

E.T. A LOCAL WAY OF LEARNING

**Title:** SCHOOLS HAVE ROOTS

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**Grade Level:** 5-12

**Concepts:**  
7. Land Use  
8. Values and Attitudes  
9. Change

**Disciplines:**  
1. Social Studies  
2. Language Arts  
3. Art

**Objective:**

Students shall learn from older members of the school community about life in the area 50 years ago or so. Students shall write reports, poetry or fiction based on this information, and/or paint murals depicting life in the "old days".

**Rationale:**

Famous Virgin Islanders may have lived and worked in the community of the school. Many factors are at work today to obliterate the unique qualities of life which were once enjoyed by the people of the islands. The overpowering exposure to T.V., most of which is not V.I. based, causes one imbalance in the influences on young island children. Through the expression in Art and Language Arts such as the painting of murals and research about island culture, students may learn about their forebears and history.

**Directions/Activity:**

If there are sugar plantation ruins in your school community you can start by learning what estate occupied the area. You may find that records can be found in the Caribbean Room of the library, that pertain to your estate.

Find a member or two of the community who have lived there since they were children, or who once lived there.

Follow the questions on the activity sheet; make up additional questions that the class decides to ask.

You will probably find that once an older person starts thinking back, a wealth of random memories will pour forth. Your questions made up beforehand will help you cover all that you want to learn. You might tape the conversation so that you could refer to it again.

With the help of a teacher (art teacher, perhaps) you can block out a mural on a suitable wall area, showing life as it once was in the islands, using books to visualize the clothing and housing according to the pictures you find. Paint the mural. Other students can write reports, historical fiction or poetry based on the material covered in your interview.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOLS HAVE ROOTS

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name of person interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_
4. What schools(s) did the person attend? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How far from home was the school? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the person's home like? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How far away was the church located? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What was the community like, i.e., how many families? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What was 'wash day' like? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How did the person's family make a living? \_\_\_\_\_
11. What means of transportation did they have? \_\_\_\_\_
12. What did the person's family have to make for its use? \_\_\_\_\_
13. What was available at stores? Name some things and their prices: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. How are some things different today than they were long ago? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List other questions you would like to ask:

Reference: Growing Up On St. Croix by Eulalie C. Rivera