Infrastructure Scavenger Hunt

Students embark on a scavenger hunt around their school and neighborhood. Their quest: to use their powers of observation and curiosity to build a concrete understanding of the term “infrastructure.

Preparation:
• Equip each student with note-taking materials that they can use while walking.
• Part of this activity occurs outside; depending on the weather, students will need their coats.

DIRECTIONS:
1. Announce that students are going on an Infrastructure Scavenger Hunt. By the end of the scavenger hunt, they will have an idea of what infrastructure is. For this to happen, they must notice as much as possible about the building. In fact, their goal is to notice things they’ve never noticed before and to write down questions that their observations generate.

2. Model what you mean about making observations by looking around the room. Pick something that is related to infrastructure and say it aloud. For example, say “Where do all these electrical cords lead? Who takes care of the electrical system in this building?” Kids should write down your observation and question.

3. After kids have a few minutes to scrutinize the room, start walking around the building. There’s lots to notice in hallways, on ceilings, and along baseboards that have to do with infrastructure. Keep the dialogue going by asking questions, directing students to look at something everyone is missing, and generally keeping them engaged with making observations. Sometimes they will see things that don’t have to do with infrastructure. That’s okay—it will get sorted out after the scavenger hunt.

4. Take the hunt outside. Observations may include things like, Where does this storm drain lead? Where do these power lines go? What happens if this traffic light stops working?

5. Keep the scavenger hunt going for as long as it takes to generate some good infrastructural observations before going back inside.