

## ***Barn Raising***

Neighbors came from miles around to help the Rutherford family raise the frame of their barn in just one day. With everyone working together they were able to raise 8 bents and the rafters to form the skeleton of the barn.

Gatherings like this were very common in rural America. These events were called barn raisings. Everyone in the area came to help. No one except for the main carpenter received any money for their work. Not only did the men come to help, their wives and other women of the community came bearing food to help feed the army of men that it would take to raise the barn. Everyone pitched in to help, because they knew that if they were ever to need help, the neighbors would come to help them, too.

At the end of the long day, the community would sit down to share a meal and celebrate the new structure by enjoying a “barn dance” to christen the new structure.

Now it is your turn to have a barn raising of your own. You are to organize in to small groups (5) people to work together to construct a small scale model of a barn.

### **Materials:**

Ruler  
Baseboard (such as sturdy cardboard)  
Building materials (craft sticks, cardboard, clay, construction paper  
Scissors, paint, paint brushes, etc.  
Craft glue, string, etc.  
Paper and pencil

### **Directions:**

1. In your group designate one person to be the observer. Their role in the project is to take notes on how well the group works together and solves any construction problems that they might have. The observer is not to talk during the whole construction process and share their observations when the project is completed.
2. Work together to plan a design for your barn. Create an architectural design including the dimensions of your completed barn.
3. Make a list of all the materials that you will need.
4. Divide up the list of materials and have each person bring supplies to class.
5. Divide up the work plan so that each person is responsible for a finished part of the barn.

6. Each person will then construct their individual piece. Next the group will begin attaching them together and then complete the model barn on the baseboard.
7. You can decorate your barn and baseboard if you like and you have time.
8. Present your finished barn to the class. In your presentation to the class have each person tell about their role in the construction of the barn, the design you chose, and how you worked together to complete the barn.
9. The observer will then get to share their observations about how the group worked together.

**Class Discussion:** Would it have been possible for you to complete this project on your own? What are the advantages and disadvantages of working in a group? What are the advantages and disadvantages of working by your self?

--idea taken from "Teacher Created  
Materials" Across Five Aprils