



Lesson 9: My Community Now

In this lesson, students take a critical look at the state of their community and mount a display to present their findings.

Support material: Department of the Environment, Building Control Authority Office, Consumer leaflets PL 1 - 10 are needed in preparation for Lesson 10. They are available free from the Department or the Local Authority.



Spotlight

The physical character of the community



Key Concepts

Analysis. Conclusions.

Discussion

Drawing on what they have learned during Lessons 6, 7 and 8, ask the students to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in the physical fabric of their community. Team Leaders and Street Pairs can report on their principal findings. If Cross-Curricular exercises have examined other issues, this information should also be presented.

Using two enlarged maps of the community (one for positives, one for negatives), agree and mark the following.

Positives

Axes

Clear geometric forms in the layout of the community

Vistas

Buildings or places of historical significance

Buildings or structures (bridges, monuments. . .) of architectural merit

Handsome and/or coherent streets or squares

Parks, gardens, trees, water or other soft landscape features

Public spaces that work well as a focus of community activity

Buildings or spaces which ought to be conserved or preserved

Any positive things which are unusual, characteristic of the area or which distinguish your community from others

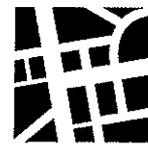
Negatives

Ugly or disorderly streets or squares

Buildings in poor condition

Unoccupied buildings

Derelict sites



Traffic black spots
 Dangerous places
 Noise
 Litter
 Public places that do not work well as a focus of community activity
 Any other specific problems the students have identified

Are there more positives or more negatives? In the opinion of the class, what needs to be done to improve their community? What are the opportunities?



Activity — Presenting the Picture

Using the Positive and Negative Maps as focal points, the students assemble a display using drawings, photographs, rubbings and written text from the Field Trip (Lesson 7) to present a complete picture of the community.

Teams should come together to pool resources and sort material to illustrate good and bad points. They will need to work together on a number of desks/tables assembled to create a large working area. They should place drawings and other information provisionally before making final decisions about where everything should go. Drawings should be trimmed and labelled clearly. Labels and keys should indicate clearly the location of features on the map.

Information about the community's social, economic or environmental assets or problems gathered in any Cross-Curricular exercises can be included in a parallel display. Use charts, diagrams, photographs or any other visual means to tell the story.

Materials: large sheets of cartridge paper or sugar paper, Pritt stick, scissors, coloured pencils, markers.

Homework

1. Distribute copies of leaflets PL 1 - 10. Students should study these in preparation for Lesson 10.
2. Each student should design a map for a community tourist trail. They should mark in points of interest, buildings, monuments and landmarks and, using a key, write a brief note for each, explaining what it is.

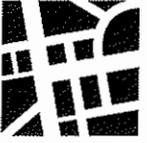


Scrapbook

Students collect images of **Positive/Negative** features found in other communities. Look out for images in newspapers, magazines etc. Give this new section a title and write a few lines about each image included.

Vocabulary File

Add new words and definitions to file.



Cross-Curricular Connections

1. Civics — Ask a local planning officer to visit the class and explain the local Development Plan.
2. Civics/Career Guidance — Ask a local planning official or elected representative to visit the class and explain his/her role in the development of the community.
3. Woodwork/Metalwork — Make a representation of an interesting street facade in your community.
4. Biology/Environmental Studies — Make a study of the wildlife in one or more open spaces in your community. Are there any which you feel ought to be considered as a wildlife conservation area?
5. Civic, Social and Political Studies — Look at the effects of building one of the following: an extension that looks into your neighbours' bedroom and blocks sun from their back garden; a noisy factory (that provides jobs) next to a school playground; or a big tourist hotel in a remote and beautiful valley. Investigate how the planning laws work. Who in society makes the decisions about what gets built and where?