9024 South Mackinaw Street. Five years later, the congregation broke ground in February 1928 after raising \$150,000 for the construction of a new large brick church on East 91st Street. The cornerstone was laid on April 1, 1928, and by September the new building was completed and dedicated with more than 8,000 parishioners standing by.

As with many older religious structures in Chicago, Our Lady of Guadalupe was constructed on a corner site. Chicago architect James Burns designed the 77' x 135' building with dark reddish brick and white limestone that makes the walls look strong and massive. Although the design isn't a copy of a specific Mexican church, Our Lady of Guadalupe would have reminded the parishioners of Renaissance and Baroque period religious structures in their homeland. The flattened columns (called pilasters) on the front of building, the tall bell tower, and the rectangular shape with a heavy cornice are all details borrowed from 16th Century Mexican churches.

(Information obtained from *The New World*, February 10, 1928 and April 1, 1928; letter from Francis J. Lewis, Chicago, to George Cardinal Mundelein, Chicago, September 30, 1927, in the archives at the Archdiocese of Chicago; *Chicago, City of Neighborhoods: Histories and Tours*, Dominic A. Pacyga and Ellen Skerrett. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986.)



Interdisciplinary Connections

Language Arts

Students may research and present their findings on notable Chicagoans of various cultures who have come from other parts of the country and the world. Examples: Louis Armstrong (African-American musician); Dr. Hugo Muriel (Bolivian physician and Chicago Health Commissioner who was the first Latino appointed to a top city position); Anton Cermak (Czech-American mayor); and Theodore Thomas (German founder of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra).

Geography

Your class can research the regions of the world where Chicago immigrants in this lesson came from. Find out more about climates, landscapes, foods, flags, dances, holidays, religions, etc.

Language Arts

The City of Chicago has started a tradition of paying tribute to neighborhood leaders through honorary street names. These brown signs are posted above the green street signs that show the official name of the street. Students can investigate local signs and people, many of whom were migrants or immigrants, to find out why they were important to your neighborhood. Are there others in your neighborhood who should have a street named after them?

Foreign Languages

What languages do students in your classroom speak? Can they add words from their language to the list of architectural vocabulary words in this lesson? What local religious structures are connected to their homeland? Visit one of these sites and have students teach the rest of the class several new architectural vocabulary words in other languages.



Resources

AIA Guide to Chicago, 2nd ed., Alice Sinkevitch, ed. San Diego: Harcourt, 2004. A comprehensive guide to the city's architecture.

America's Architectural Roots: Ethnic Groups That Built America, Dell Upton, ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995.

Chicago Churches and Synagogues: An Architectural Pilgrimage, George A. Lane. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1981. An extremely helpful resource for learning about many local religious structures. Out of print, but your local library should have a copy.

Chicago, City of Neighborhoods: Histories & Tours, Dominic A. Pacyga and Ellen Skerrett. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986. An extremely helpful resource for studying any Chicago neighborhood. Out of print, but your local library should have a copy.

Ethnic Chicago: A Multicultural Portrait, 4th ed., Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994.

Midwest Buddhist Temple, 1971

Large numbers of Japanese-Americans began arriving in Chicago from the west coast and Japan after World War II. Census data quoted by historian Masako Osako in *Ethnic Chicago, A Multicultural Portrait*, lists only 390 people of Japanese origin living in Chicago in 1940. By the next census in 1950, that number jumped to 10,829.

In July 1944, Japanese members officially founded the Midwest Buddhist Temple at a community center on the city's south side. More than 25 years later, the congregation relocated to the Old Town neighborhood on the city's north side. The present temple was dedicated in November, 1971.

According to the congregation's history, local architect Hideaki Arao traveled to Japan to visit several historic Buddhist temples before designing this one in Chicago. Typically, a Japanese temple includes sliding wall panels constructed of thin wood and fiber materials, but Chicago's cold winters required an adapted design. The walls of the Midwest Buddhist Temple are constructed of wood, concrete, and stucco. Translucent glass windows let light into the space, but don't allow people to see in or out. The large sloping roof is framed with heavy wooden timbers. A shrine containing a large gold statue of Buddha stands in the front of the sanctuary. A social hall, library, kitchen, offices, and classrooms are located on the lower level of the building.

(Information obtained from *Chicago Churches and Synagogues: An Architectural Pilgrimage*, George A. Lane. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1981 and from *Ethnic Chicago: A Multicultural Portrait*, 4th ed., Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones, eds. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994.)

Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago, 1985

The Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago grew out of an early Muslim-American community that first gathered on North Halsted Street in Chicago in the mid 1950s. By 1979, the community had grown. The group moved their worship space to Northbrook, constructing a center that included a school, library, and offices. Similar to all immigrant groups who have come to Chicago, the Muslim community continued to grow, and new facilities were needed once again.

The architecture firm of Rowe & Johnson designed a new red brick mosque with a large dome and minaret at the Center's present site on Pfingsten Road in Northbrook. Today, the Center represents Muslims from many different ethnic groups, but most of the original members came from countries in the former Yugoslavia.

(Information obtained from Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago brochures and from telephone interviews with members and clergy.)

Activity Procedures

DAY ONE and DAY TWO

- 1** Ask students: If you were traveling to a completely different country to live permanently and could only take five personal things in your suitcase, what would they be? (You don't have to worry about food, clothes, or money as part of these five things.) Make a list. Why did you choose these things? Remember that you might not return to your homeland until you are very old. Did you choose to bring along things that remind you of home? Discuss the students' lists.
- 2** Distribute **Handouts A–D** to each student or student pair. Find the four countries on a world map (Ukraine, Mexico, Japan, and Yugoslavia) and mark them with a sticker. Use the Background Information and the map on **Handout E** to explain the history and location of each of the four Chicago-area buildings. Use the Discussion Points to make connections between the buildings and the items on the student lists. Have students study the photographs on the handouts and write their answers to the handout questions on another piece of paper. Discuss their findings as a class.
- 3** Display **Handouts F and G**. Talk through the architectural vocabulary words in English and in the other four languages. Help students pronounce all the words. Point out how letters or characters look unique in each language. Identify the architectural elements found in the photographs on **Handouts A–D**.

DAY THREE

- 4** Have your class imagine that their whole family or school class was moving to a new country where all the people around them would speak a different language and have different traditions. Have each student pull a slip of paper listing an international city out of the “hat” you have prepared. Explain to your class that they will be asked to design a new American school in their new country.
- 5** Over the next few days, students should research the new city and country they will be moving to. This will help give them a background before they “move” there. What do some of the famous buildings look like? What is the geography of the country? Have them gather pictures and make notes.

DAY FOUR

- 6** Have students design and draw pictures (or construct a model) for a new American school in their new city. Will their new school remind them of the United States? Why or why not? How? What symbols of the United States might the students want to incorporate? Or, will their structure blend in and try to look similar to the architecture of their new country? How and why?
- 7** Once students have finished drawing or constructing their models, discuss why their buildings look like they do.



Resources (continued)

The Swedish American Museum Center

The story of Swedish immigration featured in this northside Andersonville neighborhood is comparable to the experiences of other ethnic groups who came (and are still coming) to Chicago. Its Children's Museum of Immigration has hands-on activities and exhibits.

5211 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60640
773.728.8111

www.samac.org

Chicago has many other neighborhood museums that highlight the homelands and experiences of ethnic groups. See the list of museums in the Yellow Pages for more information.



Illinois Learning Standards and Benchmarks

16A Apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation.

16A.2c Ask questions and seek answers by collecting and analyzing data from historic documents, images, and other literary and non-literary sources.

17A Locate, describe and explain places, regions and features on the Earth.

17.A.2b Use maps and other geographic representations and instruments to gather information about people, places and environments.

18A Compare characteristics of culture as reflected in language, literature, the arts, traditions and institutions.

18.A.2 Explain ways in which language, stories, folk tales, music, media and artistic creations serve as expressions of culture.

18B Understand the roles and interactions of individuals and groups in society.

18.B.2b Describe the ways in which institutions meet the needs of society.

Extensions

- Take a field trip to any one of the four sites from this lesson. Bring along the corresponding handout so students can compare their impressions from photographs with their impressions of the actual building studied up close. Nothing can replace the awesome power of standing in front of a unique building and learning from it first-hand. At the site, students can:

- Create a drawing of the building and label the different parts.
- Touch the materials used on the building and describe how they look and feel.
- Describe the location of the building orally or in writing.
- Make a list of questions they would like to ask, if the building could talk.

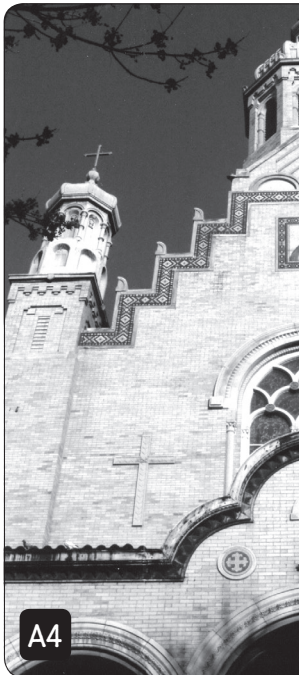
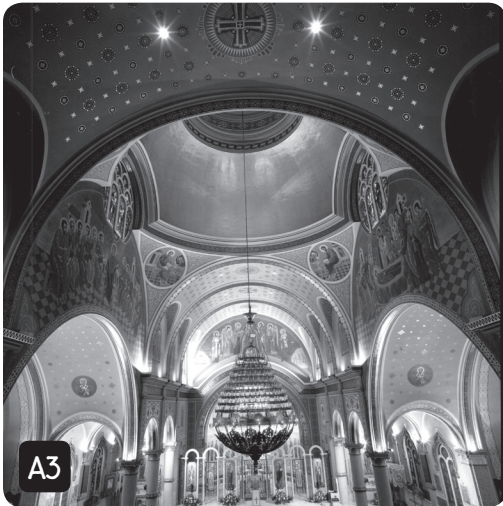
If it isn't possible to visit one of these four buildings, visit another interesting ethnic structure close to your school. Similar questions can be asked about buildings, immigrants, and migrants to your neighborhood.

- All four of the buildings in this lesson have some type of cornerstone. Explain to your class that cornerstones are sometimes used as time capsules. Have students make a list or a drawing, or actually compile items, that they would like to include in the cornerstone of the new American school they have designed. Suggestions: newspaper of the day, a calendar of special events from school, photographs, the day's weather report, signatures of the students, or a history of the school.

Handout A

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral on the West Side of Chicago, Illinois, 1913

1. Look at photo **A1**. The domes like those on the top of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral in Chicago are often called “onion domes” because of their shape. How many onion domes can you count in the photograph below?
2. Look at photos **A1** and **A2**. Compare and contrast the photograph of the church in Chicago (**A1**) with the photograph of the church in Kiev, Ukraine (**A2**). What is one similarity between them? What is one difference between them?
3. Look at photo **A3**. What are three adjectives you would use to describe the inside of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral?
4. Look at photo **A4**. Complete the photograph by drawing the other half of the front of the St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral.



TOP LEFT St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral, Chicago. (CAF, 2002) **TOP RIGHT** St. Sophia Cathedral, Kiev, Ukraine. (COURTESY ILLYA MATTHEW LABUNKA, 2001)
BOTTOM LEFT Inside of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral, Chicago. (© KEVIN O. MOONEY. USED WITH PERMISSION.)
BOTTOM RIGHT Front of St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral, Chicago. (CAF, 2002)

Handout B

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church on the Southeast Side of Chicago, Illinois, 1928

1. Look at photos **B1** and **B2**. The photographs show the first building (**B1**) and the second building (**B2**) of Our Lady of Guadalupe. What building material was the first church built from? What building material was the second church built from? Why do you think the architect changed the building material in the second church?
2. Look at photo **B2**. Circle the bell tower in the photograph.
3. Look at photo **B3**. What are three adjectives you would use to describe the inside of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church?
4. Look at photo **B4**. Our Lady of Guadalupe has a cornerstone that tells people what year construction began. What year was it constructed? Cornerstones are often filled with newspapers, letters, or photographs from the day the construction began, so they can act as time capsules to be opened many years in the future. What do you think might be inside this cornerstone?



TOP LEFT The first Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church built in 1923, Chicago. (COURTESY OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CATHOLIC CHURCH ARCHIVES)

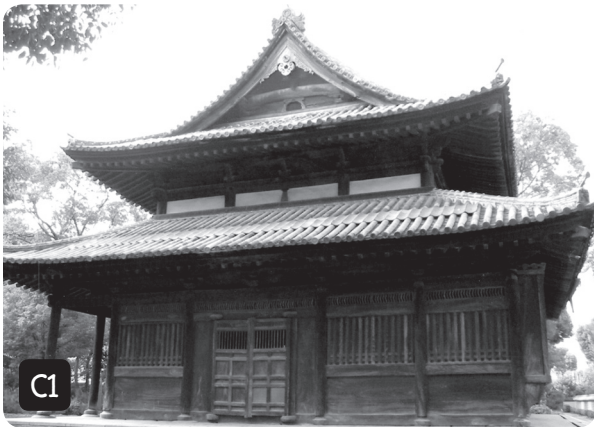
TOP RIGHT The second Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church as it stands today, Chicago. (CAF, 2002) **BOTTOM LEFT** Inside of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, Chicago. (CAF, 2002) **BOTTOM RIGHT** Cornerstone of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, Chicago. (CAF, 2002)

Handout C

Midwest Buddhist Temple

on the North Side of Chicago, Illinois, 1971

1. Look at photo **C1**. How many levels are on the roof of the temple in Japan?
2. Look at photo **C1** and **C2**. Study the roof corners in the photograph of the Japanese Temple (**C1**) and the Chicago Temple (**C2**). Describe the way these corners are shaped.
3. Look at photo **C3**. What are three adjectives you would use to describe the inside of Midwest Buddhist Temple in Chicago?
4. Look at photos **C2** and **C4**. Compare the gate that surrounds the Midwest Buddhist Temple in Chicago (**C2**) with the gate that surrounds the temple in Japan (**C4**). What is one way the gates are similar? What is one way the gates are different? Which gate do you think is fancier?



TOP LEFT Shofukuji Temple, Japan. (COURTESY KOJI YAMAMOTO, 2002) **TOP RIGHT** Midwest Buddhist Temple, Chicago. (CAF, 2002)

BOTTOM LEFT Inside of Midwest Buddhist Temple, Chicago. (COURTESY MIDWEST BUDDHIST TEMPLE, 1971) **BOTTOM RIGHT** Gate near Shofukuji Temple, Japan. (COURTESY KOJI YAMAMOTO, 2002)

Handout D

Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago

in Northbrook, Illinois (a town northwest of Chicago), 1984

1. Look at photos **D1** and **D2**. A minaret is a tall thin tower with a small balcony, from which Muslims are called to prayer. A dome is a large structure shaped like half a ball. Circle the minaret and the dome in the photograph of each mosque. A mosque is a building used for worship.
2. Look at photos **D1** and **D2**. Describe the area around the mosque in Yugoslavia (**D1**). Describe the area around the mosque in Northbrook, Illinois (**D2**). What are two ways that the areas around the mosques are different?
3. Look at photo **D2**. What are three adjectives you would use to describe the Islamic Cultural Center building?
4. Why do you think the members of the Islamic Cultural Center asked their architect to design a building with a minaret?

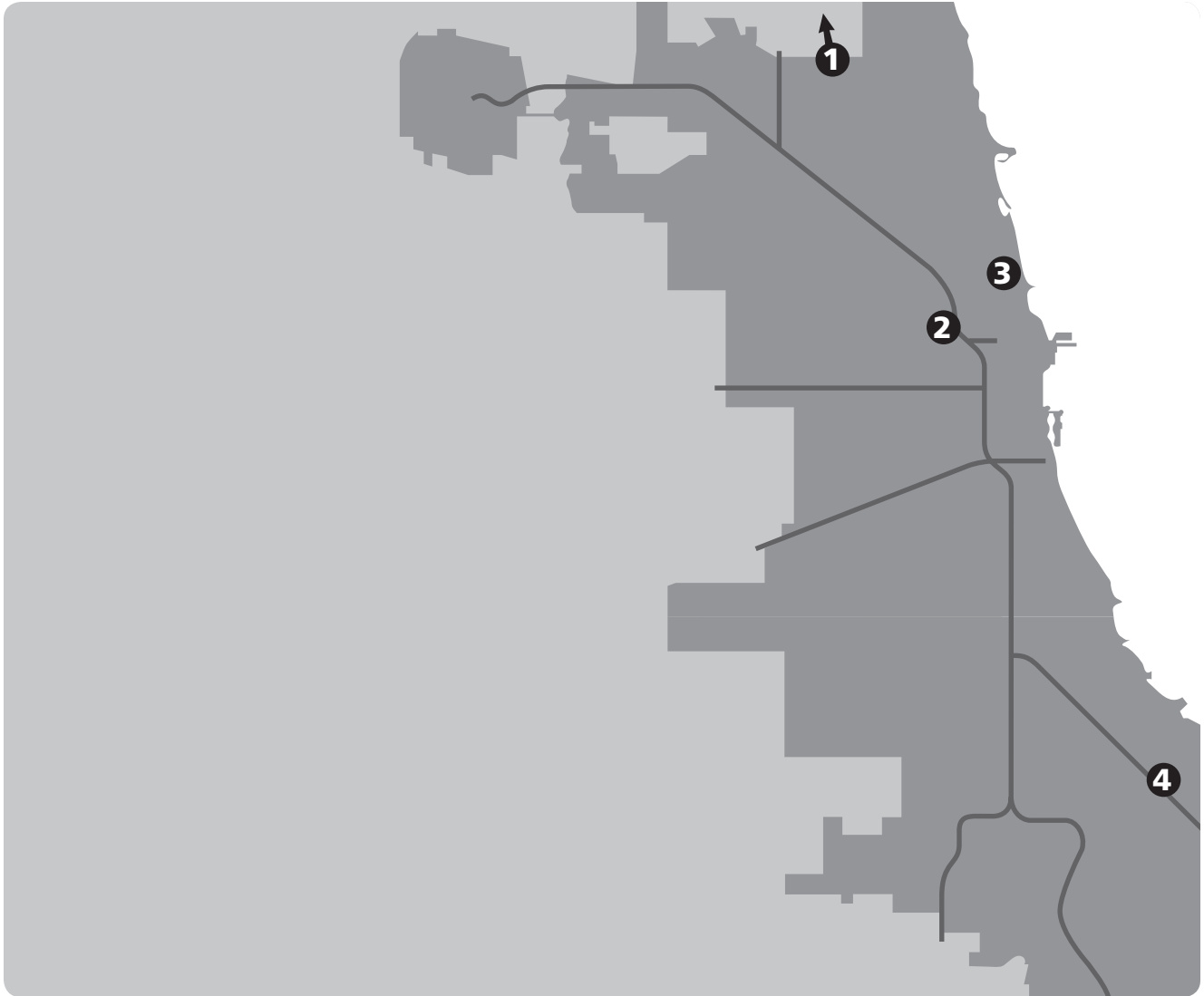


TOP Mosque of Sinan Pasha, Prizren, Yugoslavia (© DANIEL C. WAUGH, 1985. USED WITH PERMISSION.)

BOTTOM Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago, Northbrook, Illinois. (CAF, 2002)

Handout E

Map of four buildings built for Chicago immigrants



- ❶ **Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago**
1810 Pfingsten Road
Northbrook, Illinois
- ❷ **St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral**
2238 West Rice Street
Chicago, Illinois
- ❸ **Midwest Buddhist Temple**
436 West Menomonee Street
Chicago, Illinois
- ❹ **Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church**
3200 East 91st Street
Chicago, Illinois

Handout F

Architectural Vocabulary in Ukrainian - found in St. Nicholas Ukrainian Cathedral

English meaning	Ukrainian Spelling	English pronunciation
cathedral the home church of the bishop who leads the area's churches	Катедра	kah - TEH - drah
icon a picture of a saint	Ікона	ee - CONE - ah
arch a curved structure over a door or window opening	Лук	luke (<i>pronounced just like the boy's name</i>)
cupola a small dome with windows, on the top of the building	Куполя	koo - POLE - ah
stained glass window a window that has glass of different colors	Вітражі	vee - TRAH - zhee (<i>zh pronounced like the "s" in pleasure</i>)

Architectural Vocabulary in Spanish - found in Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church

English meaning	Spanish Spelling	English pronunciation
cornerstone a large stone in the bottom corner of a building often carved with a date	piedra	pee - EH - dra
dome a large structure shaped like half a ball	cúpula	KOO - poo - lah
bell tower a tower for church bells	campanario	camp - an - NAR - ee - oh
window an opening in a wall, usually filled in with glass	ventana	ven - TAN - ah
door an opening between two rooms or spaces	puerta	PWAIR - tah

Handout G

Architectural Vocabulary in Japanese - found in the Midwest Buddhist Temple

English meaning	Japanese Spelling	English pronunciation
Buddha Hall the large room where people gather together for worship	本堂	HON - do
temple a building used for worship	寺	TARE - ah
roof a structure that covers the top of a building	屋根	YAN - eh
side wing of the building part of the building, next to the main hall and under the roof	庇	HEE - sah - she

Architectural Vocabulary in Arabic - found in the Islamic Cultural Center of Greater Chicago

Although the members of the mosque in Northbrook speak many languages today, most of the service in the mosque is conducted in Arabic.

English meaning	Arabic Spelling	English pronunciation
dome a large structure shaped like half a ball	قبة	KIB - bah
minaret a tall thin tower with small balcony, used to call Muslims to prayer	منارة	min - NAR - ah
mosque a building used for worship	مسجد	MAS - jeed
window an opening in a wall, usually filled in with glass	سبّاك	sheh - BAK
door an opening between two rooms or spaces	باب	baab

