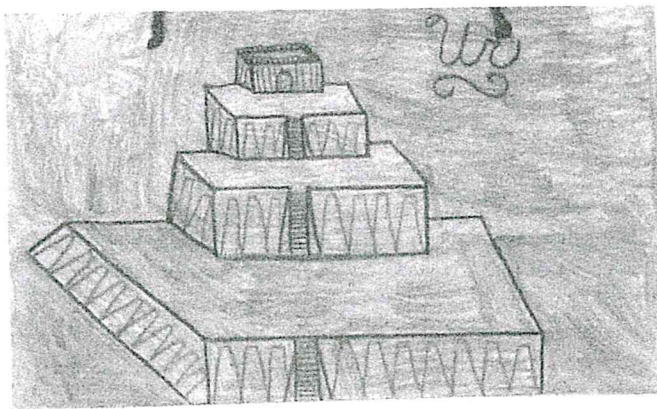


Cognitive views of learning provide the theoretical basis for current approaches to “authentic” pedagogy and assessment of learning. At the heart of authentic pedagogy are learning activities of high intellectual quality and teaching for understanding. Authentic pedagogy offers “compelling alternatives to more traditional forms of instruction focused on basic skills and content” (King, Schroeder, & Chawszczewski, 2001). Authentic learning tasks enable students to see the connections between classroom learning and the world beyond the classroom—both now and in the future. For example, Figure 4.1 presents the work of 11-year-old Shea, who was given an authentic assignment to create a postcard that an imaginary friend from an ancient culture might send her.

### FIGURE 4.1

In a sixth-grade social studies unit, students create postcards that an imaginary friend might send them from ancient cultures. Here 11-year-old Shea depicts and describes ancient Ur



Dear Shea,

Right now I'm visiting an ancient civilization called Ur. It is a civilization because it has the five characteristics that a civilization has. They are: a stable food supply, specialization of labor, a system of government, and a highly developed culture.

The building on the front of the postcard is called a ziggurat, which is a place of worship.

From,  
Sarah McBean



Shea  
276 S. Rd  
Bexley, Ohio

43209

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