

Lesson Name:

Make Your World Wonder-full

Student Objectives:

- Explain how Sam saw beauty in Watts.
- Describe a place you can view with a positive perspective.

Educator Preparation:

- Familiarize yourself with the lesson outline and the story.
- Read *The Wonderful Towers of Watts* .
- Be ready to share an example of a time you had courage to bring beauty into the world.

Introduction:

Hello! Today I am sharing with you a lesson about how having a positive perspective enables you to see the beauty in difficult places. I will be teaching this lesson through the story *The Wonderful Towers of Watts* by Patricia Zilver.

Instruction:

Our story today takes place in a neighborhood outside of Los Angeles, California called Watts. I want to start by showing you some pictures of Watts, both from a long time ago and today. While you look at the pictures, I want you to say aloud the first words that come to mind when you see the pictures. ([photo 1](#), [photo 2](#), [photo 3](#), [photo 4](#))

Maybe this place looks similar to where you live or maybe it looks different.

Teacher adds comments about their own community, for example: I live in southern Indiana in the middle of a corn field, so those pictures are very different from the place I live!

There are several things that stick out to me about the photographs: everything seems to be almost one color, the streets are very flat, houses seem very plain. The neighborhood of Watts

has changed a lot throughout its history, but for a long time it has had a pretty negative reputation.

However, only focusing on the negative makes it really difficult to find happiness where we are at. Yes, there is always work to be done to make the places we live become better, but if we lose our ability to see the positives, it makes it hard to have hope that things can change. Our perspective—the way we view the world—has a huge impact on whether we can bring beauty and change to our current circumstances. Being positive helps us find hope and happiness.

By having a positive perspective, many people who have grown up in Watts have worked to see the beauty in the place they live. Many have also brought beauty to where they live. What I didn't show you when I showed you pictures of Watts earlier, is that most of the photographs of Watts available often include a view of the Watts Towers. ([photo 5](#), [photo 6](#), [photo 7](#)). These towers were created by one man who had the courage to create something beautiful in a place not known for its beauty. Our story today explains how those towers were built.

Interaction:

Read *The Wonderful Towers of Watts*.

Closure:

There are many things I love about this story. I love that Sam used what he had available to him to make the towers. He didn't need a lot of money or any fancy equipment. In fact, some of the gorgeous towers were literally created out of junk! He just needed creativity and the courage to have a big dream. I also love that he kept his positive perspective even when other people didn't understand his dream or they made fun of him for it.

More than anything, I really connect with the idea of bringing beauty to places that are generally viewed as ugly.

Teacher provides examples of this from their own life. For example: When I was little, my family did not have a lot and I was often embarrassed about where I lived. But, I always made an effort to create little corners in my life that had beauty. Maybe I would arrange a few little treasured objects on a shelf in a way that reminded me of their beauty. Or, a favorite tree would become

transformed into a magical world as I played make-believe.

It takes a positive perspective to look at things that are very ordinary and believe that they can be extraordinary. When you create beauty out of everyday things, you bring joy not only to yourself, but also others. How will you bring a positive perspective to your world in order to create beauty out of things that others don't view as beautiful?

Activity:

Today, I want you to draw a picture of a place in your life that is often viewed as plain or even unattractive. It could be in your town or city, it could be in your school, It could be in your home.

Your picture needs to show how you would make that place beautiful through random acts of kindness or through creative works of art. After you draw your picture, write about this place showing a positive perspective toward it. If you are younger, you might just label what is going on in your picture. If you are older, you might write a detailed paragraph explaining how you are seeing beauty where you are. Think about how you can be like Sam and make your world full of wonder or wonder-full!

Additional Resources:

- [Photographs of Watts](#)
- [PBS Special on Watts Towers](#)
- [History of Watts Towers](#)
- [Reading Rainbow Wonderful Towers of Watts Episode](#)