



# SPEAK UP SPEAK OUT

*The University of Texas at Austin*

## FACILITATION GUIDE

How to coach participants through the project process



**Dear Facilitator,**

Congratulations on becoming a part of the **Speak Up! Speak Out! (SUSO)** experience! Thank you for the hard work that you and your students will be putting into the project this coming semester. SUSO is a truly fun and rewarding program, but we at the Annette Strauss Institute recognize that it brings with it an added investment on the part of all involved. We appreciate your continued dedication to promoting the civic empowerment of our community's young people.

As you go through the project process outlined in this packet, please remember that this program is designed to flex to your needs. We will be happy to work with you to develop a program structure that works for you and your students on your timeline. As needs or questions arise along the way, please feel free to reach out to the SUSO team and we will be happy to help in any way that we can.

Enclosed in this booklet, you will find a variety of resources to guide you along the way. Please review the following materials as they provide essential information about the project:

Project Scope and Sequence (Pg. 6)

Project Process Checklist (Pg. 29)

Project Scoring Rubric (Pg. 72)

To get started, we would welcome the opportunity to Skype with your students for an introductory jump start session into SUSO. This meeting includes an introductory PowerPoint, activities, and time for questions and answers. Please call or email to make an appointment.

We look forward to working with you over the course of the semester and hope to see you at the Speak Up! Speak Out! Texas State Civics Fair!

Thank you,

**Korrine Salas Young**

*Program Coordinator*

*K-12 Educational Outreach*

[korrine.young@utexas.austin.edu](mailto:korrine.young@utexas.austin.edu)

Phone: 512-471-7210

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We would like to express our deepest appreciation to the SEL specialists who understand the important role Social Emotional Learning plays in successful civic engagement and guided us in weaving SEL objectives into the Facilitation Guide.

We would like to thank the consulting group S.E.L.F. (Social and Emotional Learning Facilitators) for contributing to the conceptualization and lesson design of the "Getting Started" section and for writing the "SEL" summary in the introduction, which poignantly illustrates the advantages of SEL in civic learning. S.E.L.F. was created by Amy Kinkade, veteran Principal for 30 years, and Elise Edwards, experienced guidance counselor for 17 years, who joined forces to partner with schools to educate the whole child. Outside of curriculum consulting, S.E.L.F. supports teachers, parents, and administrators to establish positive learning environments and enhance academic success for all students.

We would also like to thank Kevin Kerr for overall consulting in how to strategically implement Social Emotional Learning into the overall program and the Facilitation Guide. Mr. Kerr provided expertise, insights, and resources and also assisted with the design of lessons created to cultivate Social Emotional Learning competencies. Mr. Kerr is currently an SEL Specialist for Austin ISD and is a director for a proprietary school in Austin.

## Additional Resources Used to Guide Creation

Blevins, Brooke, and Karon LeCompte. "I Am Engaged: Action Civics in Four Steps." *Social Studies and the Young Learner* 27, no. 4 (March & April 2015): 23-26.

Jenkins, Henry. *By Any Media Necessary: The New Youth Activism*. New York: New York University Press, 2016.

Zemelman, Steven. *From Inquiry to Action: Civic Engagement with Project-Based Learning in All Content Areas*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2016.

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# Introduction

**O**ur goal is to create a more empowered youth committed to civic participation. We know the kinds of learning that will translate into democratic participation has to start with what students are interested in and be based on their own active engagement from an early age.

As students go through the Speak Up! Speak Out! program process, they are not only gaining civic skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary to be effective citizens, but they are cultivating life skills that will help them navigate successfully through society, beyond schooling years and into their careers. Through project based learning and social emotional learning, students build critical thinking & problem solving skills, interpersonal communication skills, and collaboration skills, all skills that employers of the 21st century value more than technical knowledge related to the job. (NACE, 2015)

## SUSO and Social Emotional Learning

The Speak Up! Speak Out! program provides a rich context for developing social emotional competencies. Through collaborative learning and the democratic decision making process, teachers have the opportunity to guide students to recognize and manage emotions, develop concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle challenging situations effectively.

The Social Emotional Learning framework is an integrated approach involving students, staff, family, and the community. The SUSO program is a natural fit for the community piece, as it integrates the importance of civic involvement with the mission of developing confident, capable, resilient citizens who will be prepared to face the many challenges our society is presented with today and in the foreseeable future.

The SUSO process explicitly aims to develop the following SEL competencies:

1. Self-Management: Self-motivation, Setting and achieving goals, Self-control
2. Social Awareness: Perspective-taking, Empathy, Recognizing family, school, and community supports
3. Relationship Skills: Communicating clearly, Working cooperatively, Resolving conflicts, Seeking help
4. Self-Awareness: Accurate self-assessment of strengths and challenges, Self-efficacy, Optimism, Relating feelings and thoughts to behavior
5. Responsible Decision-Making: Considering the well-being of self and others, Basing decisions on safety, social, and ethical considerations, Evaluating realistic consequences of various actions, Making constructive, safe choices for self, relationships, and school

## SUSO and Action Civics

Action Civics, an approach to civics education that engages students in a cycle of research, action, and reflection about problems they care about personally, delivered through Project Based Learning, requires students to acquire expertise and take specific collective actions that better their communities. This type of civic learning that is student centered and experiential, develops agency and allows students to realize their capacity to influence change. The end result is students who are 21st century leaders, active citizens, academically successful, and committed to civic participation.

## Introduction (Cont.)

### SUSO Implementation

In the rush of the semester, trying to organize a Speak Up! Speak Out! (SUSO) project can be overwhelming. This step-by-step guide should help you and your students manage the project from start to finish. You can pick and choose from the tools in this guide and draw on the resources that are most useful to you. However, please do not omit reflections at the end of each step. Speak Up! Speak Out! asks students to take on academic challenges, social challenges, and emotional challenges, all within the space of a classroom. Reflection offers a way for students to translate these challenges into insights about ourselves and the people around us.

SUSO teams are typically made up of about 4 to 8 students, though some are larger and some are smaller. This means that if you are using SUSO in your classroom, you may need to divide your class into teams and each will address a different issue that they choose together. It is often best to have no more than three different teams in one class, meaning that some classes may need to have large teams.

There is no one right way to implement this process. If you and your students are meeting once a week, we suggest allowing a minimum of six weeks to complete the process. The process can also be spread out over more time, or compacted into an intensive format.

Some SUSO teams complete their projects as part of the classroom curriculum, and others meet after school to do SUSO as an enrichment activity. Some SUSO teams are organized and facilitated by a teacher who guides the process, and others are student-led and teachers take a supporting role. This guide can be used differently by each type of team:

- **Teachers using SUSO in the classroom** may want to break each of the four steps down into smaller class sessions. To help with this, we have indicated the approximate amount of facilitation time that each lesson/activity will require.
- **Teachers or facilitators using SUSO after school** may have more or less time than a classroom-based team. You will find that the four steps of the project can be facilitated in less time than indicated for the activities described here, based on the skills and independence of your students.
- **Student-led teams, which are supported by but not led by a facilitator**, may wish to focus on using the “Student Checklists” provided at the beginning of each step. Students and teachers can use these checklists to set goals for progress and guide regular check-in meetings. Students can also lead their peers in the activities outlined in this guide.

### What You Will Find Inside:

**4 Steps:** We divide the SUSO project process into four steps. The guide is divided into sections covering each of the four steps.

**Student Checklists:** These checklists are provided at the beginning of each step to help students and teachers work through the Speak Up! Speak Out! process. Student-led teams should come to the facilitator meeting with these tasks completed.

**Lessons and Activities:** These are activities and lessons that will help student teams accomplish each step.

**Resources:** At the end of most sections you will find handouts and worksheets for use by students and online resources for you.

# Speak Up! Speak Out! Scope and Sequence

We recognize the diverse needs and learning goals of our participants and designed the Speak Up! Speak Out! program to allow for various modes of implementation. The program's flexibility allows for classroom teachers of various subjects, community-based organizations, after-school programs and instructors of extracurricular programming to use the program in a way that best fits their curriculum.

Founded in Project Based Learning and driven by Action Civics, the Speak Up! Speak Out! process is completely student-driven. Therefore, we do not offer a full curriculum, but rather a facilitation guide meant to scaffold learning and compliment what is learned in the classroom. We created the scope and sequence to help you plan your day, week, or semester in a way that compliments your curriculum or program goals.

**Note:** Collaboration and communication will be key to your students' success; being so, we strongly recommend utilizing all elements of the "Getting Started" section.

## GETTING STARTED



A project's success depends upon community support and collaboration skills of competing groups. Together, students will set the tone for the project by creating cooperative guidelines and engaging in activities that encourage supportive relationships, respectful conversations, and effective decision making capacities.

1. School Visit
2. Letters Home
4. Collaboration & Community Building
5. SEL Toolkit

## STEP 1

### IDENTIFY A PROBLEM



Students will take a close look at their community and identify a community problem that personally affects them or that deeply interests them. In teams, students critically examine prospective problems to study and go through a decision making process to narrow choices and identify one community problem for their project.

1. Investigate Community Needs
2. Brainstorm specific problems of interest
3. Choose a Community Problem

## STEP 2

### EXPLORE THE PROBLEM



Students roll up their sleeves and engage in a rigorous investigation of their chosen community problem to identify root causes. They examine various perspectives from civic leaders, key stakeholders, and various community members. They will use their findings to choose one specific aspect of their issue to address.

1. Conduct Primary and Secondary Research
2. Evaluate Community Perspectives & Data
3. Identify Root Cause
4. Identify Key Stakeholders

## STEP 3

### IDENTIFY SOLUTION



In the third step, students work collaboratively to examine options and reach a consensus for solving their community problem. Students then develop a plan of action to show them where they are going and how they will get there.

1. Brainstorm, Research & Choose Solution
2. Policy or Private Action?
3. Plan a Solution
4. Create a Civic Action Plan
5. Build Community Support

## STEP 4

### PREPARE AND PRESENT



Step four allows students to demonstrate acquired civic skills, knowledge and dispositions through a high quality presentation. At an end of semester classroom/school-wide Civics Fair, teams will share their work with a panel of judges via public speaking and digital presentations. The top 50 teams from across the state will be invited to the State Civics Fair.

1. Create Oral Presentation
2. Create Digital Presentation
3. Host a Classroom/School-wide Civics Fair



**G**etting started is all about setting the foundation your students need to make their Speak Up! Speak Out! projects a success. Their success will depend upon community support, communication skills of individual students, and collaboration skills of competing groups. The lessons and resources found in the “Getting Started” section will develop social emotional competencies needed to successfully tackle each step in SUSO. Together, students will set the tone for the project by creating cooperative guidelines and engaging in activities that encourage self awareness, supportive relationships, respectful conversations, and effective decision making capacities.

### How to Implement "Getting Started"

The "Getting Started" section is strategically designed to be spiral in nature, where each component reinforces the other to collectively develop skills that will be used in each step of the SUSO process and create the foundation for a successful SUSO program. As such, we have created a daily outline to guide implementation.

### Getting Started Checklist

- ☐ Schedule a school visit.
- ☐ Introduce program to students.
- ☐ Send SUSO introduction letter home.
- ☐ Create a classroom Social Contract that will guide students' teamwork skills throughout the program.
- ☐ Implement Collaboration & Community Building lessons.

- 
- School Visit
  - Letters Home
  - Collaboration & Community Building

### School Visit

Educators may schedule a school visit to help launch the Speak Up! Speak Out! program. A representative from the program may visit classrooms (or Skype in) to activate students' awareness of the power and importance of their voices in a democracy and to get students acquainted with the journey ahead of them. In this jump start session, we will provide you, colleagues, and students with an introductory PowerPoint, activities, and time for questions and answers. Please email Korrine Young at [korrine.young@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:korrine.young@austin.utexas.edu) to schedule an appointment.

### Letters Home

Because Speak Up! Speak Out! is founded in project-based learning, learning moves beyond the classroom walls. Throughout their project, students will be immersed in their communities, gathering information from key stakeholders, organizations and various other community members. Not only can parents/guardians provide support for exploring the community, they can also offer valuable perspectives and resources. Having parental/guardian support is instrumental to student success. (Pg. 9)

### Collaboration and Community Building

The implementation of these lessons collectively equip students with skills necessary for effective civic discourse and for working in teams. The civic skills and social emotional learning competencies cultivated by engaging in these lessons are not only important to the success of SUSO projects, but also to the success of our democracy.



## Introduce Speak Up! Speak Out! to Students

**Speak Up! Speak Out!** is a project-based civic engagement program for middle and high school students. Participants form teams, identify a community issue that matters to them, research that problem, and propose a workable solution to address it. Students may then present their research and proposed solutions to their peers and community leaders at their classroom/schoolwide Civics Fair. Educators select three teams to submit to Semifinals by submitting videos online. The top 50 teams from across the state will then be invited to compete in the State Civics Fair. The top three teams from the State Civics Fair will receive funds to use toward the implementation of their solutions.

Review the Scoring Rubric on page 72, to be sure that students know how their project will be evaluated and inform students that a Speak Up! Speak Out! representative may be visiting the class soon to provide more information about the program. The videos located on our webpage, [www.speakuppeakout.org](http://www.speakuppeakout.org), may also be a valuable resource to introduce students to the program.

### Letters to Parents or Guardians

Because Speak Up! Speak Out! is founded in project-based learning, students' learning moves beyond the classroom walls. Throughout their project, students will be immersed in their communities, gathering information from key stakeholders, organizations and various other community members. Not only can parents/guardians provide support for exploring the community, they can also offer valuable perspectives and resources. Having parental/guardian support is instrumental to student success.



## Dear Parent or Guardian:

I am writing to tell you about an exciting program that your student's class is implementing this semester.

Speak Up! Speak Out! is a civic education program that teaches young people how to activate their voice in their communities and discover the power they have in changing their communities for the better. The goal of the program is to create a more empowered youth committed to civic participation and equipped with the civic skills, knowledge and dispositions necessary to make a difference in the world they live in.

In this program, students will work in teams to identify a social problem in their community and create a solution for the problem. Throughout the process, students will be engaged in civic action as they research their problem and craft a solution to address the problem. Research may include writing, calling, or meeting with public officials or other community leaders, attending a public meeting, conducting petitions, or doing projects that raise public awareness. At the end of the project students may present their ideas via speeches to a panel of judges at an end-of-semester classroom/school-wide Civics Fair. The top 50 teams from across the state will be invited to present at the State Civics Fair in Austin.

To support your student through the process, as parents or guardians, you can discuss the project at home, encouraging your child to think hard and ask questions about the topic, and provide expertise and resources. Example questions might include:

1. What part of this project has been most challenging? Why is it challenging?
2. What is one thing you have done during this project that makes you proud? Why does it make you proud?
3. What have you enjoyed most about working on this project? Why is that?

The Speak Up! Speak Out! program is sponsored by the Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life at the **University of Texas at Austin**. As the students engage in the program we would like permission to post on our website/social media student work, photographs, and possibly video showing students participating in the program to share with other program teachers and students. A permission slip will be sent home for this. We appreciate your support!

We are very excited to have your student involved. Please visit our website at [www.speakuppeakout.org](http://www.speakuppeakout.org) to help you better understand what we are asking students to do, and to support your child during the project.

Sincerely,

Korrine Salas Young  
*K-12 Program Coordinator*





## Community & Collaboration Building: Lesson 1

### Brainstorming

#### Essential Question

How can I work with others to brainstorm ideas and evaluate those ideas?

#### Objectives

- Students will exercise ownership in the decision-making process.
- Students will practice healthy ways to communicate and interact with others during the project process.

### Learning Sequence

#### A. Interpret & Discuss

1. In order to have a productive “brainstorm”, students need to be aware of the following “micro-skills” that foster the formation of positive relationships, working in teams, and dealing effectively with conflict. Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the below micro-skills, what does each skill mean, look like or sound like?

- *Helping or seeking help*
- *Communication*
- *Social engagement*
- *Respect for differences in thought and verbal expression*
- *Cooperation*
- *Effective problem-solving*

2. Display “Brainstorming in 9 Steps” in a place that is visible for all students. Review each step.

#### B. Communicate & Listen

1. Divide class into pairs or triads.
2. Using the nine steps, have groups brainstorm on the following topic: What materials do you need to host a birthday party? Take three minutes to come up with as many items as possible. Each group should assign a note taker and keep in mind that during a brainstorm, all ideas are accepted.

#### C. Reflect & Respect

1. After the brainstorm session comes to a close, the teacher should provide time for the students to review how their team interacted. Ask students to address the following questions with their group.

- *Did individuals listen to each other without interruption?*
- *Did you use effective strategies for addressing conflict?*
- *Did you relate with each other in a respectful and kind way?*

2. Ask students if there were any communication problems they could not solve during the brainstorm process. Allow the other students to make suggestions about possible solutions to try, the emphasis being that the whole class should be invested in each smaller group’s success, and they should be able to look to each other for help as needed. This also reinforces the message that collaboration and agreement are key to reaching the ultimate goal: consensus.

#### D. Practice & Process

1. Come back together to discuss findings as a class. Rank the top ten birthday party supplies.
2. After the brainstorms have been shared and decisions have been made, review the most important behaviors that the students appreciated, list these behaviors/skills on a poster-sized paper, and post in a visible part of the room. These skills can be identified as the foundational pieces for a strong, effective group. Title the poster “**Powerful Brainstorms**”, or something to that effect, so that the students may refer to the basic tenets again during future planning sessions.



## Brainstorming in Nine Easy Steps

1. Pause and let everyone think of at least one idea. Write these down.
2. Share any idea no matter how absurd.
3. Piggy back on ideas (add yours to theirs).
4. No criticism or discussion, just ideas.
5. Write down all ideas people can think of.
6. When the ideas stop coming, pause for 30 seconds
7. Write down any more ideas people thought of.
8. Look for ways to combine ideas.
9. NOW identify the group's favorite ideas and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each.

### Related Resources

<http://educationpossible.com/brainstorming-tips-tools-middle-school-students/>

<http://personalexcellence.co/blog/brainstorming-techniques/>

[http://pbskids.org/designsquad/parentseducators/workshop/process\\_brainstorm.html](http://pbskids.org/designsquad/parentseducators/workshop/process_brainstorm.html)

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/273215-how-to-learn-to-brainstorm-fun-activities-for-kids/>



## Community & Collaboration Building: Lesson 2

### Creating a Speak Up! Speak Out! Social Contract

The Speak Up! Speak Out! program is student-centered and driven by cooperative learning; as such we recommend giving students ownership in deciding the most effective ways to communicate and interact with others during the project process. Creating a social contract engages students in a democratic decision-making process, making it a great way to kick off the Speak Up! Speak Out! program. A social contract that is meaningful and committed to by the students will not only ensure success for their project, but also cultivate social competencies that will extend beyond the classroom walls. If you have already created a classroom social contract with your students for the school year please feel free to use that, if not, we've put together some guidelines below for creating one with your students.

#### Learning Sequence

**Step 1:** Explain to students that a social contract is a set of class expectations created by the class and outlines what classroom members need to do to keep from infringing on the rights of the other members. Creating a social contract is a democratic decision-making process that values everyone's opinion.

**Step 2:** Divide students into groups of four (if you have already designated groups for the SUSO project, feel free to use those groups) and have each group formulate two to three expectations. Instruct students to use the following guideline to guide their decision making process: Things that all students can do, that if we did each of them, the class would function well and our SUSO project would be an enjoyable process. All expectations should be stated positively. For example, instead of "Do not interrupt others," try, "Please listen," or, instead of "Do not hog the computers," try, "Please be mindful of yours and other's time."

**Step 3:** Reconvene as a class and ask students to share their ideas. Record all ideas and group ideas into themes. After all ideas are grouped, create one statement to express each theme. For example if various ideas were, "No yelling" and "Avoid name-calling" the expectation phrase might be "Please use respectful tones and language at all times."

**Step 4:** Take a class vote on the final expectations to be listed on the contract. Finalize the contract by confirming that ALL students approve of the expectations. Have Students individually sign the contract in front of their classmates and post in a prominent place in the classroom.

**Note:** When you or other class members notice students not adhering to the social contract, reflect on it together, "I feel people aren't listening to each other, what do you think?"

#### Related Resources

<http://www.edutopia.org/pdfs/stw/edutopia-stw-louisville-sel-protocol-for-developing-the-social-contract.pdf>

*(Adapted from Transformative Classroom Management, Schindler, J., 2008)*



## Community & Collaboration Building: Lesson 3

### Pass or Veto

#### Essential Question

How can I communicate my perspective effectively while respecting a differing perspective?

#### Objectives

- Students will learn communication strategies that will help them effectively participate in civic discourse and collaborative settings.
- Students will practice listening to and respecting others with differing perspectives
- Students will listen to and analyze other's perspectives
- Students will use communication sentence stems to effectively share their points of view

### Learning Sequence

#### A. Interpret & Discuss

1. Present the following quote to the students: "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." -George Bernard Shaw
2. Using **Think-Pair-Share**, give students a moment to react to and interpret the meaning of the quote. Next, have students share their thoughts with a partner. After a few minutes of sharing, invite pairs to share points from their discussion with the class.
3. Explain to students that communication and collaboration are foundations of the Speak Up! Speak Out! program and will be key factors in determining their project's success. On a larger scale, beyond the four classroom walls, effective communication and collaboration are critical to the success of our democracy.

#### B. Communicate & Listen

1. Designate one side of the room "Pass" and the opposite side "Veto".
2. Give students the "Pass or Veto" handout (attached).
3. Set the context. Tell students that they are part of their school's student council and they must

vote for or against a few proposed policies.

Instruct students to vote for each listed policy by circling "pass" for policies they agree with and "veto" for policies they disagree with.

4. Once all students have made their decisions, read aloud each statement and ask students to move to the side of the room that corresponds to their decision on the position
  - a. "Detention should be replaced with community service."
  - b. "Females should be allowed to play football."
  - c. "Cell phones should be banned from classrooms."
  - d. "Cyberbullying that occurs outside of school, should be punished by the school."
  - e. "PE should be required of all students throughout high school."
  - f. "Youtube should be banned from classrooms."

**Note:** It is important that students make their choices before they move so they are more true to themselves and are less likely to give into peer pressure.

5. Observe which policy is most divisive with relatively equal numbers of students who "pass" and "veto."
6. Read aloud most divisive proposal again and have students move accordingly. Create student pairs with students from opposing sides. Give students five minutes to discuss their perspective on the proposed policy and explain reasons why they either passed or vetoed it.



## Community & Collaboration Building: Lesson 3

### Pass or Veto

#### Learning Sequence (Cont.)

#### C. Reflect & Respect

Ask students to reflect on the way they communicated with their partners. Ask the following questions:

- Did you interrupt your partner or wait for them to finish their thoughts?
- Did you get angry and use language such as “You’re wrong” or “That doesn’t make sense”?
- Did you hog the conversation?
- Did you focus and look at the person while they were speaking?
- How did your partner communicate? Did they talk over you or let you finish your thought? Were they calm? Did they listen?

Communication Strategies - review and model

- Listen:** Focus on the other person while they are speaking and be attentive.
- Paraphrase:** This not only helps you better understand what the other person means, but it also shows that you are listening, making the other person feel that they are respected. For example, if you are confused or don’t quite understand the other person say, “What I heard you say is...”
- Calmly communicate your perspective:** After actively listening and paraphrasing, communicate your perspective without putting down the other person’s ideas. For example, when you think someone’s idea is completely absurd, do not say, “That’s a dumb idea!” Instead try, “I don’t agree, and here’s why...”

d. **Don’t make it personal:** It is the person’s perspective on this particular statement that you do not agree with not the person. Therefore, attack the idea, not the person. For example, instead of saying “You’re unfair!” say “This idea seems unfair to me because...”

e. **Use “I” Statements instead of “You” statements:** Using “you” statements can sound like you are putting down the other person. For example, instead of saying, “You are hogging the conversation,” try “I would like the opportunity to tell you my perspective now,” or “I feel like we were not listening to each other.”

**Communication Tip:** As an option to help students remember effective communication, teach them the acronym EARS: **E**ye Contact, **A**cknowledge, **R**eflect, **S**ay back in your own words.

#### D. Practice & Process

Have students repeat their discussions with a different partner keeping in mind the strategies they just reviewed. Post the below sentence stems in a place that is accessible to students and tell students to refer to them throughout their conversations. Ask students to choose three to focus on using.

- “What I heard you say is...”
- “Could you please explain...”
- “I disagree because...”
- “I don’t agree, and here’s why...”
- “I believe this because...”

After a few minutes, ask students to share their experience with the class. How did this conversation feel as opposed to the first? Which strategy/ies helped you communicate better?

#### Related Resources

For additional sentence stems for effective communication:

<http://www.teachthought.com/critical-thinking/sentence-stems-higher-level-conversation-classroom/>

## Pass or Veto

Proposal	Circle One
Detention should be replaced with community service. ....	Pass or Veto
Females should be allowed to play football. ....	Pass or Veto
Cell phones should be banned from classrooms. ....	Pass or Veto
Cyberbullying that occurs outside of school should be punished by the school. ....	Pass or Veto
PE should be required of all students throughout high school. ....	Pass or Veto
Youtube should be banned from classrooms. ....	Pass or Veto

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PE should be required of all students throughout high school. ....	Pass or Veto
Youtube should be banned from classrooms. ....	Pass or Veto





## Community and Collaboration Building: Lesson 4 Democracy & Deliberation

### Essential Question

How well do I communicate ideas and share in the decision making process in a team setting?

### Objectives

- Students will practice thinking critically and evaluatively about controversial social issues.
- Students will consider alternative perspectives and engage in a shared decision-making process.
- Students will learn communication strategies that will help them effectively participate in collaborative settings and civil public discourse.

### Materials

- Discussion Worksheet (Pgs. 22-23)
- Provided editorials or teacher selected primary sources (Pgs. 19-21)
- Optional: Computers/iPads for research

### Preparation

- Review effective communication strategies and communication sentence stems from previous day.
- Review the terms **Democracy** and **Deliberation** with students. **Discuss with students the importance of deliberation in a democracy and inform them that throughout the Speak Up! Speak Out! program, they will use deliberation skills to reach group decisions and engage in civil public discourse.**
- Prior to the lesson, determine whether you will use the primary sources provided, will select your own primary sources to distribute to students, or if resources and time permit, have students research relevant information on their own.
- Introduce the lesson to the students, inform them that in groups they will be deliberating on and debating the question, “Should voting be compulsory in our democracy?” and that each of them will have the opportunity to argue both for and against compulsory voting. **(Educator Note: For additional topics to choose from to accommodate grade level, curriculum alignment, or interest level, we suggest visiting the Deliberating in a Democracy website, <http://www.did.deliberating.org>).**



## Community & Collaboration Building: Lesson 4

### Learning Sequence

#### A. Assign Groups & Materials

Divide class into groups of four, and further into pairs. Assign one pair to **"Support Compulsory Voting"** (Pg. 19) and the other pair to **"Against Compulsory Voting."** (Pgs. 20-21) Give each pair the corresponding primary source and give each student a Discussion Worksheet.

#### B. Read & Plan

Instruct students to read their articles and agree on the most compelling supporting points of the argument to present. Tell students to prepare a persuasive presentation for the opposing pair using their Discussion Worksheet to guide presentation points. Encourage students to use the following sentence stems for effective communication:

"What I heard you say is..."

"The main point(s) is/ are..."

"I disagree because..."

"I believe \_\_\_\_\_ because..."

"Based on the evidence presented so far, I believe that..."

#### C. Present & Paraphrase

Have each pair present its position forcefully and persuasively to the other pair. Each pair has 3-5 minutes to present. Each pair listens, takes notes, and when the other team is finished with their presentation, the listening team repeats back the presenting team's argument for clarity. Then, listening teams may ask questions to clarify the presenting teams intent and rebut the argument.

#### D. Reverse & Repeat

Have pairs reverse positions and repeat the process. Ask students to be as sincere and forceful as they can with their new positions. Pairs will review the readings from the opposite side, add any new perspectives, deliberate key points, and present their arguments. The listening team will take notes and repeat back the presenting team's argument, asking questions for clarity and to rebut.

#### E. Drop & Deliberate

Each pair will now drop their advocacy positions and reconvene as a group. Their new assignment is to reach a decision by consensus. They will evaluate the information and summarize the best arguments for both points of view. Ultimately, they will agree on a shared position and write a summary statement that states their position with supporting reasons. Please review and model the Deliberation Rules on the next page before reconvening as a group.



## Community &amp; Collaboration Building: Lesson 4

## Learning Sequence (Cont.)

**Deliberation Rules**

1. I am critical of ideas, not people.
2. I focus on making the best decision possible, not winning.
3. I encourage everyone to participate and master all relevant information.
4. I listen to everyone's ideas, even if I do not agree.
5. I paraphrase what someone said if it is not clear.
6. I first bring out all the ideas and facts supporting both sides and then try to put them together in a way that makes sense.
7. I try to understand both sides of the issue.
8. I change my mind when the evidence clearly indicates to do so.

**Helpful sentence stems:**

What I hear you saying is...

The advantages of \_\_\_\_ outweigh the disadvantages of \_\_\_\_ because...

I believe this because...

Based on the evidence presented so far, I believe that...

I don't agree with you because...

***\*Post "Deliberation Rules" in a location visible to all students.***

**Modifications**

For middle school students it might be helpful to review readings as a whole class to ensure that the students have a common understanding of the issue being presented.

**Related Resources**

For more detailed lessons on Structured Academic Controversy and for primary resources visit The Deliberating in a Democracy Website. <http://www.did.deliberating.org> or [www.Teachinghistory.org](http://www.Teachinghistory.org)

*(Lesson adapted from Critical Thinking Through Structured Controversy, Johnson & Johnson, 1988)*

# Compulsory Voting: Why Citizens Should NOT be Required to Vote

Read this article and discuss with your partner the most compelling parts of the argument to present.

## Mandatory Voting Guarantees Ignorant Votes

Trevor Burrus, March 22, 2015

Compulsory voting is not just unwise, it is unconstitutional.

The First Amendment protects not just the right to speak, but the right to refrain from speaking. In 1943, the Supreme Court held that Jehovah's Witness students couldn't be forced to salute the flag or say the pledge of allegiance. Other cases have upheld the right to be free from forced speech in the context of compulsory union dues spent on political speech.

So, is not voting a form of speech? Not voting can certainly communicate a variety of messages, such as dissatisfaction, being fed-up with the two-party system or even being an anarchist. True, it is a crude method of communicating those messages, but it is no more crude than voting. A vote for a candidate could either indicate a begrudging acceptance or a whole-hearted endorsement. It could also just communicate that you hate the other guy (or girl).

The First Amendment covers the right not to vote. Moreover, Congress lacks constitutional authority to pass a law mandating voting, particularly in presidential elections. Article II of the Constitution gives Congress limited powers over presidential elections. State legislators have the power to choose how electors will be selected to the Electoral College, and there's actually nothing in the Constitution mandating states to give citizens the right to vote for electors. Congress only has power to determine "the Time of choosing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes."

Even if it were possible amend the Constitution to allow for compulsory voting, it would still be unwise.

Many people don't vote because they don't care enough or know enough to get involved, and there is no compelling evidence that mandatory

voting increases voter knowledge. Simply put, people who vote tend to know more about politics than those who don't. It is worth asking why we would want low information citizens voting in the first place. Just so they're "involved" even if they're trudging to the polls to avoid a fine?

American voter ignorance has become a familiar fact. In one Washington Post poll, only 36% could name the three branches of government. In another, 29% couldn't identify the current vice president. Should they be forced to vote? On the contrary, there is a very good argument that those with extremely low information have a moral obligation not to vote. Why should the rest of us have to suffer the possible consequences of their ignorance?

Moreover, in the American electoral system, not voting conveys valuable information. Every presidential election is about "getting out the base" — that is, getting core party members excited enough about a candidate to go out and vote. If turnout is low, then the party knows that, next time, they better run a candidate who excites rather than bores the base.

In Australia, where they have mandatory voting and a preference voting system — voters rank candidates in order of preference — they have a consistent problem of the "donkey vote." A small percentage of voters merely list the candidates in the order they are printed on the ballot. It is a small amount, but enough to turn a close election. Donkey votes might happen because of apathy or they could be protest votes, but in 1983 the Australian system had to be reformed to reduce the impact of donkey votes.

Ultimately, compulsory voting does not solve the problem that advocates hope it will solve: low voter engagement and knowledge.

# Compulsory Voting: Why Citizens should be Required to Vote

Read this article and discuss with your partner the most compelling parts of the argument to present.

## Telling Americans to Vote, or Else William A. Galston, November. 5, 2011

JURY duty is mandatory; why not voting? The idea seems vaguely un-American. Maybe so, but it's neither unusual nor undemocratic. And it would ease the intense partisan polarization that weakens our capacity for self-government and public trust in our governing institutions.

Despite the prevalence of mandatory voting in so many democracies, it's easy to dismiss the practice as a form of statism that couldn't work in America's individualistic and libertarian political culture. But consider Australia, whose political culture is closer to that of the United States than that of any other English-speaking country. Alarmed by a decline in voter turnout to less than 60 percent in 1922, Australia adopted mandatory voting in 1924, backed by small fines (roughly the size of traffic tickets) for nonvoting, rising with repeated acts of nonparticipation. The law established permissible reasons for not voting, like illness and foreign travel, and allows citizens who faced fines for not voting to defend themselves.

The results were remarkable. In the 1925 election, the first held under the new law, turnout soared to 91 percent. In recent elections, it has hovered around 95 percent. The law also changed civic norms. Australians are more likely than before to see voting as an obligation. The negative side effects many feared did not materialize. For example, the percentage of ballots intentionally spoiled or completed randomly as acts of resistance remained on the order of 2 to 3 percent.

Proponents offer three reasons in favor of mandatory voting. The first is straightforwardly civic. A democracy can't be strong if its citizenship is weak. And right now American citizenship is attenuated — strong on rights, weak on responsibilities. There is less and less that being a citizen requires of us, especially after the abolition of the draft. Requiring people to vote in national elections

once every two years would reinforce the principle of reciprocity at the heart of citizenship.

The second argument for mandatory voting is democratic. Ideally, a democracy will take into account the interests and views of all citizens. But if some regularly vote while others don't, officials are likely to give greater weight to participants. This might not matter much if nonparticipants were evenly distributed through the population. But political scientists have long known that they aren't. People with lower levels of income and education are less likely to vote, as are young adults and recent first-generation immigrants.

Changes in our political system have magnified these disparities. During the 1950s and '60s, when turnout rates were much higher, political parties reached out to citizens year-round. At the local level these parties, which reformers often criticized as "machines," connected even citizens of modest means and limited education with neighborhood institutions and gave them a sense of participation in national politics as well. (In its heyday, organized labor reinforced these effects.) But in the absence of these more organic forms of political mobilization, the second-best option is a top-down mechanism of universal mobilization.

Mandatory voting would tend to even out disparities stemming from income, education and age, enhancing our system's inclusiveness. It is true, as some object, that an enforcement mechanism would impose greater burdens on those with fewer resources. But this makes it all the more likely that these citizens would respond by going to the polls, and they would stand to gain far more than the cost of a traffic ticket.

The third argument for mandatory voting goes to the heart of our current ills. Our low turnout rate pushes American politics toward increased polarization.

Community & Collaboration Building: Part 2

# Compulsory Voting: Why Citizens should be Required to Vote (Continued)

Continue reading this article and discuss with your partner the most compelling parts of the argument to present.

## Telling Americans to Vote, or Else (Cont.)

William A. Galston, November. 5, 2011

The reason is that hard-core partisans are more likely to dominate lower-turnout elections, while those who are less fervent about specific issues and less attached to political organizations tend not to participate at levels proportional to their share of the electorate.

A distinctive feature of our constitutional system — elections that are quadrennial for president but biennial for the House of Representatives — magnifies these effects. It's bad enough that only three-fifths of the electorate turns out to determine the next president, but much worse that only two-fifths of our citizens vote in House elections two years later. If events combine to energize one part of the political spectrum and dishearten the other, a relatively small portion of the electorate can shift the system out of all proportion to its numbers.

Some observers are comfortable with this asymmetry. But if you think that today's intensely polarized politics impedes governance and exacerbates mistrust — and that is what most Americans firmly (and in my view rightly) believe — then you should be willing to consider reforms that would strengthen the forces of conciliation.

Imagine our politics with laws and civic norms that yield near-universal voting. Campaigns could devote far less money to costly, labor-intensive get-out-the-vote efforts. Media gurus wouldn't have the same incentive to drive down turnout with negative advertising. Candidates would know that they must do more than mobilize their bases with red-meat rhetoric on hot-button issues. Such a system would improve not only electoral politics but also the legislative process. Rather than focusing on symbolic gestures whose major purpose is to agitate partisans, Congress might actually roll up its sleeves and tackle the serious, complex issues it ignores.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

## Pair Discussion Worksheet

### Key Reason "For"...

1.

2.

3.

### Key Reason "Against"...

1.

2.

3.

## Group Consensus Worksheet

Key Reason "For"...	Key Reason "Against"...
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Position Summary



## Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Toolkit

## A. Team-Building Activity Resources

**Team-building games and activities** are great ways to help groups develop cooperation, decision making, and communication skills. A key part of these exercises is facilitating a time of group discussion after the activity. Team building games can also provide a useful entry point to teaching SEL skills for your group (i.e. Cooperation, Communication, Responsible Decision-making, Problem-solving, Perspective-taking, Empathy, and Leadership).

A well-planned and prepared activity, followed by thought-provoking questions, can be a significant learning experience:

- What worked? What didn't work?
- Who provided leadership?
- How did you work together as a team?
- Was communication good or not?
- Did the group support one another?
- Did you learn anything from this activity?

Please use the following resources as options for team -building in your SUSO classroom.

## 1. The River Crossing

[http://www.teampedia.net/wiki/index.php?title=River\\_Crossing](http://www.teampedia.net/wiki/index.php?title=River_Crossing)

## 2. NASA'S Moon Survival Test

<https://www.humber.ca/centreforteachingandlearning/assets/files/pdfs/MoonExercise.pdf>

## 3. EGG DROP

Allow 30 minutes for this activity. Divide your group into teams of 4-6. Supply each team with an equal amount of paper, cardboard, toilet rolls, bubble wrap, string, elastic bands, straws etc. Then give each team a hard-boiled egg.

The challenge is to see which team can make the best capsule and parachute for their egg to survive a drop from a great height (recommend 10-12'). The least impact damaged or cracked egg wins. This project can require some considerable teamwork and imagination. Of course, you can be extra challenging, and invite them to try the exercise with a raw egg!

## 4. ALL ABOARD!

This activity can be run many ways. Basically, the group must cooperate to try and fit into an ever-decreasing area. How far can they go?

Take a large sheet and spread it on the floor. Have the young people (or each team) stand on the sheet. Once they have done this fold the sheet in half and challenge the group to repeat their previous success. Continue this process, making the sheet smaller each round. Eventually, it will become so small that your group (or each team) will require a great deal of cooperation, teamwork and ingenuity.

Make sure your group are comfortable with this game as they will need to get physically close and support one another. Alternatively, you can have two teams competing against each other – boys vs. girls



## SEL Toolkit

## B. Problem Solving Steps

**Six Steps to Decision Making/Problem Solving****1. Identify and define the problem.**

Consider what an optimal outcome or goal might be.

**2. List possible options/alternatives.**

Use a brainstorming technique where you put a lot of ideas on paper. It is important to let the students come up with the ideas and write everything down even if some of it doesn't seem workable; this is a brainstorm! (so encourage students to honor the process). If they can't seem to get started (give them time to think first), ask if you may make a suggestion. Making it silly or outlandish may encourage them to be free to say their ideas. Keep going until they can't think of any more ideas/options. Remember not to be judgmental. This is just a gathering of ideas.

**3. Evaluate the options.**

Let the students evaluate the options, with you there for guidance, support, and encouragement. If you see a point they are not thinking of, ask them if you can bring up a point. By asking their permission to bring up a point, they are more likely to really listen to your point and not consider it a lecture or put down of their ideas and thought process.

Having the students ask the following questions can help them evaluate their options: *Is it unkind? Is it hurtful? Is it unfair? Is it dishonest? Is it in line with the goal?*

**4. Choose one option.**

It is important that the solution to the problem does not create a problem for someone else.

**5. Make a plan and do it.**

This is probably the most difficult step. If their choice is not acceptable to the other person, they may need to go back to the list of options.

**6. Evaluate the problem and solution.**

This is probably the most neglected step in decision making but it is critical to the learning process. Look at: What brought the problem about? Can a similar problem be prevented in the future? How was the present problem solved? They can feel good about their success—or learn and take ownership of looking for another solution. Avoid saying, “I told you so,” if their solution didn’t work.



## SEL Toolkit

## C. Personal Strategies to Manage Emotions

**We suggest that students can choose their own strategies and write them down,** as long as they are school appropriate. Teachers should keep copies of student strategies. All chosen strategies must be time-limited to 5-7 minutes when in use.

- Take a break (respectfully excuse yourself from group);
- Practice progressive relaxation by flexing and relaxing different muscle groups
- Walk it off (up and down hall or other designated teacher-approved location)
- Take several deep breaths (inhale through the nose, exhale through the mouth)
- Listen to a little music on headphones
- Sip cold water and visualize being in a place where you always feel calm and comfortable
- Talk the problem through with an adult or friend and brainstorm ideas for how to return to the group and restart (i.e. apologize and jump back in; ask the group if you can address what just happened and talk about it; state a need to the group in order to avoid future upset feelings- "I felt ignored when I tried to express my opinion and people kept talking over me. Can we please make sure everyone gets a chance to participate..."etc.)
- Negotiate: it's a give and take to problem solve-be willing to give a little to get a little
- Use problem-solving steps to talk through the problem with a peer



## SEL Toolkit

## D. Self-Regulation: Strategy for Calming

**Students can become overly stressed during group work for a variety of reasons.** It is important that your students know that is OK to feel frustrated or otherwise upset during conflict within the group, but it is not OK to lose control and harm peers with words or actions. It is imperative that you spend a little time working with your students to identify different personal strategies that they can use to manage their emotions if the need arises.

*\*Use section C, Personal Strategies to Manage Emotions, of the SEL Toolkit as a resource to facilitate this strategy.*

### Activity Summary:

1. Begin by discussing the meaning of the term “emotional trigger.” An Emotional Trigger is a response to a person, situation, event, dialogue, reading, film, or other content providing entity, that provokes a strong emotional reaction. Often we are not self aware when we are triggered, and fall into reacting prior to sifting through our strong emotional response.
2. Students should be able identify what his or her “triggers” are; then he or she must recognize that they need to use a personal strategy in order to calm down and get back on track. Provide students with the opportunity to self-reflect on what their own triggers are and which strategies might work best for them.
3. Have students create and write down with a plan of action for when they are emotionally triggered. Allow students the opportunity to share with their plan of actions with their group if they feel comfortable doing so. The teacher should collect the plans for review, make copies, and return originals during the next session.

This way, if a student looks like he/she is becoming agitated, the teacher can intervene and say, let’s review your “plan of action.” If needed, students can step away from the situation in order to start the process of calming down and getting back on track.

Possible Triggers: Students can discuss what their own personal triggers are. These are general categories you can use to guide their discussion.

- **Emotional State** (e.g., angry, depressed, happy, sad)
- **Physical State** (e.g., relaxed, tense, tired, agitated)
- **Presence of Others** (e.g., when the behavior occurs are certain people present?)
- **Disagreements with others** (when you and a peer disagree about a course of action or when someone seems to be dominating the direction of the group)
- **Physical Setting** (e.g., home, school, party, unfamiliar environment)
- **Social Pressure** (e.g., are you forced or coerced into doing things you don’t want to? Do you get upset when you don’t get your way or when you want your idea to be heard and others are not listening?)
- **Activities** (e.g., work, working at home, playing sports, watching TV, playing cards)
- **Thoughts** (e.g., evaluate your self-talk; is it negative or positive?)





## SEL Toolkit

## E. Summary of Sentence Stems

## I. To clarify meaning...

- I understood you say...
- I guess I misheard. Please...
- Could you please explain...
- It was my understanding that...
- What I hear you saying is...
- I thought you said...
- I'm confused when you say \_\_\_\_\_.  
Can you elaborate?

## II. To disagree...

- I don't agree, and here's why...
- I don't agree with you because...
- I see it differently because...
- I agree that \_\_\_\_\_, but we also  
have to consider that...
- We see \_\_\_\_\_ differently.

## III. For deliberation...

- The main point(s) is/ are..."
- I believe \_\_\_\_\_ because..."
- Based on the evidence presented  
so far, I believe that..."
- The advantages of \_\_\_\_\_ outweigh the  
disadvantages of \_\_\_\_\_ because...
- Based on the evidence presented  
so far, I believe that...

IV. General "I" Statements to use  
instead of "You" Statements

- I want...
- I feel...
- I would appreciate if...
- I need...
- I think...
- I expect...
- I wish...
- I would like it very much if...

# Project Process Checklist

## Step 1: Identify a Problem

- ☐ Investigate Community
- ☐ Brainstorm list of specific problems of interest
- ☐ Rank suitability of topics based on criteria in SMART Decision Matrix
- ☐ Choose a problem that meets the most criteria and is of highest interest to the group

## Step 2: Explore the Problem

- ☐ Write a specific problem statement
- ☐ Choose the methods you will use to collect data on your issue (may use all methods)
  - Community Survey (recommended first)
  - Interviews (with key decision makers, experts, allies, opponents, members of impacted community)
  - Collect Existing Data (from non-profits, policy institutes, and researchers that work on your chosen issue in your community and in other places)
- ☐ Do your interviews, other data collection and research regarding the problem's root cause, current status and possible solutions
- ☐ Record the information you gathered. Make several lists:
  - Statistics that support why your problem is worthy of attention
  - List everything that has already been tried to address your problem (what did/didn't work)
  - List people and organizations who could help you address the problem
- ☐ Have a discussion with your team about your findings
  - How can you convince the judges that your problem needs to be solved?
  - What were some of the most impressive statistics that you found?
  - What do you think needs to be done?
- ☐ Identify Root Causes
- ☐ Choose one specific, actionable root cause of your issue to focus on
- ☐ Identify key players: decision makers, allies and possible opponents for your issue

## Step 3: Identify a Solution

- ☐ Brainstorm, research, and make a list of possible solutions
- ☐ Rank your solutions and come to a consensus on one solution
- ☐ Create a plan for implementation
- ☐ Outline civic action steps

## Step 4: Prepare & Present

- ☐ Write Informative Speech
- ☐ Write Persuasive Speech
- ☐ Assign Presentation Roles
- ☐ Outline sequence for digital presentation to correspond with speeches
- ☐ Create the digital presentation
- ☐ Present your ideas at your classroom/school-wide civics fair.

# THE 4 STEPS OF A **SPEAK UP SPEAK OUT** PROJECT

## STEP 1

### Identify a Problem



- Investigate community needs
- Brainstorm community needs or issues that matter to you
- Choose a community problem

## STEP 2

### Explore the Problem



- Conduct Primary and Secondary Research
- Examine Community Perspectives
- Identify Root Cause
- Select an aspect of issue to focus on
- Identify Key Stakeholders

## STEP 3

### Identify a Solution



- Brainstorm, Research & Choose Solution
- Define Solution: Policy or Private Action?
- Plan a Solution
- Create a Civic Action Plan

## STEP 4

### Prepare and Present



- Write Informative & Persuasive Speeches
- Create Digital presentation
- Host a Classroom/School-wide Civics Fair

# Identify a Problem

## STEP 1

### Student Checklist



- ☐ Investigate Community
- ☐ Brainstorm list of specific problems of interest
- ☐ Rank suitability of topics based on criteria in SMART Decision Matrix
- ☐ Choose a problem that meets the most criteria and is of highest interest to the group

### Pointers for identifying a successful topic:

- Keep it local. Relations with India may be interesting, but that isn't a local problem. Select a problem that directly affects your community.
- Narrow the scope and get specific. Don't let the team choose a problem that is too large to cover in a semester. For example, Healthcare or Global Warming. Coach them to identify the specific aspects of complex issues.
- Name the problem. Sometimes teams are eager to suggest solutions or actions, without knowing what problem they're trying to address. Coach them to name the problem their idea responds to and explain why that problem deserves attention.
- Give students ownership. Encourage students to choose problems that they really care about and that actually influence their lives. Let them have freedom to explore and choose their own topics.

### Possible Community Issue Areas:

- Social Issues (bullying, disability issues, special education issues, LGBT issues at school, voting, discrimination)
- Health (school nutrition, services offered in school clinics, food politics, obesity, physical education, rec center programs, substance use/abuse, mental health)
- Environment (water use, energy use, school recycling programs, parks and public spaces)
- City Planning (housing development, business development, use of abandoned structures, traffic congestion, city buses, rail, affordable housing.)
- Public Safety (crime and violence at school or in the community; community/police relations; traffic safety; safe driving; safe travel to and from school)
- Economic Issues (jobs for teens, internships, job training programs, affording college, scholarship access)
- Academic Issues (cheating, literacy, access to tutoring, truancy, drop-out, class offerings, arts and music education, afterschool programs, parent involvement)

### Objectives

- Students will be able to identify local community problems and will identify areas of personal interest
- Students will discern the difference between a local community problem and a national problem
- Students will investigate their communities to identify community problems
- Students will engage in the decision making process to identify a community problem

### Related Resources

*The below lessons are optional and can be used for a more intensive Speak Up! Speak Out! experience.*

- Middle school supplemental lesson to implement prior to beginning Step 1: Why Citizens Should Participate
- High school supplemental lessons to implement prior to beginning Step 1: Defining Community, Reading: Characteristics of Community

*Videos documenting youth community leaders to inspire students*

- No Kid Hungry: Lily, Her mom, and No Kid Hungry [https://secure.nokidhungry.org/site/SPageNavigator/dd\\_welcome\\_refresh\\_nolb](https://secure.nokidhungry.org/site/SPageNavigator/dd_welcome_refresh_nolb)
- Activate -iCivics Game: Similar to the SUSO process, Activate walks students through the process of implementing a community campaign for a community issue. Recommended for middle school students. <https://www.icivics.org/games/activate>

**Part 1: Identifying Criteria for a SUSO Topic****Materials**

- Barbara Brown Video, “Choosing a SMART Local Problem” - <https://vimeo.com/18537812>
- Matrix list of Possible Issue Areas
- Optional: Computers for research, community newspapers

Time: 30 Minutes

**Learning Sequence**

**A.** Pass out the “Choosing a SMART Local Problem” matrix to students and explain that students can use the SMART acronym for problem solving in other areas of life. Lead students through a reflection to think of examples of where they could use the SMART tool for problem solving.

**B.** Watch the video on community hero, Barbara Brown.

**C.** Instruct students to complete the matrix as they watch the video and for a few minutes after they watch the video.

**D.** Review the matrix, ask students:

1. What the focus of Barbara Brown’s issue? Was it a community problem or a national problem? What makes you think so? Explain that the topic “Recycling” is a national issue, but Barbara narrowed the focus to “Oil Recycling “ in her community--not in the state of Texas, not in the U.S., not in another country, but in Victoria County. Eventually, she did spread the program to several counties, but to begin, she started small with her immediate county.
2. Were Barbara and her team able to determine the magnitude of the problem? Did they believe in their ability to do something about it? How do you know?

3. Were her friends involved in the effort also inspired by the cause? What makes you think so? Did everyone want to research and solve this problem?

4. Did her community issue deserve attention? How do you know?

5. How long do you think it took her to make a plan for her idea, collect research, and schedule a meeting for the commissioners court? 1 month? 4 months? 1 year? 2 years? Could she have performed those first three civic action steps in a semester?

**E.** Explore list of “Possible Community Issue Areas” and discuss examples with students.

**F. Optional:** For further exploration, in groups, have students explore various community newspapers, newspaper websites, and local news websites. This information will be used in “Part 2” of Identifying a Problem.

**G. Homework:** Have students interview their family and friends a using the “Community Needs Interview” form for ideas on community issues that deserve attention. **This is an informal interview and information will be used in “Part 2” of Identifying a Problem.**

## Choosing a SMART Local Problem

Enter a number for every criterion for each possible problem: **3=yes, 2=sort of, 1=no.**  
The problem with the *highest total score* is most likely to be your best option.

	Criteria	Example Problem: Barbara Brown, Oil Recycling	Problem 1:	Problem 2:	Problem 3:
Local	Is the problem located in your school or community?				
Specific	Can you describe who is involved in this problem, where it happens, when it happens, or what it looks like?				
Measurable	Can you measure this problem? For example: How many people are affected by it? Or, How often does it happen? Or, Is it increasing in size or frequency?				
Attainable	Is this a problem that your team could impact?				
Realistic	Is this a problem that you can and want to research?				
Timely	Does this problem deserve attention right now? Could this problem be tackled in a reasonable amount of time?				
	Total				

## Community Needs Interview

### 1. What would you change if you were in charge of your neighborhood/city?

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### 2. What is something that would make your neighborhood/city better?

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### 3. If you feel that your interviewee is having trouble coming up with thoughts on the questions, review the following issue areas with them and ask:

A. Is there an issue(s) from this list that you see in our community or that personally affects you? In what ways does it affect you?

---

---

---

B. What do you think are the causes for this issue (s)?

---

---

---

#### Possible Community Issue Areas:

- **Social Issues** (bullying, disability issues, special education issues, LGBT issues at school, voting, discrimination)
- **Health** (school nutrition, services offered in school clinics, food politics, obesity, physical education, rec center programs, substance use/abuse, mental health)
- **Environment** (water use, energy use, school recycling programs, parks and public spaces)
- **City Planning** (housing development, business development, use of abandoned structures, traffic congestion, city buses, rail, affordable housing,)
- **Public Safety** (crime and violence at school or in the community; community/police relations; traffic safety; safe driving; safe travel to and from school)
- **Economic Issues** (jobs for teens, internships, job training programs, affording college, scholarship access)
- **Academic Issues** (cheating, literacy, access to tutoring, truancy, drop-out, class offerings, arts and music education, after-school programs, parent involvement)

### 4. Use insight gained from this interview as a springboard into the brainstorming session with your team.

*(Questions based on Millenson et al. 2014, pg 32)*



## Part 2: Brainstorming Ideas

### Prep

- Label stations, wall space, or desk clusters around room with items from the “Possible Community Issue Areas” list. Each label should include 1-2 examples of problems that would fall under each specific area.
- Draw a spectrum line on the front board, labeled general on one end and specific on the other.
- Divide students into small groups and assign groups to each station.
- Review “Brainstorming in 9 Easy Steps” found in *Collaboration & Community Building: Lesson 1*.
- Give each group sticky notes and markers.
- Have students designate a reporter and recorder.
- Ask students to be mindful of the communication strategies they have learned from the previous *Collaboration & Communication* lessons and to review the sentence stems that they will use in their brainstorming session.

Materials: Sticky notes, Markers, White Board

Time: 30 Minutes

### Learning Sequence

**A.** Post the following guiding questions in a place visible to all students:

- What are specific problems you have seen or been affected by in your state or city?
- What are specific problems you have seen or been affected by in your school?

**B.** Students will have three minutes to come up with various specific issues in their community related to that issue area. The recorder will write down each new idea that is proposed on the sticky notes and post them to the designated station.

**C.** After the three minutes are up, rotate groups clockwise to all of the other stations, repeating the process and adding new sticky notes.

**D.** Once the groups have returned to their original stations, each reporter will share back with the large group all of the ideas that were proposed for that station’s issue area. When the reporter is finished, the group will come up to the front board and place the sticky notes to the appropriate places on the spectrum.

**E.** Ask students if there are any other issues in their community or school that were not mentioned but they feel passionate about and would like to add?

**F.** Once all sticky notes are on the spectrum, combine similar ideas to eliminate duplication. Combining ideas lets many thoughts come together in creative ways and can make problems manageable. For example: Parks, Dropouts, Crime = providing viable recreational opportunities for young people.

**G.** Have students put their initials on the 3 specific issues that they’re most interested in.

**H.** If you haven’t assigned students to project teams yet, use these areas of interest to assign students to teams.

**Team Building Tip:** Pick a value/behavior from the social contract and inform students that you will be looking for that behavior today as they work in groups.

## Part 2: Brainstorming Ideas (Continued)

## Learning Sequence (Cont.)

**Modification for a small group**

- Using the “Possible Community Issue Areas” list, give students ten minutes to independently brainstorm as many community issues in their city or school as they can come up with.
- Ask the group to share their ideas. Once all of the ideas are out in the open, begin by combining similar ideas to eliminate duplication. Combining ideas lets many thoughts come together in creative ways and can make problems manageable. *For example: Parks, Dropouts, Crime = providing viable recreational opportunities for young people.*
- Have each group member cast their votes for their top three topics; take a hand vote and keep a tally. Tally the votes and determine final three choices. Take another hand vote to select final project problem.

### Part 3: Selecting a Community Problem

Materials: Criteria matrix handout for each student

Time: 30 Minutes

#### Learning Sequence

**A.** Review communication strategies and sentence stems to help with a shared decision-making process - Listen, Paraphrase, Calmly Communicate your Perspective, Don't Make it Personal, and Use "I" statements instead of "You" statements. Remind students to use the following sentence stems:

- a. "What I heard you say is..."
- b. "Could you please explain..."
- c. "I disagree because..."
- d. "I don't agree, and here's why..."
- e. "I believe this because..."

**B.** In teams, have students decide on their top three community problems of interest.

**C.** Have students independently complete the matrix. Then as a large group, complete the matrix together, coming to a consensus on the criteria for each community problem.

**D.** Students will continue in the shared decision-making process to ultimately select one community problem to be the focus of their project. All team members must agree before moving forward.

**E.** Conference with each group to confirm that the selected issue is local and that they concretely identify with it.

## STEP 1

### Community Problem Reflection

Time: 15 minutes

These are questions that can be posted to students as a group discussion or done individually in the form of a worksheet or journaling activity.

- Why is this issue a problem that people should care about?
- How does this issue impact your own life, if at all?
- Who is impacted by the problem?
- What will be different about your school or community if this problem is resolved?
- Who might already know something useful about this problem?
- What are you most excited about doing in this project?
- What are you worried or nervous about?

## STEP 2

# Explore the Problem



### Student Checklist

- ☐ **Write a specific problem statement**
- ☐ **Choose the methods you will use to collect data on your issue (May use all methods).**
  - Community Survey (recommended first)
  - Interviews (with key decision makers, experts, allies, opponents, members of the impacted community)
  - Collect Existing Data (from nonprofits, policy institutes, and researchers that work on your chosen issue in your community)
- ☐ **Do your interviews and other data collection and research regarding the problem's root cause, current status and possible solutions**
- ☐ **Record the information you gathered. Make several lists:**
  - Statistics that support why your problem is worthy of attention
  - List everything that has already been tried to address your problem (what did/didn't work)
  - List people and organizations who could help you address the problem
- ☐ **Have a discussion with your team about your findings**
  - How can you convince the judges that your problem needs to be solved?
  - What were some of the most impressive statistics that you found?
  - What do you think needs to be done?

### Objectives

- Using web resources, community surveys, interviews and or field observations, students will investigate the “impacted community” and use this information to better understand the problem and determine the root cause of the problem.
- Students will use prior knowledge and research to brainstorm and identify root causes to their community problem.
- Students will design and implement community surveys and personal interviews. Students will organize and evaluate research to identify key stakeholders and synthesize conclusions.
- Students will practice research skills such as evaluation of sources and analyzing relevant information.

### Related Resources

- Supplemental lessons from Annette Strauss Institute for:
  - “Evaluating Data”: [Have Data, Now What?](#) (PDF)
  - “Identifying Root Cause”: [What's The Root?](#) (PDF)
  - “Identifying Key Players”: [Who's In Control?](#) (PDF)



## Part 1: Initial Root Cause Brainstorming

### Materials

- Chart Paper
- Example of “Root Cause Web: Initial Brainstorming” displayed

### Learning Sequence

#### A. Write a problem statement.

A problem statement is the description of the issue that needs to be addressed and is stated in one sentence. Ask students to describe their problem in the most specific terms possible. For example, if their topic is “smoking,” what specific aspect of smoking negatively affects their community, what specifically would they like to address? Teen smoking? Smoking in public spaces? Writing out this statement will confirm understanding of the problem to be addressed and drive students research to identify the root causes for the problem.

#### Examples:

- Crude oil waste is polluting Victoria County’s drinking water.
- There is a high population of stray dogs in San Antonio.
- Indoor air pollution is affecting the health of many Dallas residents.
- Teen smoking is on the rise in our USA High School.

#### B. Ask student to turn their problem statement into a question.

For example: “Teen smoking is on the rise in our USA High School” will become, “Why is teen smoking on the rise in our high school?”

#### C. Review “Root Cause Web: Initial Brainstorming” with students

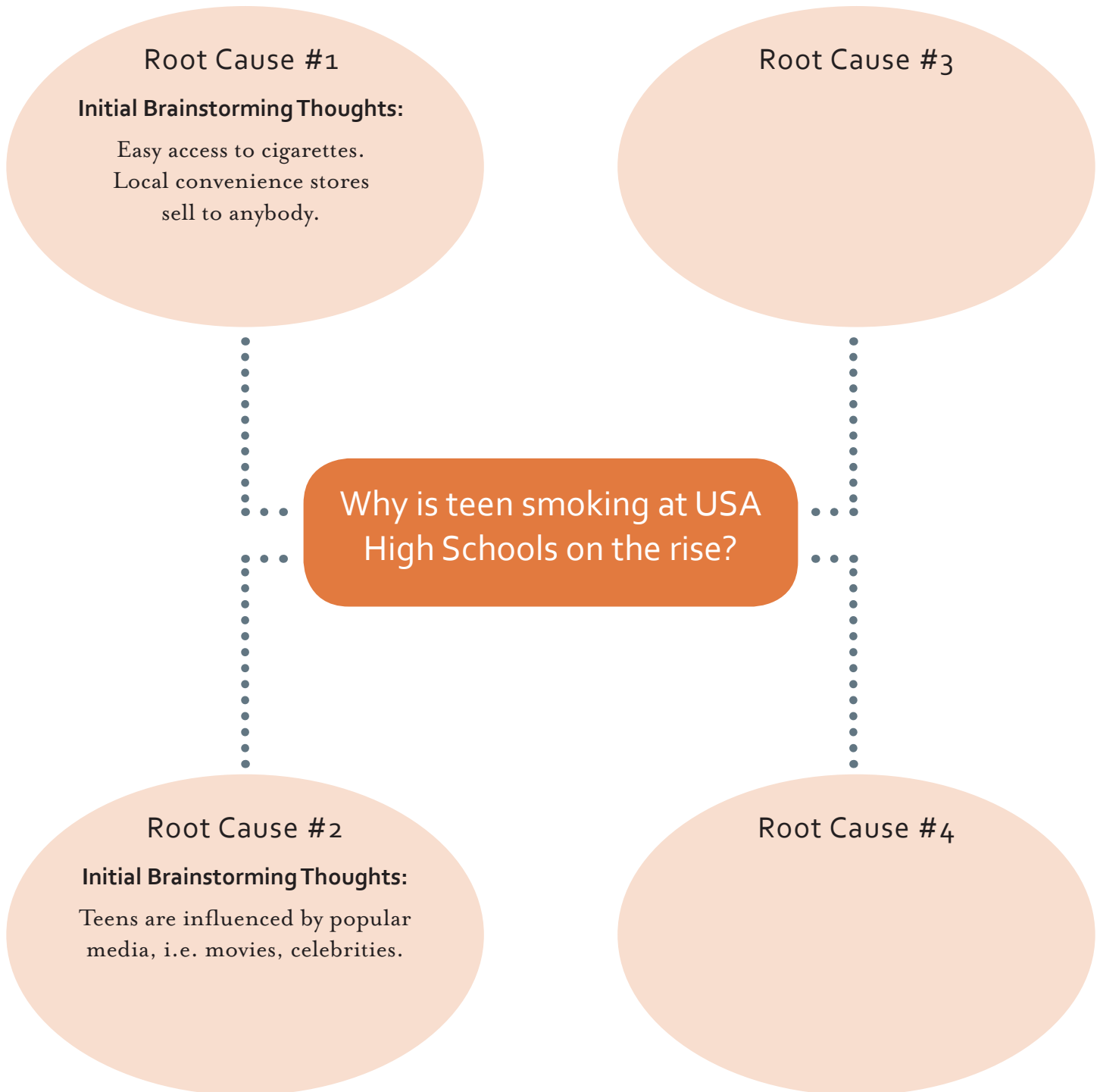
#### D. Give each team piece of chart paper. Ask them to write their question in the middle of their chart paper. The key is to have students think in terms of, “Why does this problem exist?”

#### E. Ask teams to brainstorm on social and cultural factors that contribute to the problem -these are root causes.

#### F. After this initial brainstorming session for root causes, ask student to keep their charts. Students will return to their “Root Cause Web” after they have conducted research. Evaluating community perspectives and collected data on the problem will provide the insight needed to further define initial thoughts of the root causes, rebut initial thoughts or shed light on root causes they were unaware of.

# Root Cause Web

## Root Cause Web Example: Initial Brainstorming



## Part 2: Collecting Data

To fully understand the problem they have selected, participants need to evaluate multiple perspectives and sources related to the problem. Using the goals below will help shape a research strategy.

### Goals for Research:

1. To better understand the impacted community Who specifically does it affect?  
In what ways does it affect them? How long has it been a problem?
2. To prove that it is a problem that deserves immediate attention using statistics, testimony, survey feedback and/or observation for evidence.
3. To determine if there are school policies, laws, or government regulations affecting the issue
4. To identify root causes and define an aspect of problem to focus on.
5. To identify key players who affect the problem or who are affected by the problem.
6. To become aware of solutions other communities, organizations, or schools have tried
7. To create the foundational knowledge necessary to craft a solution.

**Plan for Collecting Data:** Dividing up research tasks is an efficient way to achieve goals. Participants can use the “Team Work Plan” handout on [Pg. 42](#) to guide planning their research efforts. Use the above goals to guide research efforts.

### Team Work Plan Example:

What needs to be done?	Who will do this part?	By when?	✓ Done
Create and Implement Community Survey	Mark and Andrea	September 13, 2016	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interview Non-profit who deals with our issue	Cassie and Mary	September 16, 2016	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research local newspapers/online for evidence or statistics that our issue deserves attention now	Edward and Kayla	September 16, 2016	<input type="checkbox"/>



## Team Work Plan

What needs to be done?	Who will do this part?	By when?	✓ Done
			<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>

### Types of Research:

Community Survey (Primary Research)  
 Interview (Primary Research)  
 Direct Observation (Primary Research)  
 Web Research - Collecting Data from Existing Sources (Secondary research)

\*Due to the nature of the Speak Up! Speak Out! timeline, we recommend students restrict their research to only one community survey, one interview, and a limited number of web resources to use during this step. Note that students may have to conduct additional research in Step 3, Identifying a Solution.

## Part 2: Collecting Data (Continued)

### A. Writing a Community Survey

A community survey is a great way to gain insight into the problem easily and quickly from a large group of people who deal with the identified problem. For this reason, it might be helpful to begin with a community survey. The goal of the survey is to find out:

- Do people in the impacted community think that this issue is a problem?
- How severe is the problem? (How often does it happen? How many people notice it, experience it, or participate in the problem?)
- According to people in the impacted community, why does the problem exist? What has caused the problem?
- How do people in the impacted community want things to be different?
- What do people in the impacted community think should be done about it?

Materials: “Community Survey Guidelines” handout found on [Pg. 44](#), technology to create surveys

Time: Two 45 minute class periods

### Learning Sequence

#### A. Identify the purpose of the survey:

For example, “To find out why teen smoking is on the rise at USA High School.”

#### B. Identify the audience:

Ask students to describe who is in the “impacted community” for this problem. Is it fellow students? People who live in a certain neighborhood? People who use a certain street? People who like a certain subject? People who have a certain health issue?

**C. Create questions:** Using the “Community Survey Guidelines” ask students to brainstorm a list of questions that will help them find out the information they need.

#### D. Organize questions & draft questionnaire:

Using tips from the “Community Survey Guidelines,” teams will edit questions and select final questions to be placed on the survey. After final questions are selected, students should sequence questions in a way that makes sense and creates a cohesive

flow. Finally, have students type and print questionnaire or use a web resource such as “Survey Monkey” to create the final questionnaire.

**E. Administer survey to target audience:** This may be a neighboring class, to the students in the lunchroom, or any other community members that are relevant and serves the survey’s purpose.

**F. Analyze results:** Depending on the type of questions generated for the survey, the methods for organizing and evaluating the collected data will vary. Encourage students to create lists, charts or graphs to explain the data, find percentages and count, response frequency. If using a tool such as “Survey Monkey,” students may use a survey to generate a report. Ultimately, students will use this information to draw conclusions important to their project goals.

# Community Survey Guidelines

## Helpful Hints for Writing a Questionnaire:

- Keep it short (generally one page is sufficient).
- Have clear instructions.
- Test the survey on the class first before giving it out to others. Make sure that everything makes sense.
- Don't ask questions that will embarrass anyone or invade participants' privacy.
- If it is an anonymous survey, make sure it stays that way. Do not leave survey results in places where others might access them.
- Don't reward or punish participants based on their responses.
- Questions should be clear, not too short or long, appropriate for the audience, and respectful

## Types of Questions for Surveys

Teams will need to decide on which question format will best fit their needs.

1. Open-ended questions – These questions give subjects a blank space and allow them to fill in a unique response based on their experiences or opinions. This survey question type is generally used to obtain general, rather than specific, feedback. For example, “Why do you think that people at our school smoke?”

### Pro

Writing the questions is relatively easy

### Con

Compiling the information is more difficult than multiple choice or ranking questions

## Tips for Open-Ended Questions:

- Make sure that your questions are specific and not too general. For example, if you would like to know about the reasons for teen smoking, and you asked the following question, “What do you think about teen smoking?” You might receive general responses that will not help you draw conclusions, responses such as, “It’s bad” or “I wish they didn’t.” Instead try, “What are reasons you believe contribute to teen smoking in our community?”
- Avoid confusing and lengthy questions. For example, “What do you think about crude oil and

do you think it’s hurting our environment because we don’t recycle it?” This is actually two questions, not one, and without more context, the subject may not know what you mean about “recycling” it.

- Avoid biased questions. If you begin questions with “Don’t you agree...” you will influence the subject to agree with you and not be authentic to their opinion.

2. Multiple-choice questions – These questions can help your students to collect specific information with specific answer choices. For example, if you wanted to know which problem was most relevant, difficult, or meaningless in the eyes of the community, your students might ask:

Which of the following is the leading contributor to smoking on our campus?

- A. Convenience stores sell to anyone
- B. Tobacco industry marketing
- C. No one understands the risks.
- D. College students smoke Hookah and Biddis so students think it’s harmless.
- E. Staff and students smoke together at the rec. center so students think it’s cool.

## Tips for Multiple Choice Questions:

- Cover all possible reasons
- Avoid more than five choices
- Be clear and concise

## Community Survey Guidelines (Cont.)

3. Rating scales – These questions allow students to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with specific statements. This type of question is very useful when you need an overall measurement on a particular topic, opinion or experience. Typically, a statement is presented, then their peers can respond on a scale that indicates how much or how little they agree with the statement. For example:

For the following statements, please indicate whether you agree or disagree.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Smoking is a problem at our school	1	2	3	4	5
Advertising by the tobacco industry makes teenagers want to smoke	1	2	3	4	5

### Tips for Rating Scale Questions:

- Stick to 5 scale points
- Use to determine frequency as well as opinion.  
Ex. Use “Never, Seldom, Sometimes, Often, Always” when wanting to know how often somebody does something, such as recycling.
- Be clear and concise.

\* Guidelines are adapted from the Florida Center for Instructional Technology, “Classroom Assessment” Found at: <http://fcit.usf.edu/assessment/attitude/surveyb.html>

### Part 2: Collecting Data (Continued)

#### B. Online Research

**Materials:** Internet access, Online or Print Data Collection Form

**Time:** Independent work time

Though online research students will discover information on their topic that's already out there. For specificity it is important that students begin with research from local sources such as nonprofits, government, local newspaper or local magazines.

#### Helpful Hints for Library and Internet Research:

- Guide teams as they search for supporting materials to make their cases. Facilitating a mini-lesson on identifying credible web resources and cyber citizenship is recommended.
- Search online and at the library. Help them use the Internet to find local websites of use. Look for books, journals, newspaper, and magazine articles of relevance. Also, research non-profits in the community who deal with the issue and local newspapers.
- Document the source. Make sure that teams keep track of sources, both actual and potential. You can use the Data Collection sheet we have provided or your own form. If they are unable to print information from the web or plan to come back to an electronic or other source, have them document the source location so that they may return to it at a later time.
- Research should be going on throughout the project. Encourage teams to keep seeking out information that can give them the edge over the competition. Good research will help your teams to create a project that is informative and interesting. It can back up opinions, support key points, and provide conversation points for teams as they make their presentation and talk to community members. Nothing makes a student look self confident like a good grasp of information about their topic.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Online or Print Data Collection Form

Name of Publication or Website (with web address)	Author & Date	Did this resource help you identify root causes? Find statistics/facts to support need for action? Identify key players? Find an idea for a solution?	Summary of Findings or Key Quotes. What are key points from this source that will help you achieve your project goals?

## Part 2: Collecting Data (Continued)

### C. Creating and Conducting and Interview

Interviews during this initial research stage may be useful in identifying the root cause of the problem or in collecting evidence to support that this problem deserves immediate attention. They can also be used to follow up a respondent's questionnaire to gain more insight into their responses, for getting the story behind the respondent's experiences or to determine if there is a school or government policy that affects the issue.

Interviews may particularly be useful in Step 3: Craft a Solution. An interview at this stage of SUSO might

be used to discover what solutions already exist or have been attempted to solve the problem. It also might involve an elected official, school principal, or other key player to determine feasibility of proposed solution or for help in implementing proposed solution.

**Materials:** “Helpful Hints for Interviewing” & “Planning an Interview” Handouts

**Time:** 30 minutes for facilitation; additional independent implementation

### Learning Sequence

**A. Identify goals for the interview:** Only focus on a few goals so that you get exactly what you need for the interview and the interview can be conducted in a timely manner.

**B. Identify key players to interview:** Team members should attempt to interview experts or key stakeholders identified in prior research or brainstorming sessions and schedule an interview on the phone or in person. Make sure students thoroughly review the interview topic with the interviewee.

**C. Plan the interview:** Invite students to use the “Interview Worksheet” to help them plan their interview. Draft well written questions and organize them in a way that makes sense.

### D. Create plan for collecting data from interview:

Ensure that students have a plan for recording information gathered during the interview. For example, will they be voice recording the interview and reviewing later to summarize, will they be writing collected data down with pencil and paper, will one team member be asking questions while the other collects data. An option to offer students is to take notes in a two-column entry format, with the questions on one side and answers they receive on the other.

**E. Transcribe and analyze:** If student notes for the interview are disorganized, advise them to rewrite them in a way the entire team can understand. Have students review their research goals for the interview and summarize key findings. What findings from the interview can be used to strengthen informative and persuasive speeches? Did the interview help identify the root cause? Was something said in the interview that could be useful in developing a solution?

*Communication Tip:* Now would be a great time to review the communication strategies learned in the earlier Community and Collaboration Building lessons and to remind students to use **EARS** (**E**ye contact, **A**cknowledge, **R**eflect, **S**ay in your own words)



## Helpful Hints for Interviewing

From: Jarvis, S. & Han, S. (2007). American Trustees Curriculum. University of Texas at Austin

### ◇ Be polite and use a courteous tone

### ◇ Interviewing requires concentrated attention in order to...

- Follow up on interesting comments
- Detect when interviewees are giving answers meant for public consumption rather than their true opinions
- Monitor the progress of the interview

### ◇ Yes/no questions are inappropriate; try these approaches instead:

- “Walk me through a typical day”
- “Tell me a story about a particular event that illustrates what they've been talking about”

### ◇ Trace a story back to its very beginning

- “Can you describe how \_\_\_\_ started”
- “Please say more about the difference between \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_”

### ◇ Give clues as to how detailed you would like their answers to be

### ◇ Be prepared to follow up whenever you're not sure about what the person is saying

- “What does that look like?” “How does that work?” “What is an example of that?”
- Ask for clarification, details, and example

### ◇ Avoid leading questions

- Bad: “Don't you think you should earn more money?”
- Better: “Tell me about the pay scale at your company”

### ◇ Don't interrupt

- Can always ask for clarification later or paraphrase for clarification when they are finished with their thoughts
- Become comfortable with silence
- Learn probes: “I see,” “Yes,” “Uh-huh,” “Please continue”

### ◇ Strike a balance between being formal versus casual

- If too formal, participants may not open up
- If too casual, participants may not take the interview seriously and may stray off topic

### ◇ Leave the interview on a positive note

- Get the interviewee to agree to be contacted again (if necessary) and thank them!
- Make sure to clarify something they said, or ask new questions raised by subsequent interviews
- “Is there anything that I missed?” “Is there something else that you would like to talk about?” “Is there something that we've discussed today that is more important than the other topics?”

## Planning an Interview

From: Jarvis, S. & Han, S. (2007). American Trustees Curriculum. University of Texas at Austin

**Each team** will create questions to guide the upcoming interview with your designated community leader, expert or other key player. The interview should include a list of questions that are organized by several themes. Follow the steps below to guide you in planning an interview.

### 1. Write 3-5 background questions.

Questions may include:

- How serious is this problem?
- How widespread is the problem?
- What are some causes of the problem?

**2. Write 3-5 questions** that help you to acquire information about the challenges, obstacles and/or struggles with your community problem. Depending on the interviewee's level of expertise, you may also want to ask them how they got interested in their subject area.

Questions may include:

- What are the biggest challenges or obstacles in this community need or problem area?
- What lessons have you learned working in this problem area?
- If you have implemented a solution, what might you have done differently?

**3. Write 3-5 questions** that help to explore possible solutions and/or alternatives.

Questions may include:

- What are the possible solutions?
- Is there a school policy, law or government regulation that affects the issue?
- Which solution makes the most sense to you? Which solution do you prefer and why?
- Why are there so many different approaches?
- If your team decides to go with a particular solution, ask the expert what he/she thinks about the solution. Does this solution address the "root causes" of the problem?

**4. Write 3-5 questions** about where additional information can be found. Your main goal should be to respect your interviewee while gathering the information that you need to plot your next steps.

Questions may include:

- Where can we look for additional information on the subject?
- Who is involved in solving this problem (if anyone)? Who else is working on this matter?
- Who else should we talk to?
- Who can help us?



## Part 2: Collecting Data (Continued)

### D. Observations

In an “observation” you observe people or places in their natural setting. An observation would be useful if you are studying a traffic problem in your neighborhood. Perhaps a certain intersection is too congested to let pedestrians cross and you would like to collect data on the wait time for pedestrians to cross the street, you would use an observation.

Students may also use observation to observe behavior. For example, if you would like to know how many students use an unlit school sidewalk as a route home, you might observe that sidewalk everyday after school to determine how many students use this route and create a solution that advocated for lighting the path.

#### Tips for Observations

- To avoid the influence in opinion in your results use a double entry method to record data. Create a two columned sheet and label one side “ Observations” and the other, “Thoughts.” This separates facts from feelings.

Example:

#### Observations

I observed the sidewalk behind the school for 20 minutes. During those twenty minutes, I observed 26 students use the sidewalk as a route off campus. It was 5:00pm and the sun was going down.

#### Thoughts

Students love taking this route home. Are more students not taking it because it is unlit?

- Use a sufficient amount of time/number of times to observe and collect data.
- To evaluate, simply tally results and report.



### Part 3: Identify Root Cause

#### Materials

- Example of “Root Cause Web: Initial Brainstorming” displayed

Time: 30 minutes

#### Learning Sequence

##### A. Review research.

Have students review data collected for root causes revealed in a community survey, interview, or web resource.

##### B. Complete “Root Cause Web” charts.

Student may want to define the root causes they brainstormed or add new root causes discovered in research.

##### C. Determine most actionable root cause

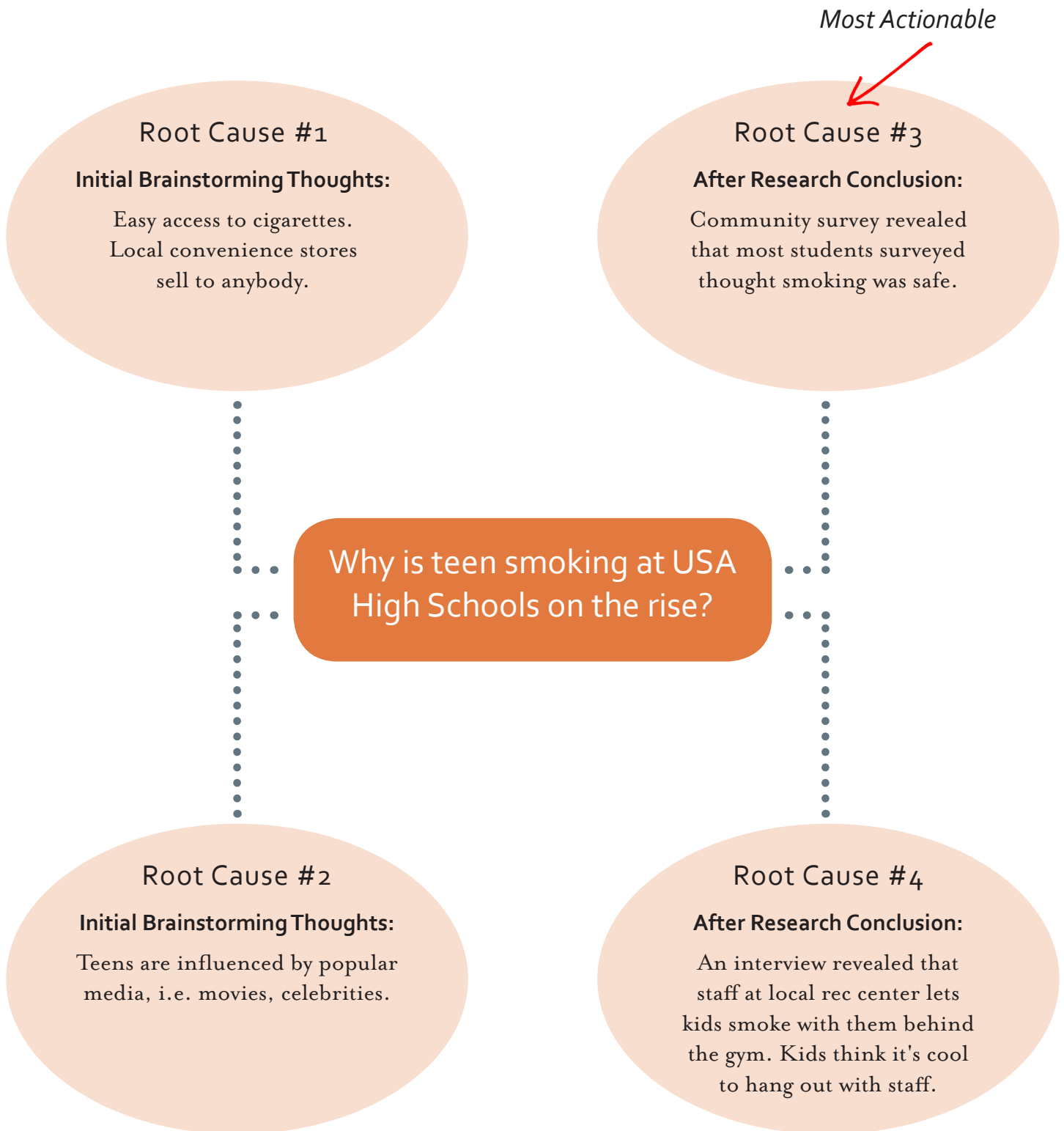
For example, if a root cause for student smoking was influence from popular media such as movies or pictures of celebrities who smoke, it would not be logical to focus solution efforts on reducing the amount of smoking portrayed on television.

Moreover, this would expand efforts beyond the local community. However, if community survey revealed that a root cause was that students are uninformed of the health risks associated with smoking, this is actionable. Students might propose a health education program that addresses the health risks of smoking or they might lobby for the addition of a health course or create a social media campaign to spread awareness of the harmful effects of smoking.

In the example on the following page, students chose “Root Cause #3” as the most actionable root cause. From here they could use previous research or conduct new research to determine why students are unaware of the health risks of smoking. This is a great starting point for brainstorming solutions... Perhaps the risks of smoking are not a focus in health class and the school needs an awareness campaign for the health risks of smoking.

## Root Cause Web

Root Cause Web Example: After Research



## Part 4: Identify Key Players

Though identifying key players is the last part of Step 2: Collecting Data, it is recommended that students complete this throughout the research process.

**1. Are there any elected officials who could provide insight on the issue or would be a target to garner support from?** This will also provide an opportunity to experience how constituents communicate with legislators and ask questions regarding how laws are made and changed. Create a list.

- School Board Members
- City Council members
- Travis County Commissioner
- State Legislature of Texas: Senate Member or House Representative (Visit “Who Represents Me” <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx>)

**2. Who are supporters of your issue or would be supporters ?** Create a list:

- Nonprofits:
- Businesses:
- Media:

**3. What organizations or experts are already working on the problem?** Create a list.

**4. Is there a government agency that specifically deals with the issue?**

- City Transportation Department?
- City Police Department?
- Animal Care Services?
- Parks & Recreation department?

## STEP 2

### Reflection and Summary

Problem Statement:

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**1. How does the information collected and evaluated help you better understand the problem?** What do you see happening? How serious is the problem? What needs to change?

**2. Relate the problem to your experience.** In what ways have you and others been impacted?

**3. What are social or cultural factors causing the problem?** Why does the problem exist (root causes)? What is the most ACTIONABLE root cause?

**4. How does information collected help you think about possible solutions?** What can be done to address the most actionable root cause? Who are people that might be able to help you with your issue?



## Identify a Solution



### Student Checklist



- ☐ Make a list of possible solutions
- ☐ Rank your solutions and come to consensus on one solution
- ☐ Create a plan for implementation
- ☐ Outline Civic action steps

### Objectives

- Students will evaluate how change is made in communities.
- Students will use collaboration and communication skills to work as a team and craft a solution.
- Students will evaluate research to determine the most feasible solution to solve a community problem.
- Students will plan and organize a civic action plan.

### Related Resources

- Supplemental lesson from the Annette Strauss Institute to support identifying key decision makers responsible for policy: [Who's in Control](#) (PDF)
- Supplemental lesson from the Annette Strauss Institute to support crafting a solution through policy: [Working With Local Government](#) (PDF); [Reading: Working with Local Government](#) (PDF)
- Supplemental lesson from the Annette Strauss Institute to support crafting a solution through organization partnership: [Working With Organizations](#) (PDF); [Reading: Working With Organizations](#) (PDF)
- For more on influence policy visit the Community Toolkit: <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/influencing-policy-development>
- Resource for applying for a grant to implement solutions: [http://www.whatkidscando.org/specialcollections/student\\_research\\_action/index.html](http://www.whatkidscando.org/specialcollections/student_research_action/index.html)
- Resource for creating petitions and also a powerful video on how petitions influence change: [www.change.org](http://www.change.org)



## Part 1: Understanding Solutions

**Materials:** Barbara Brown Video, streamed via Annette Strauss Institute's American Trustees video website (<http://communication.utexas.edu/strauss/at/american-trustees-video-collection>), projector, screen, speakers, computer with fast internet, white board/chalk board

**Time:** 30 minutes

### Learning Sequence

**A. Set up.** Load Barbara Brown Video on computer. Make a 3-circle Venn diagram on board. Label the 3 circles "Do Service/ Create Something," "Inform/ Educate," "Influence/ Change"

**B. Explain.** We are going to watch the short video we watched in Step I about a real Texas teen and a problem she identified in her community. Try to notice the different methods that this young person uses to make change in her community. We're going to talk about them afterwards.

**C. Watch and record.** Show the video to

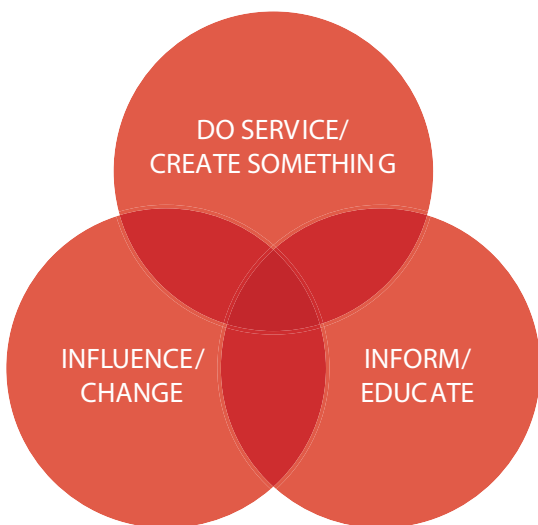
the students. As students watch, ask them to list the actions of Barbara Brown.

**D. Discuss.** Discuss the three methods on the diagram and where Barbara's actions fit in the diagram.

**E. Analyze.** As a class, evaluate strengths and weaknesses of each method of making change

**F. Discuss.** Discuss the value of a solution that combines multiple methods

**G. Generalize.** This is how change is made in communities. People form coalitions, or groups, and then take these approaches, just like you did.



**1. Do Service/Create Something:** Doing service refers to volunteering time and effort to remedy the community problem and is most often correlated with creating something. For example, students may volunteer their time to create a garden at a high school for incarcerated students and also create a website or pamphlet to instruct students on how to take care of it.

**2. Influence/Change:** This often involves influencing or changing policy or the way something is done or influencing or changing the actual physical state of a place. One example might be creating a petition and influencing the government to pass a ban on plastic bags.

**3. Inform/Educate:** This involves creating awareness to influence action or a change in behavior. One example might be creating a social media campaign on the harmful effects of smoking combined with creating an Anti-smoking campaign at school that involves forming an anti-smoking club, distributing information to students, and hosting a school event in regards to spreading awareness of the harmful effects of smoking.



### Part 1: Understanding Solutions (Continued)

**More Practice:** Below is an example of a previous SUSO project. Have students identify the methods used to implement their solution.

Once, a group of students got together and did a SUSO project about the bathrooms at their school. They noticed that their bathrooms seemed like they needed repair work. Many of the toilets didn't flush well, many toilet seats were broken, the soap dispensers didn't work and many sinks leaked. They did a great job of establishing that this was a real problem at their school. They surveyed students and found out that lots of students were not using the bathroom while at school because the facilities felt unclean. The students did some research about the health effects of not using the bathroom for 8 hours – NOT GOOD! They talked to the principal about why the bathrooms were in such bad shape. The principal said that this was because the school district had to build another new school across town and was strapped for cash – didn't have much money to spend on renovating old schools. The students decided that it really was a problem that their bathrooms were in disrepair, and it seemed like the solution would have to involve getting more money for their school district to spend on fixing up schools. After a cost analysis, they decided on this plan: They would organize a car wash to raise money from community members to buy new toilets.



## Part 2: Policy vs Private Action

Time: 30 minutes

## Learning Sequence

**A. Gauge prior knowledge.** Present the three scenarios below and ask if the solution lies in policy or public action. Ask students to explain their reasoning. Do not tell them the correct answers at this point.

a. Your neighborhood has grown and so has the school population. The extra traffic is making it difficult for students who walk home to cross the street and difficult for cars to exit the school parking lot. Your team determines that a red light is needed.

b. You have identified that there is an enormous food waste problem at your school. Unused food is being thrown away daily. Your team decides to partner with the local food bank to solve the problem.

c. Your team discovers that several neighborhood playgrounds are not suited for children with physical disabilities. They decide that the city should invest in changes that create more inclusive playgrounds.

**B. Explain the difference** between policy and private action and re-examine the scenarios from above. Ask students to explain their reasoning.

- **Public Policy:** The means by which the government maintains order or addresses the needs of its citizens. These means include laws, rules, regulations, or agreed upon procedures.
- **Private Action:** Individual or group action that does not require action from the government.

**C. As a whole class, review** the Speak Up Speak Up example from Part I. In the example, the students chose private action. Have students brainstorm possible steps the students could have taken if they had chosen to resolve the problem through policy: who are the key players, which level of government or government agency would address the issue- school district, municipal, county?

**D. In groups, give students** 10 minutes to discuss the questions below using their research:

- Who is responsible for addressing your problem (the government, an organization, or private citizen) and what is their current policy?
- Is the root cause of your problem a policy?
- If the cause of your problem is rooted in policy, is the policy not adequate and needs change, or is it adequate and not enforced, or is there not a policy that exists for the problem?



### Part 3: Select a Solution

Time: 45 minutes

#### Learning Sequence

**A. Create a driving question.** Create a question that will guide the work towards crafting a solution. This question will stem from the most “actionable root cause” identified in Step 2. For example, the most actionable root cause from the Root Cause Web example was “Students on campus believe smoking is safe,” the driving question for this may be “How do we make students on campus aware that smoking is extremely hazardous to your health?”

**B. Develop goals.** Goals should be general statements that identify the endpoints of the project. Begin by brainstorming possible goals towards reaching the ideal outcome. Goals should be stated in a pro-active way: “To increase the numbers of youth volunteers.”

**C. Brainstorm Possible Solutions.** Teams brainstorm possible solutions to their problem that would fit into different parts of the Venn diagram from part one. Have students consider the following questions below in their decision making process:

1. Would your problem be most effectively solved through Policy or Public Action?
2. If solution lies in policy, does it need to be changed, eliminated, replaced with a new policy, or created?
3. Who are the players involved in implementing your solution -Key decision makers, organizations, government agencies, community members?
4. Based on your research and understanding of the problem, what policy or private action approach would you recommend? Why?

**D. Use decision matrix.** Have teams use the “Choosing a SMART Solution” (see Pg. 61) to “pick” their solution. Ask each student to fill out the matrix for themselves. Then as a large group complete the matrix together. Try to come to consensus on their rating of each solution.

**E. Group consensus.** Using prior research to guide decisions, come to consensus on one solution.

**F. Solution title:** A project title helps to focus the vision and facilitates spreading the word about your project in the community.

## Choosing a SMART Solution

Enter a number for every criterion for each possible problem: 3=yes, 2=sort of, 1=no.  
The problem with the *highest total score* is most likely to be your best option.

	Criteria	Solution 1:	Solution 2:	Solution 3:
Local	Is the solution meant for a problem located in your school or community?			
Specific	Can you identify key decision makers, when it will take place and the root cause that will be addressed?			
Measurable	Can the success of this solution be measured? For example: How many people will be affected by it? Will you be able to determine if the problem is solved?			
Attainable	Is this a solution that your team has the ability to implement? Do you have the finances to implement this solution, if not could a plan to raise funds be implemented?			
Realistic	Is this a solution that you can and want to implement?			
Timely	Is this a solution that could be implemented in a reasonable amount of time?			
	Total			



### Part 4: Create an Action Plan

Civic Action Steps refer to actions that facilitate civic participation. A well thought out plan of action consisting of small measurable civic action steps is critical to the success of the project. Please note the following example:

#### Civic Action Plan for USA High School

**Driving Question:** How can we keep the restrooms at our school sanitary?

**Solution:** Implement a school policy for policing restrooms and enforcing consequences.

#### Civic Action Steps

1. Monitor restrooms for one week to identify sources of the problem.

2. Survey students for suggestions of punishment for offenders.
3. Interview school custodian for insight into how the restrooms might be monitored.
4. Create list of how other schools of similar size address this issue.
5. Craft proposal
6. Schedule interview with principal to present proposal of new policy

**Materials:** Action Planning Guide handout, Team Work-Plan handout, youth TED talk video, [Our Campaign to Ban Plastic Bags in Bali](#)

**Time:** Two 45 minute class periods

### Learning Sequence

**A. Set Up.** Pass out the “Action Planning Guide” to students. Inform them that they will watch a video of two Ted Youth speakers who successfully campaigned to ban plastic bags in Bali. **IMPORTANT:** Stop video at the 6 minute mark. After this time, the students list a hunger strike as one of their civic actions. The Annette Strauss Institute does condone this behavior.

**B. Explain.** Civic Action Steps are the actions one take to create change and demonstrate their powers in a democracy. They are the steps that the students will take to implement their solution.

**C. Watch and record.** Have students watch the video and write down all of the civic action steps that the students take.

**D. Discuss.** Where did Melati and Isabel’s civic actions fall on the solution method diagram from part I? What key players did they target and why do you think they chose those key players? Which civic action was most compelling to you and why?

*(Continued on following page.)*



## Part 4: Create an Action Plan (Continued)

## Learning Sequence (Cont.)

**E. Prep for action plan.** Prior to actually drafting a plan, have teams consider the following tips:

1. Review prior research and interviews. What do they reveal about the actions steps you should take?
2. Consider whose decisions or actions can make your solution happen.
3. Generate support for your cause before bringing it to a key decision maker for support.
4. Create a list of resources that you have that will help you achieve success in implementing your solution.
5. Define critical factors for success that will help you achieve your goals.
6. Brainstorm a list of obstacles that might get in the way of you making your solution happen.
7. Consider a wide range of actions to facilitate solutions: Create a community mural, create a

blog, create an online petition, write an Op-ed for your local newspaper, create a social media campaign, host a community event, apply for a grant, form a club, propose a policy, crowdsource for funds, implement a voter registration drive, write and perform slam poetry, etc.

**F. Create Civic Action Plan.** Give students the “Action Planning Guide” handout and have them begin the planning process. For each civic action step, have students ask themselves, “What is the purpose of this step?” Examples of types of civic action steps include, “Meet with\_\_\_\_,” “Write to\_\_\_\_,” or “Attend\_\_\_\_\_.”

**G. Divide and conquer.** Once students have reached a consensus, encourage them to use the “Team Work-Plan” handout to divide tasks and set deadlines for actions to be accomplished.



# Action Planning Guide

Solution Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## Civic Action Steps

Driving Question:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Goals:

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Resources (*funds, materials, meeting place, organizations, etc.*):

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Obstacles (*budget, opponents - why are they putting up resistance and what can you do about it?*):

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Critical Factors for Success (*volunteers, funds, support from decision maker, etc.*):

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Root Cause:

9. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Solution:

10. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



## Part 4 Supplement: The Importance of Building Community Support

It will be important for your students to build community support before presenting their solutions to key decision makers or to help with raising funds, it is key to influencing change. As such, it would be a idea to include action steps that build community support into their plan. This can manifest in many different ways.

### Building Community Support in a Digital Age

Youth today are influencing policy and change through advocacy. They are rallying their networks and mobilizing their communities by producing and circulating information about issues that matter to them. In a digital age, our youth have new means to mobilize for change.

Your students may be drawn to create support for their cause and circulate information to bring awareness to their cause through media. With proper guidance, students can be successful in their endeavors to generate community support through the media. Some examples of popular media channels include:

1. Social Media Campaign: Circulating messages via Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Periscope, Tumblr, Google +, etc.
  - a. Popular campaigns: #BlackLivesMatter, #Dreamers, #BringBackOurGirls
2. YouTube
3. Blogs, Websites
4. Film: Such as creating a Public Service Announcement
5. Images

### Educator Resources:

Examples of Digital Media in Civic Education: <http://ypp.dmlcentral.net/pages/theory-practice-examples-digital-media-civic-education>

Additional examples of action through media: <http://byanymedia.org/works/mapp/media-type>



## STEP 3

### Reflection and Summary

Vision Statement (The Ideal Outcome):

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1. How do you feel about your role in implementing the solution?

2. What do you expect to learn as you move through the process of implementing your solution?

3. How will you know if you are making progress and if the civic action plan is successful?

4. What are the consequences of your solution not being implemented?

## Prepare and Present

### STEP 4

#### Student Checklist



- ☐ Write Informative Speech
- ☐ Write Persuasive Speech
- ☐ Assign presentation roles
- ☐ Outline sequence for digital presentation to correspond with speeches
- ☐ Create the digital presentation
- ☐ Present your ideas to one or more key decision makers in your school or community at the classroom/school-wide Civics Fair

#### Part 1: Prepare

**Materials:** Computers, Team Work-Plan handouts, digital tools such as PowerPoint or [Prezi](#)

**Time:** Mostly independent work time for students

#### Learning Sequence

**A. Using the Team Work-Plan**, have students work together to divide the tasks of creating the digital presentation text and visuals and the informative and persuasive speeches among the members of the team. Refer to parts A & B below for guidance in creating the speeches and digital presentations.

**B. Teams should consider** the skills of each member and try to draw on the particular strengths of each teammate to make their final product.

**C. Encourage students** to create a timeline for completing their presentation materials.

**D. Schedule work dates** to get things done, including a rehearsal.

**E. Practice role playing.** Pair teams together, and have one team present and the other team provide counter arguments to their solution after the presentation. The presenting team must use evidence to defend their claims. Possible sentence stems for counter arguments are:

- I disagree because....
- What I heard you say is....
- Based on the evidence presented....

**F. Host a classroom/school-wide Civics Fair** and help students create an opportunity to present their project to a key player involved in their issue. (This may mean presenting to a principal, AP, school district department administrator, city council member, relevant non-profit staffer, etc.)

**G. Optional: Have teams decide** on a “team look” that will contribute to the sense of professionalism and unity of your team (this can be a dress code, a color theme, or anything that you think will help you look like a team).



## Part 1: Prepare (Continued)

### A. Write Persuasive & Informative Speeches

Each team is responsible for two speeches, one informative and one persuasive. The ideal presentation will be logical, easy to follow, organized, and well researched. The solution will be original and innovative. The participants will engage the audience, maintain their attention, and be able to answer questions from the judges.

- Informative Speech (5 minutes)
- Persuasive Speech (5 minutes)

#### 1. Informative Speech

The informative speech is necessary to inform your audience that a problem exists and deserves attention. The informative speech increases your audiences awareness and understanding concerning your topic.

Informative speech checklist:

- ☐ Includes a problem statement
- ☐ Includes at least 3 pieces of supporting evidence to prove the problem deserves attention and is significant to the community
- ☐ Includes evidence from primary sources, such as interviews and surveys
- ☐ Includes evidence from secondary sources, such as studies, newspaper clippings, etc.
- ☐ Identifies key players connected to the problem
- ☐ Identifies Root Cause of the problem

#### 2. Persuasive Speech

The purpose of a persuasive speech is not to persuade that a problem exists. Instead, a persuasive speech persuades that your solution is feasible, necessary and the best possible option.

Persuasive speech checklist:

- ☐ Explains and presents evidence that proposed solution will work.
- ☐ Include critical factors for success in implementing plan, such as budget, community support, and communication with appropriate stakeholders;
- ☐ Must include solution outcomes, i.e. what would be the effect if solution properly implemented\*

*\* For example, if your solution is to put recycling bins around school, your solution goal would be that litter will decrease by 75%*

- ☐ Must include your planned civic action steps. Your civic action steps tell the audience how you will implement the solution and attest to the feasibility of the solution.

#### 3. Speaking Tips

- Before beginning, take a deep breath and smile
- Make eye contact
- Speak at correct volume and take it slow
- Avoid “uh,” “like,” and “you know.”
- If possible, try to talk and not read
- Speak with conviction



## Part 1: Prepare (Continued)

### B. Plan and Create Digital Presentation

**1. Create an outline** or a plan to sequence your PowerPoint, Prezi, or other chosen presenting media (such as Google Slides); your informative and persuasive speeches should guide your sequence.

Tip 1: Organize the slide order to correspond with critical elements from the informative and persuasive speech

Tip 2: Consider a transitioning slide between your informative and persuasive speech components to form a cohesive presentation

#### 2. Add a Title

**3. Cite evidence**, making sure that the slides illustrate your evidence used in your speech.

Example 1: Evidence from a community survey, “78% of students surveyed said...”

Example 2: Evidence from published research, “Between 2014 and 2015, 5,000 beekeepers lost 42% of their bee colonies to Colony Collapse Disorder. (NPR’s Audie Cornish)”

**4. Insert links** (optional): If relevant, embed links to media sources, such as an interview clip, Tumblr page, blog, fundraising page, Twitter account, Instagram account, etc.

**5. Assign presentation roles**, for example: Assign who will be changing slides and assign slides to team members based on who has the corresponding speech segment

**6. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse!**

# Visual Presentation Resources

**Note for the facilitator:** Students are not constrained to using any one media source, but please note that Powerpoint and Prezi are sufficient to keep it clean, simple and efficient. Choices for creating a presentation can be overwhelming, the additional resources below are for optional usage. Keep it simple and choose what will help your students create an effective message.

*Tip: Prior to sharing with students, please review and choose which ones, if any, would best support your students.*

## File sharing for organization of materials

- [Dropbox](#) is an option for file collection and sharing.
- [Google Apps](#) is a series of applications that allow creating, sharing, and editing of documents in a collaborative fashion. You can also download any document into Microsoft Office format.
- [EverNote](#) is an application that stores images, audio, video, and screen shots by filing and indexing the media for easy searching.
- [Flickr](#) lets you upload and share photos and videos.

## Educational workspaces to share and organize information during research

- [Diigo](#) is social bookmarking and allows bookmarks and tags of Web pages, highlighting text, and even adding sticky notes.
- [LiveBinders](#) allows you to organize research into an online 3-ring binder.

## Applications for presenting information

- [Google Slides](#) allows you to create, edit, collaborate, and present while in the Google Drive interface.
- [Slides](#) lets you create, present and share slide decks and has a more modern editing feel.
- [Prezi](#) permits you to create engaging slide presentations that are more dynamic than traditional alternatives.
- [Weebly](#) is a platform to create free websites that have a user-friendly drag-and-drop interface.
- [Wordpress](#) is an open-source blogging tool and publishing platform that allows easy creation of web pages.
- [Edublogs](#) is the largest education blogging platform that does not allow adult content or exposure to other blogs and is accessible by most schools.
- [Wikispaces](#) is a free wiki site that allows the easy creation and editing of Web pages.
- [Audacity](#) is a free open-source software for editing sounds, ideal for voiceovers.
- [Dvolver](#) offers free MovieMaker software.
- [Photoshop.com](#) offers editing tools for quick fixes on images and organizing/presenting photos.

# Speak Up! Speak Out! Civics Fair Scoring Rubric

Scoring	Needs Work 6	Nears 8	Meets 10	Points
<i>If yes to four questions, teams have met expectations = 9 — 10</i> <i>If yes to three questions = 7 — 8</i> <i>If yes to two questions = 5 — 6</i>				Points
<b>Issue</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the students clearly identify an <b>issue</b>? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Did they explain why this issue <b>deserves attention</b>? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Do they have <b>evidence</b> that their issue is significant to the community? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Is the issue specific and local? (Y / N)</li> </ul>				
<b>Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did students identify the <b>root cause</b> of the problem? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Did students use a variety of <b>secondary sources</b> (i.e. books, articles) for their research? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Did students create a clear, accurate, and visually appealing <b>display</b> of their research (i.e. charts, graphs, infographics, images, etc.)? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Did presenters consult with <b>primary sources</b> through interviews or surveys? (Y / N)</li> </ul>				
<b>Solution</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did students propose a <b>specific solution</b>? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Did students present a thoughtful <b>civic action plan</b> with concrete steps? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Is the solution <b>actionable and realistic</b>? (Y / N)</li> <li>• Have students taken action on their solution? (Y / N)</li> </ul>				

(44 Points) TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

If deserving, nominate the team for a special award. Excellence in:

\_\_\_\_\_ Creative Expression    \_\_\_\_\_ Persuasive Speaking    \_\_\_\_\_ Innovative Thinking

\_\_\_\_\_ Primary Research    \_\_\_\_\_ Passion for Change