Community Action Problem Solving Teacher Guide

Earth Force

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The teacher guide informs readers about the process used by educators who deliver Earth Force programs. The process includes identifying a community problem, researching its local history, and taking civic action to help solve it. Earth Force programs are designed for middle school students and teachers, though some elementary and high school teachers have adapted the materials to suit other age groups.

The teacher guide refers to companion materials such as a student manual and civic action tips cards, which are available from Earth Force. Visit www.earthforce.org, call 703-299-9400, or send an e-mail

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Community History/Environmental Citizenship (CHEC) teacher guide, which is designed to engage students in historical inquiry as part of environmental service-learning projects. CHEC materials are a key part of a larger Earth Force program called Community Action Problem Solving (CAPS). CHEC materials are designed to help students understand:

- how past events affect present environmental issues
- how local environmental challenges have been addressed in the past
- how historical context can help them to effectively address today's environmental problems

The CAPS program and the CHEC materials help your students take civic action to bring about long-term improvements to the environment in your community. But how do you get started? Where do you find information? What can a class of middle school students realistically accomplish? CHEC materials will help you answer these questions and many more. You will learn how to help a group of students make reasoned choices and decisions as they select a local environmental problem, research its local history, develop a civic action plan, and carry out their plan. You will work with them to select a manageable problem that they care about, that is important to the community, and that is strongly related to key concepts in your class. Together you will find out what has been done and what needs to be done, how to find and analyze diverse perspectives, and how to apply historical thinking to today's real-world problems.

We hope you find the CHEC process to be energizing for you, motivating for your students, and good for your community's environment.
WHY COMBINE HISTORICAL INQUIRY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP?

The intersection between community history and environmental conditions is important for students to understand. Any environmental issue students choose to address will have roots in past events. Once these links are understood at the community level, students can see similar connections in American and world history. They begin to use the historian's lens to examine contemporary questions. How do the community and nation adapt to demographic changes, and to what effect on the environment? How do technological innovations affect communities and their environments? How do changing environmental conditions affect communities and nations?

Students should learn how to connect historical events and environmental conditions, but they also need to put these connections to work through civic action projects. CHEC is designed to help students become effective civic actors through experience. They will not only gain historical inquiry skills and new knowledge of community history, they will also carry out more effective environmental service projects. CHEC will help students understand how community environmental issues were addressed over the decades. It will also help them make connections between historical, economic, and political events on the one hand, and community environmental problems on the other. In short, historical inquiry will make students more effective community problem solvers.

Providing students with opportunities for direct experience helps build the knowledge and skills necessary to be engaged and effective citizens. Nearly every description of an effective democratic citizen includes the phrase “well-informed.” The effective citizen also needs to embrace democratic values such as tolerance and humility and possess skills such as communication and collaborative problem solving. These democratic skills and values are put to use in a particular place, however, so knowledge of community history is an essential piece of effective civic action. CHEC will help students actively explore and discover the history of their communities, and by using history to inform their civic action projects, students will see concrete proof that history matters.

www.earthforce.org
HOW CHEC WORKS

CHEC materials take students through the six-step CAPS process, which blends service-learning, civic engagement, environmental stewardship, and community problem-solving. CHEC teachers receive a boxed kit of materials that includes this teacher guide, 15 copies of the CAPS student book, an Earth Force video, and 15 sets of skill-building tips cards. The six steps of the process are outlined below.

1. Community Environmental Inventory

CHEC students begin a project by conducting an inventory of the environmental conditions in their community. But first they must define the boundaries of their community, which can range from a school's grounds to an entire region. Then students begin to take stock of the community's environmental conditions. They identify environmental assets and problems through activities such as walking around and making observations, looking at maps, reading news articles, talking with resource people, surveying community members, visiting the library, and researching websites.

Before proceeding to step two, students create two products: a list of assets and a list of problems.

2. Problem Selection

From the list generated in step one, students choose a problem using democratic procedures along with criteria they help develop. Teachers supply some of the criteria, such as relevance to the curriculum. Other criteria should include the size and scope of the problem, the intensity of feeling about the problem among community members, and the extent to which students care and can do anything about the problem. Given that groups may not easily agree on a problem, the materials include democratic activities such as voting and working through disagreements in detail in small groups.

Before proceeding to step three, students select an environmental problem to address.
3. Policy and Community Practice Research

Once they have identified a problem, some groups may be in a rush to brainstorm solutions. The third step of the CHEC framework calls on students to slow down and look at their problem through the lens of history. They will create a timeline of their problem to gain an understanding of where it came from. The timeline includes three categories: policies, economics, and history. The goal is to help students understand that today's problems have complex roots that may span decades.

Completing a timeline about their problem will help students identify its underlying cause: is it an existing public or private policy, poor enforcement of a well-intentioned policy, economic changes, or the habits and everyday behaviors of people in the community? Who makes the relevant policies and at which levels of government, who lobbies for which policies, who enforces the policies, and how effective is this enforcement? How do economic conditions affect policies, practices, and problems?

By looking at widely diverse perspectives on these questions, students often sharpen the definition of their problem. For example, a group's problem statement might evolve from “the park is full of garbage” to “there are not enough trash cans in the park, and the few in place are always overflowing, so most park users litter.”

To reframe problems in this way, students research “policies” and “players.” They conclude step three with a simple sentence describing the improved policy or practice they want to see. Focusing on problematic policies and practices helps students avoid developing “quick fix” projects that have little lasting impact on the community. Rather, balanced policy research helps students develop projects that can effect lasting improvements.

4. Options for Influencing Policies and Practices

Now that students have a clear sense of the policy or practice change they want to see, they need to develop a strategy to make it happen. This step involves looking at past efforts to address the problem, researching how other communities have tried to solve similar problems, identifying and talking to supporters and possible opponents, generating an extensive list of strategies, and using democratic procedures to choose a strategy.
The menu of strategies may include writing letters to the editor, conducting community forums or other public education efforts, circulating petitions, and surveying community members. Once again, students develop and use criteria to make a choice among these and other strategies. Though the choice of a strategy belongs to the students, teachers often ask rigorous questions about scale, feasibility, and resources. This step is complete only when students have selected a strategy to bring about the change they want to see in policy or practice.

5. Planning and Taking Civic Action

CHEC materials help students create a detailed action plan to carry out their strategy. At a minimum, this usually requires them to identify audiences, customize messages, build alliances, and engage other citizens. Students create a project calendar, identify every task that needs to be done, assign students to complete tasks by certain dates, and set standards that define quality for any products they will create (e.g., what does an effective town meeting look like?).

CHEC teachers have perhaps their most important yet least predictable role during the action phase. Student frustration can reach its zenith here if they are trying unsuccessfully to contact officials and others. It is crucial to use various reflection strategies to handle such frustration. (See the "Stop and Think" breaks in the student book, as well as two comprehensive guides to reflection at http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual and http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/132/.)

The goal is to help students realize the value of the process, even when policies and practices are slower to change than desired. This can be difficult because teachers often intensely want their students to succeed in influencing policy.

6. Looking Back and Ahead

Reflection occurs throughout a CHEC project. Students are continuously challenged to think and talk about what they are learning and feeling, how their actions relate to course goals, and whether they are on the right track. But this post-project reflection involves a broader look at the original problem students identified and how their project affected both the
community and them as individuals. They also reflect on their successes and challenges and determine how citizen involvement can continue to affect their problem. Finally, students complete a second timeline at this point, which prompts them to speculate about the impact of their project into the future.

**What Happens When**

The sequence below outlines the order in which student activities should be conducted.

**Community Environmental Inventory**

Activity 1: What is a Survey?
Activity 2: Introduction to CHEC
Activity 3: What Works?
Activity 4: Community Search Survey
Activity 5: In the Paper

**Problem Selection**

Activity 6: Narrowing the Problem
Activity 7: Voting and Civil Discussion

**Policy and Practice Research**

Activity 8: The Roots of Our Problem
Activity 9: Building a Timeline
Activity 10: Ask the Experts
Activity 11: Completing Your Timeline
Activity 12: Analyzing Policies
Activity 13: Making Sense of Our Research

**Options for Influencing Policy and Practice**

Activity 14: Who’s With Us?
Activity 15: Identifying the Possibilities
Activity 16: What’s Our Best Option?
Activity 17: Prepare to Present
Planning and Taking Civic Action
Activity 18: Planning for Action

Looking Back and Ahead
Activity 19: Looking Back and Ahead
Activity 20: Building a Future Timeline
Activity 21: Post-program Survey

Extension Activities
Extension Activity 1: Mystery Photo
Extension Activity 2: No More Field Trips

Using the Timeline
The student timeline of a community environmental problem starts in 1900 and includes three categories of events: history, policies, and economics. It is blank because events will vary by community and issue and because one goal of CHEC is to help students develop historical inquiry skills. Beyond turning to websites and media sources, CHEC teachers will be able to call on local history experts at universities and historical societies for assistance in creating timelines. Students should concentrate on local community events when completing their timelines, though national or world events that affect the community should be included. They will find that the categories do not necessarily have clear boundaries separating them. For example, the development of a big shopping mall might fit partly under history and partly under economics. It is less important to get the categories right for every item than it is to capture the most relevant community events to their problem.

A sample timeline follows that is specific to the Washington, DC, metro area. It is intended to illustrate what a completed timeline about pollution in a local river might look like.
### A Sample CHEC Timeline of River Pollution for the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>1900s</th>
<th>1910s</th>
<th>1920s</th>
<th>1930s</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1950s</th>
<th>1960s</th>
<th>1970s</th>
<th>1980s</th>
<th>1990s</th>
<th>2000s</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>History</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Potomac River has fecal bacilli &quot;at all times&quot;</td>
<td>DC sewer system treats waste of 340,000</td>
<td>Untreated waste from 575,000 flows to Potomac</td>
<td>Commission starts first water monitoring program in Potomac watershed</td>
<td>Wash. Post calls Potomac &quot;open sewer&quot;</td>
<td>Pres. Johnson calls Potomac &quot;health hazard&quot;</td>
<td>Contact with river from 1971-79</td>
<td>Potomac festival is held on the Mall; metro area govts agree on sludge limits for region</td>
<td>VA stream has oil spill of 400,000 gallons</td>
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<td><strong>Policies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>River closed for swimming through DC</td>
<td>DC, MD, VA, PA form commission to protect Potomac</td>
<td>Potomac called unsafe for swimming</td>
<td>US Govt. sends money to states for sewage plants</td>
<td>DC, MD pass laws to limit erosion</td>
<td>Sewage plants cut phosphorous pollution going into Potomac</td>
<td>US Govt supports &quot;watershed&quot; approach for basins</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Economics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Union Station opens</td>
<td>Area has 808,000 people</td>
<td>Millions lose jobs in US due to depressed economy</td>
<td>Many jobs regained due to preparation for World War II</td>
<td>1-95 and 495 built (beltway) and suburbs grow</td>
<td>VA limits number of sewer hookups in fast-growing county</td>
<td>Dioxin, PCBs found in some fish, harming some fishing businesses</td>
<td>WV farmers get money to protect streams</td>
<td>Area has 5 million people</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: [www.potomacriver.org/about_potomac/history.htm](http://www.potomacriver.org/about_potomac/history.htm)
Using CHEC Materials

The CHEC activities follow a traditional format for classroom planning.
All of them include:

- a goal
- objectives
- materials needed
- time needed
- an outline of the procedure
- a reflection question

Where appropriate, activities also include:

- teacher notes
- suggestions for performance assessment
- performance assessment rubrics
- extension ideas

The rubrics attached to some activities should help you assess student-created products. The rubrics vary somewhat in format and are merely suggested models, which should be adapted to suit specific needs and preferences.

Each activity's materials listing often points out relevant pages in the CAPS student book and usually denotes which tips cards are used in the activity. Originals for all handouts are provided immediately after the activity for which they are used.

The CAPS student book is written for a middle school audience. It includes information about the process used in CHEC as well as inspirational quotations, sample Earth Force stories, and “stop-and-think” boxes that prompt student reflection.

The 35 tips cards are designed to help students gain and practice the civic action skills they will use throughout their projects. They provide clear guidance on topics such as how to use the library, how to conduct a survey, and how to collaborate in groups.
Elements of a Quality CHEC Project

Segment One – Community Inventory

It involves...

- Defining the community in which students will work
- Listing community assets and environmental problems
- Investigating and evaluating numerous sources

It is good when...

- Students hear diverse views
- Students develop and use criteria to judge sources’ reliability
- Students identify a large number of assets and problems

Segment Two – Problem Selection

It involves...

- Using democratic principles to make group decisions
- Developing and using criteria to select a problem to address
- Clarifying the definition of problems

It is good when...

- Students choose a problem without racing ahead to solutions
- Students give fair consideration to each other’s diverse views
- Students develop and use criteria to judge sources’ reliability
- Students choose a problem that is realistic for them to address

Segment Three – Policy and Practice Research

It involves...

- Examining the historical roots of policy questions
- Creating a community history timeline
- Analyzing policies related to the problem
- Identifying centers of power related to the policies
- Determining the underlying causes of the problem
- Explaining how to improve a policy or practice
It is good when...

- Students recognize the “gray areas” involved in evaluating policy
- Students make key decisions shaping the timeline
- Students give fair consideration to a wide array of diverse views
- Students develop and use criteria to judge policies
- Students clearly describe what improved policies and practices would look like

Segment Four – Options for Influencing Policy and Practice

It involves...

- Using democratic principles to make group decisions
- Developing and using criteria to select a strategy to make change
- Predicting how a strategy would affect various community members
- Examining how others have promoted change in the past and in other places

It is good when...

- Students choose a feasible strategy
- Students can explain how their strategy will effect long-term improvements
- Students feel a sense of accomplishment regardless of whether a policy is changed
- Students have built a strategy on broad community input

Segment Five – Planning and Taking Civic Action

It involves...

- Using planning templates to define and assign tasks
- Building coalitions and partnerships in the community
- Developing a persuasive message
- Educating the public and policy makers
It is good when...
- Students define and develop high quality communication tools
- Students make fair use of the talents of everyone in the class
- Students propose reasonable course corrections as needed
- Students adapt maturely to setbacks

Segment Six – Looking Back and Ahead
It involves...
- Reflecting on the content students learned and the process they used
- Predicting where the local environment is headed next
- Assessing the impact of the project
- Examining the role of citizens in addressing environmental issues

It is good when...
- Students can describe how they learned from setbacks
- Students identify how citizens can affect problems beyond their own
- Students express an unwillingness to accept “things as they are”
- Students can describe what they would do next if they had more project time
Frequently Asked Questions

1) How much time does it take to lead a good CHEC project?
There are 21 activities in the CHEC teacher guide and two optional extension activities. Each should take one traditional class period (estimated 45 minutes) to conduct, unless otherwise noted. The amount of time needed for the action step will vary depending on the scale of the project. For example, planning and conducting a town meeting will probably take longer than creating a brochure to educate the public.

2) Do students have to work on a traditionally “green” issue?
No. Giving students the power to choose a community problem is vital if the project is to have a lasting impact on them. As long as they can explain the environmental importance of an issue that appears to be more social or economic, students should have the latitude to choose their issue. They must, however, develop and use criteria to make this key decision, and they should employ democratic values and procedures to make their choice.

3) Is it OK to study an issue and research its history without taking action to address it?
No. Research on Earth Force programs suggests that students do not gain civic skills unless they work to resolve their issue in the real world. A CHEC project must engage students in authentic community problem solving, rather than conditional projects (it is about what students will do, not what they would do). Further, the US Department of Education states: “Research shows that students are more likely to have a sense of social responsibility, more likely to commit to addressing community or social problems in their adult lives as workers and citizens, and more likely to demonstrate political efficacy when they engage in structured conscious reflection on experience in the larger community. To achieve these outcomes, students need structured, real-world experiences that are informed by classroom learning.”
4) Won’t the policy part of the project be too vast and complicated?
No. CHEC is not a major in policy studies, so students will not have to know everything about national, state, and local policies and how they are made. The level of government students learn about will vary from project to project based on who makes and enforces the relevant policies. One group may learn about how local zoning ordinances are made, while another may investigate limits on runoff imposed by a state agency. The consistent thread is that CHEC students will be identifying and evaluating relevant policies.

5) What resources are needed to lead a CHEC project?
In addition to the CHEC materials, you will need access to local media sources (newspaper articles, Internet access, or TV news video clips). Ideally, you will be able to get out into the community with your students at least once to assess local environmental conditions. Having community partners is essential, and your local Earth Force staff member will help you identify resources such as historical societies, museums, and universities. Students will need access to a telephone to conduct community surveys or to conduct local historical research. You may also want to provide materials for students to keep individual and group records of their projects, such as a video camera and blank notebooks or journals.
CHEC STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Segment One
Community Environmental Inventory

CHEC students begin a project by conducting an inventory of the environmental conditions in their community. But first they must define the boundaries of their "community," which can range from a school's grounds to an entire region. Then students begin to take stock of the community's environmental conditions. They identify environmental assets and problems through activities such as walking around and making observations, looking at maps, reading news articles, talking with resource people, surveying community members, visiting the library, and researching websites.

Community Environmental Inventory

*It involves...*
- Defining the community in which students will work
- Listing community assets and environmental problems
- Investigating and evaluating numerous sources

*It is good when...*
- Students hear diverse views
- Students develop and use criteria to judge sources' reliability
- Students identify a large number of assets and problems

*The five activities in the segment are:*
- Activity 1: What is a Survey?
- Activity 2: Introduction to CHEC
- Activity 3: What Works?
- Activity 4: Community Search Survey
- Activity 5: In the Paper

Before proceeding to segment two, students create two products:
- a list of assets, and
- a list of problems.
ACTIVITY 1

Title of Activity
What is a Survey?

Goal
This activity will introduce students to the program and to the uses of surveys.

Objectives
- Distinguish between two types of surveys
- Describe the purpose of the Earth Force survey
- Explain how surveys fit into CHEC projects

Materials
- Pre-program survey
- Teacher cover sheet for surveys

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to introduce the Earth Force Community History/Environmental Citizenship (CHEC) program and to complete the pre-program survey.
2. Explain to students that they will take part in the CHEC program. Let them know that one part of the program is finding out what people in the community think about the environment and local issues through conducting a survey.
3. Ask if anyone can define “survey,” and ask if anyone has ever been surveyed. If so, ask the student to describe the topic, questions, and format that were used.
4. Explain that the program has two kinds of surveys. In one, students will find out community opinions on the environment. In the other survey, Earth Force will survey students before and after the
program to find out what is good about the program and what needs to be changed. Right now, the students will complete the "pre-program" survey. Explain these important points: 1) this is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers; 2) it is important for students to say what they really think; 3) students should ask for help if they do not understand any of the questions; 4) they are helping a national program to improve.

1 Distribute the surveys. Before students begin, explain that they should fill out the "code," which will help Earth Force match students from pre to post.

2 After all the surveys are turned in, point out that surveys are one way to find out one kind of information: people's views and opinions.

3 Reflection question — Why is it important to find out people's opinions before working on a community problem?

**Teacher Notes**

Please collect the surveys and ensure that they are coded according to the instructions. Complete the teacher survey and cover sheet, place all the surveys into an envelope, and hand them off to the Earth Force staff person in your community.

**Extension**

Have students research and compare various kinds of surveys, such as in-person interviews, phone calls, paper surveys, and web-based instruments.
The Earth Force Pre-Survey
We Want to Know What You Think!

As your teacher explained, we are asking students to complete a survey at the beginning and end of the CHEC program so we can see what you have learned.

Instead of asking you to give us your name on the survey, we are using a code that will let us match your before and after surveys without knowing your name. We will ask you to use the same code at the end of the program.

What are the first initials of your first name, middle name, and last name?

First name initial: __
Middle name initial: __
(leave blank if no middle name)
Last name initial: __

What is your date of birth? (Month/date): ___ / ___

What color are your eyes?  ○ Brown  ○ Blue
○ Hazel/Green
○ Something Else

Please answer the questions in this survey as carefully and honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want to know how you think or feel.
Please tell us what you think!

For each statement below, please tell us if you feel that the statement is Very True for you, Sort of True for you, Not Very True for you, or Not at All True for you. Please be sure to fill in the circle completely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very True</th>
<th>Sort of True</th>
<th>Not Very True</th>
<th>Not True at All</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel that it is my responsibility to help solve environmental problems in my community</td>
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<td>2. I think each person in the community should do what he or she can to protect the environment</td>
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<td>3. I believe that what I do every day can have an impact on the environment</td>
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<td>4. I am committed to working on environmental issues now and later in life</td>
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<td>5. I am aware of environmental issues in my school or community</td>
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<td>6. It is important to understand the history behind an environmental problem before you try to solve it</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I know where to find information on environmental issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I know how to contact adults in my community to get information on community or environmental issues</td>
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<td>9. I know how to find information on the environmental history of my community</td>
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<td>10. I know what it takes to change the rules and laws that affect the environment in my school or community</td>
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<td>11. I know how to work with others to solve an environmental problem in my school or community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very True</td>
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<td>Not True at All</td>
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<td>12. I believe that I can personally make a difference in my school or community</td>
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<td>13. I believe that young people can persuade other youth and adults to do things to improve the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. I believe that people working together can solve community problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I think you can improve an environmental project by looking at how people tried to solve environmental problems in the past</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I am confident in expressing my opinions in front of a group of adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I think it is more important to look for ways to help the environment for a long time than to do something that will just make a difference for a few days</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I talk about local environmental issues with my friends or parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I pay attention to local environmental issues when I hear about them</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I do not know of any events in my community in the past that made a difference for the environment in my community today</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I am not interested in learning about the history of my community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please tell a little about yourself

22. How old are you? _______

23. What grade are you in? _______

24. Are you a boy or a girl?
   - Boy
   - Girl

25. How would you describe your racial or ethnic background? Please feel free to mark all the answers that apply.
   - African-American
   - White
   - Hispanic/Latino
   - Asian/Pacific Islander
   - Alaskan/Native American
   - Other (Please describe) _______

26. Have you participated in an Earth Force project before?
   - Yes
   - No

That's It!

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER THE SURVEY!
ACTIVITY 2

Title of Activity
Introduction to CHEC

Goal
This activity will help students understand the “roadmap” of the CHEC program and become oriented to the materials.

Objectives
• Describe the six steps in the CREC process
• Develop ground rules for working on group projects

Materials
• Chart paper and markers
• Tips Cards 2, 3, 4, 6
• Earth Force video
• CAPS Student Book pages 5-7

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to describe the six-step CHEC process and to develop ground rules for working together.
2. Distribute student books and have students look at page seven. Point out the questions in the first paragraph, and have students talk about how well they liked a previous group project and the ground rules they used then.
3. Using the examples in the box on page seven, have students brainstorm a list of ground rules they would like to use during the CHEC project. Record the items on chart paper. Lead a discussion on which of these rules to keep and which to discard. Keep the final list posted in the classroom throughout the project.
4. To introduce the CHEC process, show the Earth Force video. Discuss the program's steps while looking at page five of the student book.

5. Reflection question — Which of your ground rules did you see being used by the students in the video, and which of their ground rules would you like to adopt?

Teacher Notes
Point out the perils of rushing into action projects before researching policies, practices, and community history.

Extension
- Use Tips Card 3 to identify a method (e.g., making a video, keeping journals) for recording the CHEC project as it unfolds.
- Ask students to think of what each of them brings to the project (e.g., one quality or talent) and have them write this on an index card. Ask them to do the same for what they need from the other members of the group in order to feel supported. Post cards on a flip chart or bulletin board under the heading, “What I bring. What I need.”
- Introduce ground rules by brainstorming a list of qualities the group should have (e.g., patience with each other, hard work, respect for each other's ideas). In order to foster those qualities, what rules should we have? Divide students into two groups, one group responds to “Members should...”, the other to “Members should not...”. Compare lists, and record a final list.
ACTIVITY 3

Title of Activity
What Works?

Goal
This activity will help students understand the elements that comprise a quality CHEC project.

Objectives
• Identify elements of quality CHEC projects
• Assess project descriptions using criteria

Materials
• Winding Stream handout for group one
• Winding Stream handout for group two
• CAPS Student Book pages 5-7

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to illustrate what makes a successful CHEC project.

2. Divide the class into two groups. Distribute a different Winding Stream handout to each group, and ask groups to read their story and “grade” it.

3. Have each group report its findings to the whole class. Focus a class discussion on the differences between the two stories.

4. Reflection questions — What did Mr. Shelby do that we want to avoid? What did Ms. Walker do that we want to copy?
Teacher Notes

- Adapt the text in the handouts to the reading abilities of your class as necessary.
- The Winding Stream handouts include the term “fecal coliform,” which means bacteria that are found in excrement or sewage contamination, occurring naturally in the digestive tract of human beings and animals to aid in the digestion of food.

Extension

Refer to the Earth Force website to examine more project stories. Brief descriptions can also be found on pages 24, 33, 41, and 52 of the CAPS student book. Have students use the grading grid to assess these stories.
Winding Stream handout — Group One

The eighth-grade classes of both Ms. Walker and Mr. Shelby have discovered a pollution problem in Winding Stream, which runs close to Anytown Middle School's campus. Students monitored water from the stream and found high levels of fecal coliform, which is often caused by human or animal waste.

Before taking on the problem, both classes create a historical timeline of water quality in Winding Stream. They find that small plots of land have been farmed upstream for decades. They also find that Anytown has grown a lot since the 1960s, with population nearly doubling. A paper plant was closed in 1978 just outside of Anytown. In the 1950s and 60s, the factory polluted Winding Stream, but water quality improved since then. Anytown built a “combined” sewer system in the 1950s. During heavy rains, this system sent untreated human waste directly into Winding Stream. In 1990, Anytown replaced the “combined” system with one that used different pipes for sewage and rainfall. This stopped untreated sewage from going into Winding Stream and helped improve the water quality. Because of costs, people who lived upstream in Anycounty were never hooked up to the sewer system. They still use septic systems today.

Mr. Shelby and his students seek to identify the cause of the pollution. They focus on the people upstream who have never been hooked up to the sewer system. Instead, all these homes are using septic systems. On the Web, students research the link between septic systems and water pollution in other communities. They find that when homeowners fail to maintain their systems, fecal coliform often shows up in nearby bodies of water. The class decides that these septic systems must be leaking human waste into the stream.

Mr. Shelby's students decide to take civic action. They make and send out a brochure to teach rural people about the importance of keeping their septic systems in good shape, and about how to do so. They then develop a plan to monitor the stream every two weeks for a semester to see if the brochures have made a difference.
Mr. Shelby’s students did not identify the true cause of the fecal coliform pollution. They did not realize that all the homeowners are in fact properly keeping up their septic systems. The students find this out when Mr. Shelby receives a call from the county water officer, who finds out about the brochures from a concerned homeowner. The students feel as if they have wasted their time, and some homeowners feel insulted.

Use the grid to grade the project done by Mr. Shelby’s students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Element</th>
<th>Grade (A-F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examining the history of the problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examining the causes of the problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working for a lasting change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding out community views</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving local experts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Winding Stream handout – Group Two

The eighth-grade classes of both Ms. Walker and Mr. Shelby have discovered a pollution problem in Winding Stream, which runs close to Anytown Middle School’s campus. Students monitored water from the stream and found high levels of fecal coliform, which is often caused by human or animal waste.

Before taking on the problem, both classes create a historical timeline of water quality in Winding Stream. They find that small plots of land have been farmed upstream for decades. They also find that Anytown has grown a lot since the 1960s, with population nearly doubling. A paper plant was closed in 1978 just outside of Anytown. In the 1950s and 60s, the factory polluted Winding Stream, but water quality improved since then. Anytown built a “combined” sewer system in the 1950s. During heavy rains, this system sent untreated human waste directly into Winding Stream. In 1990, Anytown replaced the “combined” system with one that used different pipes for sewage and rainfall. This stopped untreated sewage from going into Winding Stream and helped improve the water quality. Because of costs, people who lived upstream in Anycounty were never hooked up to the sewer system. They still use septic systems today.

Ms. Walker’s students think that the fecal coliform in the stream is coming from rural septic systems. But before taking action, they talk with the manager of the county water office, who says that all the homeowners are taking good care of their septic systems. Students wonder what else might be causing the high levels of fecal coliform in the water. They find that “combined” sewage treatment systems and animal feces can contribute to high levels of fecal coliform. From their timeline, students know that Anytown no longer has a “combined” sewer system.

The students then invite the state university’s extension agent to school to discuss local farming practices. He explains that some farmers in the area allow large animals to enter streams rather than build fences to keep them (and their waste) out. This practice often allows high levels of fecal coliform to enter a stream. The students then interview some farmers to understand their reasons for this practice and to see if the farmers would be willing to build fences. Some farmers agree to build fences, but others are not sure.
The students and the extension agent both agree that farmers need to fence out animals where they have direct access to the stream. They discuss how to convince all the farmers to build fences along the stream to keep the animals out, and the students also try to predict how farmers will react. For example, the farmers may fear that building a fence will cost a lot of money. So students also contact a local lumberyard to ask for donations of materials. The extension agent promises to see if the state has a program to help farmers pay for fences.

Ms. Walker's students then contact all the farmers along Winding Stream and invite them to attend a meeting about the stream's water quality and what can be done to improve it. The students share their fecal coliform test results. Then the extension agent tells farmers how to take part in a state program that helps pay for fences. As the meeting ends, the farmers are more than happy to take part in the fence building program.

Use the grid to grade the project done by Ms. Walker's students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Element</th>
<th>Grade (A-F)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examining the history of the problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examining the causes of the problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working for a lasting change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finding out community views</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving local experts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITY 4

Title of Activity
Community Search Survey

Goal
This activity will help students find out what people consider the important environmental problems in the community, and it will help students develop survey questions.

Objectives
- Identify the components of a community survey
- Describe the various ways to collect survey information
- Develop common questions to ask community members
- Identify which groups in the community to survey
- Compile and discuss survey findings

Materials
- Tips Cards 8, 9, 10, 12
- CAPS Student Book pages 13-14

Time
Two class periods to prepare surveys, out-of-class surveying, one follow-up class

Procedure
1. Describe to students the goal of the lesson: to determine what various members of the community regard as environmental problems. Explain that they will be figuring out whom to survey, how to develop questions, and how to compile the information.
2. Discuss with students what they think they need to know from community people in order to create a list of community environmental problems. Ask them to discuss why it is important to know the public's views on the causes and seriousness of such problems.
3. Once the students have listed what they want to discover, develop a set of questions. Go over some criteria for developing effective questions, such as clarity, brevity, and neutrality (i.e., not worded to lead respondents toward any answer). See if students want to add any criteria. Present students with some model survey questions that satisfy these criteria.

4. Discuss who students think should be surveyed. Possible groups to survey may include parents, business people, teachers, government officials, randomly selected "people on the street," and other students.

5. Next determine how to conduct the surveys. The most common methods are face-to-face, telephone, and written questionnaires. Students may choose any combination of these.

6. Have students practice the questions on classmates or willing teachers before beginning the actual survey. Use the criteria list and the reactions of listeners to determine whether any questions need improvement. After students modify questions as needed, have them conduct the surveys.

7. After surveys have been administered, discuss survey results, focusing on problems identified by various groups, views about the seriousness of problems, and whether the medium (phone, written questionnaires, or face-to-face) seemed to make any difference in the responses.

8. Reflection question — Which, if any, problems were new to the students?

Teacher Notes
- Permission may be required before students can conduct surveys in school, in front of shops, and at sporting events.
- Visit http://www.42explore2.com/pollsurvey.htm to see model survey questions.

Performance Assessment
Use the attached rubric for effective surveying to assess the quality of surveys created by students.

Extension
Before students develop their surveys, invite a pollster or media representative to describe how professionals create survey questions and use survey information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample Population</td>
<td>Clearly identifies and describes the population the poll attempts to represent. Clearly explains why this population is the appropriate one to survey.</td>
<td>Identifies and describes the population the poll is intended to represent. Somewhat vague when explaining why this is the appropriate population to survey.</td>
<td>Identifies and describes the population the poll is intended to represent. Unable to explain why the selected population is the appropriate one to survey.</td>
<td>Unable to identify or describe the population the poll is intended to represent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Selection Technique and Sample Size</td>
<td>Uses an appropriate technique to ensure a random selection of people from a large enough sample size.</td>
<td>Interviews a random selection of people from a large enough sample size.</td>
<td>Interviews enough people, but the sample is not representative.</td>
<td>Interviews only a few people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Wording</td>
<td>Questions are clear, concise, unbiased, and interesting enough to hold respondents' attention.</td>
<td>Questions are clear and unbiased, but not particularly interesting.</td>
<td>Questions are somewhat unclear, overly wordy or uninteresting, and may show some bias.</td>
<td>Questions are poorly written and show clear bias.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Order</td>
<td>Questions are in a logical order and avoid &quot;question order bias.&quot;</td>
<td>Questions are in a logical order, and there is little possibility of question order bias.</td>
<td>Questions are not in any particularly logical order, introducing bias.</td>
<td>The poll seems to be a jumble of questions, and there is clear bias present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Interviewer presents him/herself in a professional and friendly manner and speaks clearly. Written survey is neat, attractive, and easy to read. Purpose of the poll is effectively explained.</td>
<td>Interviewer is professional. Written survey is neat and easy to read. Purpose of the poll is explained.</td>
<td>Interviewer appears neither professional nor unimpeachable, and doesn't speak clearly. Written survey is sloppy and difficult to read. Reason for the poll is unclear.</td>
<td>Interviewer is unpleasant, unprofessional, unkempt, hard to understand. Written survey is full of typos and is sloppy. No explanation of the poll is given.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITY 5

Title of Activity
In the Paper

Goal
This activity will help students discover community assets, priorities, and problems by consulting newspapers.

Objectives

- Identify the sections of the newspaper that address community environmental assets and problems
- Describe coverage of stories about the environment over time
- Compare newspaper coverage of community environmental problems with information gathered through surveys

Materials

- One newspaper per student, some 0-3 days old, some 4-6 days old, some 7-9 days old (let half the class have “state/local” sections and the other half “national” sections; make sure that each of these sections has articles about community environmental assets and problems — if not, change which sections you distribute)
- Tips Cards 10, 11, 16, 35

Time
One class period

Procedure

1. Explain the activity’s goal: to help students use the newspaper to identify community assets, supplement their list of environmental problems, and check the information gained from their surveys.
2. Discuss the different sections of a newspaper and their purposes.
3. Divide the class into six groups of equal size. Distribute newspaper sections to students. Give group one a state/local section that is 0-3 days old, group two a national section 0-3 days old, group three a state/local section 4-6 days old, group four a national section 4-6 days old, group five a state/local section 7-9 days old, and group six a national section 7-9 days old.

4. Have students read their parts of the paper and underline any mention of community environmental assets and problems. Ask groups to generate a list of environmental assets and problems covered by the paper. All students need to prepare to share their lists with the entire class.

5. Then use the “jigsaw” approach to reconfigure the students into groups of three students each. Some of the new groups will have one student each from the “state/local” groups (1, 3, and 5). The rest of the new groups will have one student each from the “national” groups (2, 4, and 6). The students’ task in the new groups is to report the findings of their original groups and to analyze coverage of any stories over time.

6. Conclude the lesson with a whole-class discussion of these questions:
   - What assets and problems did you identify from the papers?
   - How did coverage change over time?
   - How did problems covered in the newspaper compare with problems identified by surveying the community?
   - What differences did you see between the different sections of the paper?
   - Which stories received the most attention in the paper?

7. Reflection questions – How is information in the newspaper different from and similar to survey findings? Which is more trustworthy and useful?

**Teacher Notes**

Use the library or Internet to expose students to different newspapers. Ask your local paper if they take part in the “Newspapers in Education” program, which provides free papers to schools.
Performance Assessment

Have students create a "news roundup" newspaper article that pulls together their newspaper research, and use a rubric to define a quality roundup piece.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>The roundup summarizes articles clearly and quickly and is exceptionally interesting to readers.</td>
<td>The roundup summarizes articles clearly and is interesting to readers.</td>
<td>The roundup is uneven or wordy and is only marginally interesting to read.</td>
<td>The roundup omits key points from the articles and is uninteresting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source Identification</td>
<td>The roundup clearly points out the sources from which all points and ideas came.</td>
<td>The roundup points out the sources from which most points and ideas came.</td>
<td>The roundup identifies the sources from which a few of the points and ideas came.</td>
<td>The roundup does not identify any of the sources from which the points and ideas came.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling and Proofreading</td>
<td>The roundup contains no spelling or grammar errors.</td>
<td>The roundup contains one to two spelling or grammar errors.</td>
<td>The roundup contains three to five spelling or grammar errors.</td>
<td>The roundup contains more than five spelling or grammar errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Order</td>
<td>The roundup presents information from articles in correct time order from past to present.</td>
<td>The roundup includes one to two errors in the time order of information from articles.</td>
<td>The roundup includes three to four errors in the time order of information from articles.</td>
<td>The roundup includes more than four errors in the time order of information from articles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extension

- Have students compare newspaper coverage of environmental assets and problems with that of the electronic media (TV, radio, Internet).
- Have students clip, bring in, and post articles that deal with community environmental assets and problems over time.
Segment Two

Problem Selection
From the list of problems generated in step one, students choose a problem using democratic procedures along with criteria they help develop. Teachers supply some of the criteria, such as relevance to the curriculum. Other criteria should include the size and scope of the problem, the intensity of feeling about the problem among community members, and the extent to which students care and can do anything about the problem. Given that groups may not easily agree on a problem, the materials include democratic activities such as voting and working through disagreements in detail in small groups.

Problem Selection
It involves...

- Using democratic principles to make group decisions
- Developing and using criteria to select a problem to address
- Clarifying the definition of problems

It is good when...

- Students choose a problem without racing ahead to solutions
- Students give fair consideration to each other’s diverse views
- Students develop and use criteria to judge sources’ reliability
- Students choose a problem that is realistic for them to address

The two activities in the segment are:

- Activity 6: Narrowing the Problem
- Activity 7: Voting and Civil Discussion

The total time needed for segment two may vary considerably from teacher to teacher and group to group. Some student groups may be so adept at “narrowing the problem” as to not need to do Activity 7. Other groups may need to conduct multiple votes after extensive “civil discussion.”

Before proceeding to segment three, students select an environmental problem to address.
ACTIVITY 6

Title of Activity:
Narrowing the Problem

Goal
This activity explores how students can consolidate the problems on the list they created at the end of segment one.

Objectives
• List causes and effects associated with community environmental problems
• Combine problems into categories as appropriate
• Define criteria and discuss which criteria to use to select one problem from the list

Materials
• Tips Cards 6, 8, 10, 13
• CAPS Student Book pages 20-23

Time
One class period, possibly more if additional research is needed

Procedure
1. Begin with a class discussion of the problem list. Ask whether any problems are closely related enough to be merged into one problem.
2. Next encourage students to do a "first cut," that is, are there any problems everyone agrees should not be the focus of the CHEC project? Strike any of these from the list.
3. Introduce the notion of criteria by asking students what factors they consider when making a choice in their everyday lives, such as which snack to select or which movie to attend (for selecting a snack, students might list cost, taste, convenience, and nutrition as criteria).
4. Work with the students to develop a criteria list for eliminating some of the problems from consideration. For example, students might come up with three criteria: student interest, scale, and importance. If you want them to consider “connection to the curriculum” as a criterion, describe which parts of the curriculum must be met.

5. Have students apply their criteria to the list of problems. Ask students to discuss how well each problem on the list addresses each criterion. For example, is “stream pollution” interesting, important, and possible to tackle?

6. Reflection question — Describe two different decisions you have made, one when you thought through criteria, and one when you did not; how were the outcomes of these decisions different?

Teacher Notes

- It is not unusual for students to struggle with applying criteria. Spend extra time working on this idea if needed, using extra real-life decisions facing students.

- When applying criteria, students may need to venture back into segment one. For example, if they do not know whether “stream pollution” is viewed as an important problem by large numbers of city residents, they may wish to do a survey to find out.

Extension

Add a math element by creating a grid with problems listed down the side and criteria listed across the top. Have students use a one-to-five scale to “score” each problem against each criterion. You may also “weight” the criteria, so that each “score” would be multiplied by the weight assigned to each criterion.
ACTIVITY 7

Title of Activity:
Voting and Civil Discussion

Goal
The activity outlines a classroom debate structure that promotes civil dialogue and helps students choose a problem to address when consensus does not easily occur.

Objectives
- Distinguish between assertion and evidence
- Take and defend positions using evidence to support their viewpoints
- Explain the characteristics of and need for civil debate

Time
One class period

Materials
- Copies of the attached rubric
- Tips Cards 6, 17

Procedure
1. Explain the reason for this activity: to civilly debate which problem to work on when the class is divided, and then vote to resolve the matter.
2. Define the terms assertion (a claim) and evidence (facts to help people judge whether to believe a claim) for students. Stress the need to back up their claims with scientific research and community surveys or investigation. Note also that some of their reasons for their views may not be subject to scientific testing, such as whether students find litter in the park more "interesting" than a polluted creek.
3. Next explain how the debate process will work. Stress that no matter which side "wins" the vote, grades will be determined by the preparedness, civility, use of evidence, fairness of questions, and
respect demonstrated by the students. Distribute the attached debate rubric, and explain that a few students will use these to help grade each team's performance.

4. Designate student “referees” by selecting an equal number of students (perhaps three) from each side. These students will use the debate rubric to help you grade the debaters. The debate proceeds as follows:

- Teams prepare and deliver their opening remarks, limited to 2 to 3 minutes, which must include at least two assertions and two pieces of supporting evidence for each assertion.
- After both sets of opening remarks, teams may question students on the other team. (You may want to call on students to ask questions.)
- Limit responses to 1 to 2 minutes, and include as many rounds of questions and responses as time permits.
- Conduct a secret ballot vote when 15 minutes are left in the class period.
- Disclose results and debrief.

5. With the whole class, ask about the format, fairness, and substance of the debate. Make sure no one feels railroaded.

6. Reflection question – Discuss the quotation, “Remember you will not always win. Some days, the most resourceful individual will taste defeat. But there is, in this case, always tomorrow – after you have done your best to achieve success today.” – by Maxwell Maltz. What happens in a democracy if people are unable to accept losing at some point?

**Teacher Notes**
Collect referees’ task list sheets and compare the results with your own scoring of the debate.

**Performance Assessment** is built into the activity.

**Extension**
Have students select the voting rules and procedures from a number of options, such as requiring a supermajority like 2/3 to “win” or voting publicly as opposed to using the secret ballot.
**Debate Rubric**

Critique of Team A by __________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Maximum Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opened with at least 2 assertions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported each assertion with at least 2 pieces of evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team questions were fair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions were respectful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses to questions used evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one resorted to personal attacks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Debate Rubric**

Critique of Team B by __________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Maximum Points Possible</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported each assertion with at least 2 pieces of evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team questions were fair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions were respectful</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses to questions used evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>No one resorted to personal attacks</td>
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</table>
Segment Three
Policy and Community Practice Research
Once they have identified a problem, some groups may be in a rush to
brainstorm solutions. The third step of the CHEC framework calls on
students to slow down and look at their problem through the lens of history.
They will create a timeline of their problem to gain an understanding of
where it came from. The timeline includes three categories: policies,
economics, and history. The goal is to help students understand that today’s
problems have complex roots that may span decades.

Completing a timeline about their problem will help students identify its
underlying cause: is it an existing public or private policy, poor enforcement
of a well-intentioned policy, economic changes, or the habits and everyday
behaviors of people in the community? Who makes the relevant policies and
at which levels of government, who lobbies for which policies, who enforces
the policies, and how effective is this enforcement? How do economic
conditions affect policies, practices, and problems?

By looking at widely diverse perspectives on these questions, students often
sharpen the definition of their problem. For example, a group’s problem
statement might evolve from “the park is full of garbage” to “there are not
enough trash cans in the park, and the few in place are always overflowing,
so most park users litter.”

To reframe problems in this way, students research “policies” and “players.”
Focusing on problematic policies and practices helps students avoid
developing “quick fix” projects that have little lasting impact on the
community. Rather, balanced policy research helps students develop projects
that can effect lasting improvements.
Policy and Practice Research

*It involves...*
- Examining the historical roots of policy questions
- Creating a community history timeline
- Analyzing policies related to the problem
- Identifying centers of power related to the policies
- Determining the underlying causes of the problem
- Explaining how to improve a policy or practice

*It is good when...*
- Students recognize the “gray areas” involved in evaluating policy
- Students make key decisions shaping the timeline
- Students give fair consideration to a wide array of diverse views
- Students develop and use criteria to judge policies
- Students clearly describe what improved policies and practices would look like

*The six activities in the segment are:*
- Activity 8: The Roots of Our Problem
- Activity 9: Building a Timeline
- Activity 10: Ask the Experts
- Activity 11: Completing Your Timeline
- Activity 12: Analyzing Policies
- Activity 13: Making Sense of Our Research

Students are ready to move on to segment four when they have written a simple sentence describing the improved policy or practice they want to see.
ACTIVITY 8

Title of Activity
The Roots of Our Problem

Goal
This activity will help students understand what a history timeline is and how to develop questions to complete one for the environmental problem they have chosen to address.

Objectives
- Define the timeline categories of history, economics, and policies
- Develop questions to pursue in completing a community timeline

Materials
- Chart paper and markers
- Tips Card 34
- Blank timeline sheets

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to begin the process of researching the history of their problem.
2. Distribute blank timeline sheets and explain that students will research their problem's history and record the results on the timeline.
3. Distribute Tips Card 34 and divide students into three “category” groups: history, policies, and economics. Ask each group to use the tips card to create a chart paper poster that shows what their category means. Also ask each group to generate historical questions about their problem they would like to explore.
4. Have each group choose a speaker and a scribe and prepare to teach the rest of the class about their topic (e.g., these are the kinds of things we will look for under “policies”) and to share their questions.

5. Ask scribes to hold up chart papers while speakers explain the topics.

6. Reflection questions — What events in our community’s history, policies, and economics do you already know about? Why do you think the timelines go back 100 years instead of 20 or 200?

**Teacher Notes**

You may or may not wish to keep students in their category groups (history, economics, policies) as they conduct community research and complete their timelines.

**Extension**

- Have members of other category groups add questions that may have been overlooked at first.
- Have students create a personal timeline, limited to five or six events and dates, using categories such as family, school, and community. What events have shaped their lives?
- How does their personal history inform who they are at the moment? If a historian were studying your life, where would they go to find information?
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Policies</strong></td>
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1900s 1910s 1920s 1930s 1940s 1950s 1960s 1970s 1980s 1990s 2000s
ACTIVITY 9

Title of Activity
Building a Timeline

Goal
This activity will help students determine what sources to consult to begin working on their timelines.

Objectives
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources
- Develop criteria to assess the reliability of sources

Materials
Tips Card 35

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to identify sources of information to consult as students work on their timelines.
2. Begin by defining “source” and distinguishing a first-hand from a second-hand source.
3. Divide the class into four groups, two that will work to define a good source and two that will work to define a poor source. Ask groups to come up with three to five general rules about what makes a source either good or bad. Have a speaker from each group share these rules with the entire class.
4. Distribute Tips Card 35 and discuss how similar it is to the groups’ ideas about good and bad sources.
5. Ask students to list the kinds of sources they want to consult when exploring the questions they created in Activity 8. Ask if they think any types of sources are better than the others.
6. Reflection questions — Why do you think the tips card suggests that you find a fact in at least two places before being added to the timeline? Do you think this is a good practice?

**Teacher Notes**

Demonstrate the need to look at sources critically by playing the “telephone game.” Whisper a message into one student’s ear, let him/her pass it along by whispering to another, until it comes back to you. Share with the group how different the message has become. The point: as others handle information you need, it may become less reliable.

**Extension**

Show video clips that use obvious propaganda techniques (e.g., bandwagon, guilt by association), and discuss how to identify these in other media. See http://www.santarosa.edu/~dpeterso/permanenthtml/PropagandaListFRAME.html for definitions of numerous propaganda techniques.
ACTIVITY 10

Title of Activity
Ask the Experts

Goal
The activity helps students gather and assess the views of one or more local historians.

Objectives
- Identify people and organizations that can provide information about community history
- Compare the quality of information from human sources to that found in the media

Materials and Preparation
- Consult your historical association partner organization to arrange for a visit by a speaker with broad knowledge of community history.
- Tips Cards 5, 18, 19, 35

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain that the purpose of the guest speaker is to allow students to ask their questions to a community historian, and to provide a human source against which to compare the other sources students will consult.
2. Introduce the speaker; suggest a time limit of 15-20 minutes for remarks to leave equal time for Q&A (adjust time allotments to fit block or other special scheduling).
3. Have the group publicly thank the speaker.
4. After the speaker departs, have students discuss how useful and accurate they found the information provided by this source. They should also identify and write down points made by the speaker that should be added to their timeline (pending confirmation by one other source).

5. Reflection question — What are the strengths and weaknesses of information gathered from these different sources: media reports, direct experience, and experts?

Teacher Notes
Invite numerous speakers with different areas of expertise and points of view. They may either take part in one panel discussion or visit the class separately. With proper preparation in how to moderate a panel, a student might take the role of panel facilitator.

Performance Assessment
Factors for a rubric about active listening might include: taking notes on relevant information and omitting irrelevant information, describing flaws in reasoning or argumentation, distinguishing assertions from evidence, and summarizing central ideas.

Extension
Take field trips to various local museums and organizations to increase the number of first-hand sources to which the class is exposed.
ACTIVITY 11

Title of Activity
Completing Your Timeline

Goal
This activity will help students compile their research of community history into a timeline.

Objectives
- Describe various sources of community history information
- Assess the quality of historical information
- Synthesize research into a timeline of community history

Materials
- Blank student timelines
- Chart paper and markers
- Tips Cards 34, 35

Time
One class period, plus homework time

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to analyze the raw material they have gathered through researching media sources and talking with experts.
2. Provide class and homework time for students to consult newspapers, websites, TV shows, and other media sources of community history information. Divide students into groups based on topics as defined on Tips Card 34 (policies, history, economics), medium (TV, newspapers, etc.), or both.
3. Have students refer to information provided by experts during the previous activity.
4. Have groups propose items for the class’s community history timeline. Use the criteria on Tips Card 35 to have the whole class approve or reject proposed items for the timeline. Conduct a vote if students have a hard time reaching a consensus about any items.

5. Record approved items onto a chart paper version of the timeline.

6. Reflection questions – Which topic has the most items, and why? Which source proved to be the most useful for you?

Teacher Notes
- Preview text resources to ensure that they are written at the appropriate reading level.
- When appropriate, have students enter multiple events per decade and denote the specific year in which an event occurred.
Performance Assessment

Use the following rubric to assess timelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sourcing</strong></td>
<td>The timeline includes items from two or more sources deemed highly reliable.</td>
<td>The timeline includes items from two or more sources deemed reliable.</td>
<td>The timeline includes items from one or two sources of uncertain reliability.</td>
<td>The sources of the items are unclear or lacking in credibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy</strong></td>
<td>The timeline includes no factual errors and lists the specific year in which each item occurred.</td>
<td>The timeline includes one factual error and lists the specific year in which most items occurred.</td>
<td>The timeline includes two to three factual errors and lists the specific year in which many items occurred.</td>
<td>The timeline includes more than three factual errors and does not list the specific year in which items occurred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance</strong></td>
<td>The timeline includes no items that are unrelated to the students' environmental problem.</td>
<td>The timeline includes one to two items that are unrelated to the students' environmental problem.</td>
<td>The timeline includes three to four items that are unrelated to the students' environmental problem.</td>
<td>The timeline includes five or more items that are unrelated to the students' environmental problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>Students fairly consider each proposed item and use reasonable arguments to decide which items to accept.</td>
<td>Students fairly consider most proposed items and use reasonable arguments to decide which items to accept.</td>
<td>Students accept or dismiss many proposed items without discussion or use of reasonable arguments.</td>
<td>Students decide on most or all items without discussion or use of reasonable arguments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extension**

Have students teach younger students about their timelines. They may produce websites (or upload a timeline to the Earth Force website), booklets, videos, and plays to share with students in younger grades or with anyone else in the community. Students may also create museum exhibits for local historical societies.
## CHEC Blank Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1900s</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>History</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Economics</strong></td>
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ACTIVITY 12

Activity Title
Analyzing Policies

Goal
The activity prompts students to understand various points of view about a policy or practice related to their environmental problem.

Objectives
- Analyze policies listed on their timelines
- Identify the diverse views held by community members about the policies
- Explain criteria used to evaluate policies

Time
Two class periods, with research time between the two classes

Materials
- Tips Card 10, 13, 14, 15
- GAPS analysis tally sheet handout

Procedure
1. Explain to students that they have two major tasks to complete in this lesson:
   - research and discover community views about policies
   - develop their own views about policies
2. Explain that students will next need to contact community people to find out their views about the policies listed on their timelines. (Call this a GAPS survey: students conduct research about the Goals of the policy, Achievements of the policy, Problems with the policy, and Suggestions for change.) Have them ask each respondent:

- what do you think were the goals of the policy?
- what do you think the policy has achieved?
- what problems do you think have resulted from the policy, its enforcement, and its application?
- how do you suggest improving the policy?

3. In addition, have students determine which community people to interview. The list may include:

- Business people
- Government officials
- Environmental activists
- Parents
- Students
- Reporters
- Non-profit organization representatives

4. Ensure that students understand they do not have to survey all of these groups, just those with a stake in the policy. Make sure, however, that students consciously seek diverse and opposing views.

5. Depending on the number of community people on the contact list, students may work individually or in teams. They may want to use the tally sheet handout to take notes.

6. Reflection questions – How diverse were the views you found in the community? What is your opinion about the policy, its achievements, its failures, and how it should be changed?

**Extension**

Have students organize a public forum to learn about the diverse views in the community regarding the policy under discussion. Different groups of students can be responsible for invitation letters, logistics, thank you letters, media relations, and so forth.
Sample GAPS Analysis Tally Sheet

Policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Achievements</th>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Suggestions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business People</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Activists</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Officials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reporters</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Profit Organization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives</td>
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www.earthforce.org
ACTIVITY 13

Title of Activity
Making Sense of Our Research

Goal
The activity helps students organize their policy and practice information in terms of people's behaviors.

Objectives
- Identify community centers of power related to their problem
- Assess policies and practices related to their problem
- Develop a project goal in terms of a policy or practice change they envision

Materials
- Chart paper and markers
- What Should We Change? handout
- CAPS Student Book pages 26-35

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to pull together the group's policy and practice research in one place so that the group can work toward a project goal.
2. Label six blank sheets of chart paper “positive players,” “negative players,” “positive policies,” “negative policies,” “positive practices,” “negative practices” (one label per sheet).
3. Divide the class into six groups, one per blank sheet (i.e., one group to look at positive policies, one for negative policies, etc.). Have students refer to their work in Activity 12 to begin filling in the blank charts.
4. Have groups report their findings to the entire class.

5. Distribute the What Should We Change? handout and ask students to complete it individually to generate ideas. Have students discuss their ideas and try to achieve a class consensus answer to question 7 on the handout ("Which is the key cause of our problem or threat?").

6. Have students rewrite the answer to question 7. Instead of spelling out a problem, ask them to write it as a positive step that should be taken. Item 8 in the handout helps students do this by identifying who should take what action (e.g., “the city parks department should place 20 new trash cans throughout City Park”).

7. Reflection question — How far back in time can you find the roots of the policies or practices you think need to be changed?

**Extension**

The statement students create in item 8 of the handout will be their project goal. Develop and use criteria with students to judge this goal. Examples may include adequate time and resources to achieve it, feasibility, and likelihood of success.
What Should We Change? handout

Directions: Write your answers to these questions and be ready to discuss them with the group.

1. What policies, if any, are in place to address our problem or threat? What policies, if any, are making the problem or threat worse?

2. Are the policies public (created by government) or private (created by a group, corporation, association, etc.)? What groups or people made them?

3. Who is responsible for enforcing the policies?

4. How effectively are the policies being enforced?
5. What community practices contribute to our problem or threat?

6. Which if any of these should be changed?

7. Which is the key cause of our problem or threat? (Check one)

  — a bad public policy *(who created it?)*

  — a bad private policy *(who created it?)*

  — poor enforcement of a good policy *(who is responsible?)*

  — the way people behave in our community *(describe the behavior)*

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8. Create a project goal statement by filling in the blanks below.

We want ________________ (a person, group, or organization)

to ________________ (take a specific action), which will result

in ________________ (the impact you want).
Segment Four

Options for Influencing Policies and Practices

Now that students have a clear sense of the policy or practice change they want to see, they need to develop a strategy to make it happen. This step involves looking at past efforts to address the problem, researching how other communities have tried to solve similar problems, identifying and talking to supporters and possible opponents, generating an extensive list of strategies, and using democratic procedures to choose a strategy.

The menu of strategies may include writing letters to the editor, conducting community forums or other public education efforts, circulating petitions, and surveying community members. Once again, students develop and use criteria to make a choice among these and other strategies. Though the choice of a strategy belongs to the students, teachers often ask rigorous questions about scale, feasibility, and resources. This step is complete only when students have selected a strategy to bring about the change they want to see in policy or practice.
Options for Influencing Policies and Practices

*It involves...*

- Using democratic principles to make group decisions
- Developing and using criteria to select a strategy to make change
- Predicting how a strategy would affect various community members
- Examining how others have promoted change in the past and in other places

*It is good when...*

- Students choose a feasible strategy
- Students can explain how their strategy will effect long-term improvements
- Students feel a sense of accomplishment regardless of whether a policy is changed
- Students have built a strategy with broad community input

*The four activities in the segment are:*

- Activity 14: Who's With Us?
- Activity 15: Identifying the Possibilities
- Activity 16: What's Our Best Option?
- Activity 17: Prepare to Present

Before proceeding to segment five, students must select a strategy to achieve their goal.
ACTIVITY 14

Activity Title
Who's With Us?

Goal
The lesson explores the potential reactions that community members may have to the students' project goal.

Objectives
- Identify community groups that may be affected by the students' proposed policy or practice change
- Make predictions about whether these groups would be supportive
- Anticipate objections groups may have to policy and practice changes
- Develop arguments or alternative courses of action to address potential objections

Time
One class period

Materials
- Chalkboard or chart paper and markers, prepared with a blank template
- Who's With Us? handout

Procedure
1. Explain that in this activity, students will begin to predict community reactions to their project goal.
2. Distribute the Who's With Us? handout and lead a whole-class brainstorm using their project goal statement from the last activity. For the example in the handout, the project goal is, “we want homeowners along the creek to stop applying too much fertilizer on their lawns.”
3. Discuss how to address the concerns of potential critics. What would you say to someone who opposes your goal? Are there alternative goals that could keep allies on board while converting some potential opponents?

4. Reflection question — How have you reacted in the past when something you want to do is opposed by others?

**Extension**

Discuss with students the likely response of every stakeholder group to each policy or practice recommendation they generate.
**Who's With Us? handout**

**Example Project Goal:** We want homeowners along the creek to stop applying too much fertilizer on their lawns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons to Support</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Reasons to Oppose</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Want a clean creek</td>
<td>Home Owners</td>
<td>Resist being told what to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Want pretty lawns to keep home values high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could prevent future clean-up costs</td>
<td>Local Gov't</td>
<td>Don't want to anger homeowners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaner water, so more uses for creek</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely to</td>
<td>Hardware Stores</td>
<td>Could dampen fertilizer sales and profits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would clean creek and waters downstream</td>
<td>Sierra Club</td>
<td>Unlikely to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brainstorm with students to complete a grid like this on chart paper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons to Support</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Reasons to Oppose</th>
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</thead>
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ACTIVITY 15

Title of Activity
Identifying the Possibilities

Goal
The activity helps participants develop various strategies for achieving their project goal.

Objectives
- Identify past efforts by others to achieve their project goal
- Describe how other communities are addressing their problem
- Apply historical information to create a project strategy

Time
One class period

Materials
- Internet access
- Phone numbers of experts
- CAPS Student Book pages 36-43

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to examine specific strategies for achieving the group’s project goal.
2. Divide the students into groups, one per available Internet station. Some of the groups should examine how people in the community’s past tried to achieve the goal students are working on today. Other groups will look at how other communities are working to achieve goals similar to the students’ goal. Have each group record its list of strategies on chart paper.
3. Ask groups to move from chart to chart, spending two to three minutes reading each one, until they have rotated through all the charts.

4. Ask the entire class to discuss whether any strategies can be eliminated. Try to end up with a list of five or fewer strategies.

5. Reflection question — What did you learn from efforts in the past that might help you reach your goal today?

**Teacher Notes**

Preserve the list of strategies so that participants can evaluate them in the next activity. The Earth Force website (www.earthforce.org) describes numerous youth action stories that may give students ideas about project strategies.

**Extension**

Enlist speakers from earlier sessions to help the group select a strategy, either through return visits or field trips.
ACTIVITY 16

Title of Activity
What's Our Best Option?

Goal
The activity helps participants evaluate various strategies so that they can select one strategy with which to proceed.

Objectives
- Develop and use criteria to evaluate project strategies
- Describe elements of an effective public education effort
- Take and defend a position concerning the best strategy to achieve their project goal

Time
One class period

Materials
- Chart paper and markers
- Tips Cards 6, 17
- CAPS Student Book pages 36-43

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to narrow to one the list of specific strategies for achieving the group's project goal.
2. Look at the list of strategies created in the previous activity and try to eliminate as many as possible by consensus discussion.
3. Go over any pre-set criteria for strategy selection (interest, feasibility, importance, etc.). In addition, an effective effort to change people's behavior includes:
   - showing people the benefits of the new behavior
   - pointing out the costs of continuing the old behavior
   - making the new behavior practical and convenient
4. Ask the group to add any other criteria they would like to use. Post these criteria on chart paper, then conduct a vote (using the procedure spelled out in Activity 7, if necessary).

5. Reflection questions — What does our examination of community history say about our chances of succeeding? How difficult was the process of selecting a strategy?

Teacher Notes
If students are unable to achieve consensus, discuss with them whether it is possible to implement more than one strategy given resource limits.

Performance Assessment
Use the rubric below to help students judge the leading strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>Students are definitely able to carry out the strategy given available resources.</td>
<td>Students are probably able to carry out the strategy given available resources.</td>
<td>Students are likely to encounter a shortage of one or two resources (e.g., time, money, technology).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precedent</td>
<td>Students can cite two or more examples of the strategy working elsewhere or in the past.</td>
<td>Students can cite one example of the strategy working elsewhere or in the past.</td>
<td>Students cite at least one example of the strategy failing elsewhere or in the past, but they discuss how to adapt it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>Students can cite three or more reasons why the strategy addresses the project goal.</td>
<td>Students can cite two reasons why the strategy addresses the project goal.</td>
<td>Students can cite one reason why the strategy addresses the project goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Students respected and looked for ways to accommodate everyone's ideas.</td>
<td>Students respected and looked for ways to accommodate most ideas.</td>
<td>Students respected but did not look for ways to accommodate most ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITY 17

Title of Activity
Prepare to Present

Goal
The activity is designed to help students practice their persuasive communication skills.

Objectives
- Define the elements of an effective public presentation
- Develop a plan to share policy and practice research findings with a real-world audience

Time
Two class periods

Materials
- Tips Card 19
- Presentation rubric

Procedure
1. Explain the point of this activity: to practice giving a public presentation.

2. Develop a criteria list with students by brainstorming the elements of an effective presentation. Criteria such as multimedia, informative, thorough, aware of audience, accurate, respectful of divergent views about policies and practices, fast-paced, and so forth, may be included on the list. Consult with the students to decide which criteria to use to judge the practice presentations.

3. Again working with students, place measurable indicators on each of the criteria. For example, how fast is fast-paced; should each segment be limited to two minutes, 10, or 20? And what does multimedia mean: speaking and visuals, or must video and drama be used as well? Should respect for diverse views be measured by requiring a number of point-counterpoint statements?
4. Once the criteria have specific indicators, help the students get organized to plan their presentations. For example, some might write the talking points, some might prepare overheads, and some might design posters.

5. Finally, have groups rehearse their parts of the presentation. Have those students who are not rehearsing use a rubric sheet to “score” those who are presenting. The rubric should be based on the criteria they have defined. The score sheet should include suggestions to improve the presentation as well.

6. Reflection questions — What advertisement, book, article, or lecture was the most persuasive you ever saw, and what made it so persuasive? How does our presentation compare?

Extension
Have students conduct their presentations in front of audiences including parents, administrators, and other students.
Performance Assessment

Use this rubric sheet to prepare a quality presentation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Exceeds Standard</th>
<th>Meets Standard</th>
<th>Below Standard</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware of audience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Solicits questions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Answers questions fully</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses 3 or more strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes presenter every 10 minutes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of diverse views</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional criterion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional criterion</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Suggestions:
Segment Five
Planning and Taking Civic Action
CHEC materials help students create a detailed action plan to carry out their strategy. At a minimum, this usually requires them to identify audiences, customize messages, build alliances, and engage other citizens. Students create a project calendar, identify every task that needs to be done, assign students to complete tasks by certain dates, and set standards that define quality for any products they will create (e.g., what does an effective town meeting look like?).

CHEC teachers have perhaps their most important yet least predictable role during the action phase. Student frustration can reach its zenith here if they are trying unsuccessfully to contact officials and others. It is crucial to use various reflection strategies to handle such frustration. (See the “Stop and Think” breaks in the student book, as well as two guides to reflection at http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual and http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/132/.)

The goal is to help students realize the value of the process, even when policies and practices are slower to change than desired. This can be difficult because teachers often intensely want their students to succeed in influencing policy.

Planning and Taking Civic Action
It involves...
- Using planning templates to define and assign tasks
- Building coalitions and partnerships in the community
- Developing a persuasive message
- Educating the public and policy makers

It is good when...
- Students define and develop high quality communication tools
- Students make fair use of the talents of everyone in the class
- Students propose reasonable course corrections as needed
- Students adapt maturely to setbacks
The activity in the segment is:

Activity 18: Planning for Action

The time needed for segment five will vary depending upon the scope, intensity, and complexity of the students' strategy. A mix of in-class and out-of-class time will be needed for students to carry out their plans. Groups and teachers who need to contact community members may rely on the local Earth Force office for assistance.

Before proceeding to segment six, students plan and conduct their civic action project.
ACTIVITY 18

Title of Activity
Planning for Action

Goal
The lesson explores how students can organize their problem, project goal, and resources into a written action plan.

Objectives
• Identify tasks essential to achieving their project goal
• Assign people and deadlines to each task
• Describe what a quality product will look like when tasks are done well

Time
• One class period for planning and additional time for carrying out the plan

Materials
• Tips Cards 20, 21, 23
• Project planning handout
• Task sheet handout
• Project calendar handout
• CAPS Student Book pages 44-53

Procedure
1. Explain that good planning will help students have a better chance to reach their goals, but that planning does not guarantee success.
2. Distribute the planning sheet handout. With the whole class, discuss their problem, project goal, and strategy to effect change. Have students use the planning sheet to list tasks necessary to carry out their strategy. Ask students to set standards of quality for the products they create (e.g., what are the characteristics of an excellent letter to the editor, poster, or website?).
3. Distribute and help students complete the task sheet handout.

4. Once tasks are clear, decide together how to make task assignments. Will students volunteer, draw tasks from a hat, or design their own task assignment system? Try to strike a balance between matching skills to tasks and encouraging students to try new things.

5. Schedule time to assess student work on their tasks as they implement their projects.

6. Review the entire action plan as a group. Be sure there are regular check-in points to monitor tasks, share results, offer support, and adjust plans. Ensure that all students clearly understand their responsibilities.

Teacher Notes

- You may want to create one student group to coordinate the tasks and to remind everyone of impending deadlines.
- If students do not see quick progress toward their project goal, they may become discouraged and frustrated. Explain that there are two categories of success: actually improving policies or practices and learning the CAPS process well enough to repeat it, which are equally important.

Extension

Invite some of the community partners and historians who helped in earlier steps to class to consult with students on their plans.

Performance Assessment

Use quality criteria developed by students on their task sheets to create rubrics.
### Planning Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing Policy or Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our Vision for Improved Policy or Practice (&quot;Project Goal&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Task Sheet**

*Complete one task sheet per task.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
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<td>Time</td>
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<td>Resources needed</td>
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<td>including money,</td>
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<td>materials, skills,</td>
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<td>equipment</td>
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<td>Possible obstacles</td>
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<td>and ideas for dealing</td>
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<td>with them</td>
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<td>How will we know if</td>
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<td>this task was done</td>
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<td>well (build one or</td>
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<td>more rubrics based</td>
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<td>on this description</td>
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<td>of what good quality</td>
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<td>looks like)?</td>
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</table>
## Planning Calendar

*Record key goals and events here.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Number</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
Segment Six

Looking Back and Ahead
Reflection occurs throughout a CREC project. Students are continuously challenged to think and talk about what they are learning and feeling, how their actions relate to course goals, and whether they are on the right track. But this post-project reflection involves a broader look at the original problem students identified and how their project affected both the community and them as individuals. They also reflect on their successes and challenges and determine how citizen involvement can continue to affect their problem. Finally, students complete a second timeline at this point, which prompts them to speculate about the impact of their project into the future.

Looking Back and Ahead

*It involves...*
- Reflecting on the content students learned and the process they used
- Predicting where the local environment is headed next
- Assessing the impact of the project
- Examining the role of citizens in addressing environmental issues

*It is good when...*
- Students can describe how they learned from setbacks
- Students identify how citizens can affect problems beyond their own
- Students express an unwillingness to accept “things as they are”
- Students can describe what they would do next if they had more project time

*The activities in the segment are:*
- Activity 19: Looking Back and Ahead
- Activity 20: Building a Future Timeline
- Activity 21: Post-program Survey

Students have completed CHEC when they have turned in their post-program evaluation surveys.
ACTIVITY 19

Title of Activity
Looking Back and Ahead

Goal
The activity helps students reflect on the entire process and recognize their accomplishments.

Objectives
- Identify successes and challenges encountered during the CHEC project
- Describe the impact of their project
- Predict the impact of their project into the near future

Materials
- Looking Back handout
- Looking Ahead handout
- Eight sheets of chart paper and markers
- Tips Cards 7, 31, 32
- CAPS Student Book pages 54-62

Time
Two class periods

Procedure
1. Explain that the reflection activity has two phases: looking back and looking ahead. Also explain that both phases involve students writing their thoughts on chart paper at various stations around the room.
2. Distribute the Looking Back handout, and have students write individual responses to the questions.
3. Divide students into five groups of equal size. Send one group to each station at the first five pieces of chart paper (with the questions from the Looking Back handout). Give students 3-5 minutes at each station, then rotate the groups until all students have written on all charts. The questions are:
   - What conditions first brought your attention to the problem you worked on, and how have those conditions changed?
   - What challenges did you meet along the way, and how did you meet these challenges?
   - How have you changed as a person because of this project?
   - What advice would you give the next group to take part in this project?
   - What was the best part of the project for you?

4. Discuss items on the looking back charts.

5. Distribute the Looking Ahead handout, and have students write individual responses to the questions.

6. Send one group to each of the three chart stations (with the questions from the Looking Ahead handout). Give students 3-5 minutes at each station, then rotate groups until all students have written on all charts. The questions are:
   - What are the next steps that will help bring a long-term solution to the problem?
   - What groups or individuals might continue working on the problem?
   - Who else needs to be made aware of the problem at this point?

7. Discuss the items on the looking ahead charts.

**Teacher Notes**

Some students may prefer discussing their responses instead of writing.
Extension

- If students kept a record of their project, have them examine and discuss the "journey" from start to finish.
- Have students write themselves a letter about the CHEC experience. They might describe what they liked about the process, why it is important to take action, and a few things they learned about their problem and its history. Collect the letters and mail them to students after several weeks.
- Have students write a resume based on the skills they gained and results they achieved.
Looking Back handout

- What conditions first brought your attention to the problem you worked on, and how have those conditions changed?
- What challenges did you meet along the way, and how did you meet these challenges?
- How have you changed as a person because of this project?
- What advice would you give the next group to take part in this project?
- What was the best part of the project for you?

Looking Ahead handout

- What are the next steps that will help bring a long-term solution to the problem?
- What groups or individuals might continue working on the problem?
- Who else needs to be made aware of the problem at this point?
ACTIVITY 20

Title of Activity
Building a Future Timeline

Goal
Students will examine two alternative futures for their community.

Objectives
- Predict the impact of their project
- Describe the role of citizens in shaping environmental conditions

Materials
- Blank future timelines
- Chart paper and markers

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to have students look ahead and speculate about the health of their community’s environment in light of their project.
2. Distribute two timelines to each student, side one for “if our progress is maintained” and side two for “if our progress is rolled back.”
3. Have students complete both timelines individually and then discuss them in groups of four or five students. Ask them to identify the most likely results and create a chart paper version of both future timelines.
4. Have groups share and explain their future timelines with the rest of the class. As they do so, ask them to describe what has to happen for the positive outcome to occur instead of the negative one.
5. Reflection question — What kind of power do people have to influence the direction of the community’s environment in the future?
**Future Timeline handout** (Side One: if our progress is maintained)

**Our environmental problem:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2030</th>
<th>2040</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>History</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policies</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Economics</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future Timeline handout (Side Two: if our progress is not maintained)

Our environmental problem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2030</th>
<th>2040</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ACTIVITY 21

Title of Activity
Post-program Survey

Goal
This activity will ensure that students complete post-program surveys.

Objectives
- Describe the purpose of the Earth Force survey
- Explain how surveys fit into CHEC projects

Materials
- Post-program survey
- Teacher cover sheet for surveys

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to conclude the Earth Force Community History/Environmental Citizenship (CHEC) program and to complete the post-program survey.
2. Discuss any surveys students created or researched during the CHEC program. For the surveys they created, ask students to recall why they created them, how they selected respondents, what they asked, and how they used the data.
3. Remind students that they completed pre-program surveys. Explain that they will complete a post-program survey now that includes many of the same questions as the pre, with a few additional items at the end.
4. Explain these important points: 1) this is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers; 2) it is important for students to say what they really think; 3) students should ask for help if they do not understand any of the questions; 4) they are helping Earth Force improve the CHEC program.

5. Distribute the surveys. Before students begin, explain that they should fill out the “code,” which will help Earth Force match students from pre to post.

6. Collect the surveys and ensure that they are coded according to the instructions. Complete the teacher survey and cover sheet, place all the surveys into an envelope, and hand them off to the Earth Force Staff person in your community.
The Earth Force Post-Survey
We Want to Know What You Think!

As your teacher explained, we are asking students to complete a survey at the beginning and end of the CHEC program so we can see what you have learned.

Instead of asking you to give us your name on the survey, we are using a code that will let us match your before and after surveys without knowing your name.

What are the first initials of your first name, middle name, and last name?

First name initial: ___
Middle name initial: ___
(leave blank if no middle name)
Last name initial: ___

What is your date of birth? (Month/date): ____ / ____

What color are your eyes? 〇 Brown 〇 Blue
〇 Hazel/Green 〇 Something Else

Please answer the questions in this survey as carefully and honestly as you can. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want to know how you think or feel.
Please tell what you think!

For each statement below, please tell us if you feel that the statement is Very True for you, Sort of True for you, Not Very True for you, or Not True at All for you. Please be sure to fill in the circle completely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Very True</th>
<th>Sort of True</th>
<th>Not Very True</th>
<th>Not True at All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I feel that it is my responsibility to help solve environmental problems in my community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I think each person in the community should do what he or she can to protect the environment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I believe that what I do every day can have an impact on the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I am committed to working on environmental issues now and later in life</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I am aware of environmental issues in my school or community</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>It is important to understand the history behind an environmental problem before you try to solve it</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I know where to find information on environmental issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I know how to contact adults in my community to get information on community or environmental issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I know how to find information on the environmental history of my community</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I know what it takes to change the rules and laws that affect the environment in my school or community</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I know how to work with others to solve an environmental problem in my school or community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Very True</td>
<td>Sort of True</td>
<td>Not Very True</td>
<td>Not True at All</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I believe that I can personally make a difference in my school or community</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I believe that young people can persuade other youth and adults to do things to improve the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. I believe that people working together can solve community problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. I think you can improve an environmental project by looking at how people tried to solve environmental problems in the past</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I am confident in expressing my opinions in front of a group of adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>17 I think it is more important to look for ways to help the environment for a long time than to do something that will just make a difference for a few days</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. I talk about local environmental issues with my friends or parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. I pay attention to local environmental issues when I hear about them</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I do not know of any events in my community in the past that made a difference for the environment in my community today</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I am not interested in learning about the history of my community</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please tell us a little about your Earth Force experience:

22. Did you work on one or more Earth Force projects in your school or community this year?
   - Yes  - No

23. Did you discuss or research what caused the environmental problem you worked on before you took action?
   - Yes  - No

24. What kind of issue or problem did your Earth Force project or projects address? 
   *(Please fill in the bubbles for all the answers that apply.)*
   - Air Pollution
   - Water Use or Pollution
   - Energy Use
   - Protection of Ecosystems (forests, wetlands, etc.)
   - Habitat Creation/Preservation
   - Other *(Please describe)*
   - Waste Disposal/Reduction
   - Recycling
   - Protection
   - City Parks/Neighborhoods
   - Gardens/Community Gardens
   - Endangered Species

25. Do you feel like your project made a difference in your school or community?
   - Yes  - No

26. Would you like to continue to work on this issue, either on your own or with your Earth Force group?
   - Yes  - No

27. Do you feel like you have a better understanding of environmental issues in your community as a result of your experience with Earth Force?
   - Yes  - No
28. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Do you strongly agree, agree a little, disagree a little, or strongly disagree?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree a Little</th>
<th>Disagree a Little</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. My Earth Force experience makes me want to learn more about the environment

b. My Earth Force experience makes me want to know more about the history of my community

29. How would you rate your experience in Earth Force?
   ○ Excellent  ○ Good  ○ Fair  ○ Poor

30. If possible, would you want to be in Earth Force again?
   ○ Yes  ○ No

Please tell us a little about yourself

31. How old are you? ___________

32. What grade are you in? ___________

33. Are you a boy or a girl?
   ○ Boy  ○ Girl

34. How would you describe your racial or ethnic background?
   Please feel free to mark all the answers that apply
   ○ African-American
   ○ White
   ○ Hispanic/Latino
   ○ Asian/Pacific Islander
   ○ Alaskan/Native American
   ○ Other (Please describe) __________________________________________
35. Have you participated in an Earth Force project before?
   ○ Yes  ○ No

36. Finally, we would like to know more about some of the skills you learned as a result of being in Earth Force this year. For each of the following questions, please tell us how well you could do each type of task at the beginning of the school year and now.

   Could you do it  ○ Not at all?
                     ○ A little?
                     ○ Pretty well? or
                     ○ Very well?

For example, in the sample question at the top of the chart, we ask you how well you could ‘identify an environmental problem in your community.’ To answer, first you need to fill in one of the circles on the left side of the page to tell us how well you could identify an issue at the beginning of the year. Then, you would fill in one of the circles on the right side of the page to tell us how well you think you can identify an issue now. In the example below, we have filled in the circle indicating that you could identify an issue ‘a little’ at the beginning of the year and ‘very well’ now.
At the beginning of the school year

How well could you do each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>At the beginning of the school year</th>
<th>Now</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at All</td>
<td>A Little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Identify an environmental issue in your community (sample question)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Find the right person to give you information on a community or environmental issue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Identify what is good or bad about an idea of how to solve an environmental problem</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Use a democratic process (like voting) to make decisions with others in a group</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>Find information on the history of your community and how it affected the environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>Change what you are doing on a project to make it work better</td>
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<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>Decide whether a piece of information is likely to be correct and useful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td>Figure out whether a source of information is biased</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Make decisions based on clear criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j.</td>
<td>Make decisions only after looking at both sides of an issue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k.</td>
<td>Talk to people you don’t know about an issue you think is important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l.</td>
<td>Analyze a policy to understand its goals, achievements, and problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>Work with other youth and adults to identify and solve a community or environmental problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.</td>
<td>Look at different ways to solve a problem until you find a solution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o.</td>
<td>Identify the steps you need to take to put a project into action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER THE SURVEY!
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 1

Title of Activity
Mystery Photo

When to Conduct Activity
After Activity 9

Goal
This activity will help students examine evidence from aerial photographs and look at the changes in land uses at one community site.

Objectives
- Describe land use changes over time in the community
- Identify the impact of these changes on environmental quality

Materials
Four aerial photographs of areas of your community: one from 30-70 years ago, one showing the same site today and two other current photographs of different sites in the community

Time
One class period

Procedure
1. Explain the purpose of the activity: to look at aerial photographs of community sites over time and to discover clues from such pictures.
2. Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Show students an aerial picture of a site or intersection in the community that was taken 30-70 years ago. Do not tell students where the site is; instead, ask them to look for and discuss clues that would help them figure it out.
3. Show students three modern-day aerial pictures of different sites in the community, one of which is the same site as the picture in step two. Ask student groups to identify which of the three modern pictures is showing the same site as the older one. Have them report their answer and explain how they used evidence from the pictures to arrive at a conclusion.

4. Reflection questions — What changed at the site over 30-70 years? What kinds of environmental issues may arise from such land use changes?

**Extension**

Have students place their pictures and the answer to the mystery on a community website.
EXTENSION ACTIVITY 2

Activity Title
No More Field Trips

When to Conduct Activity
After Activity 12

Goal
This activity explores how different people can hold diverse views about policies and practices based on their experiences, roles, and perspectives.

Objectives
- Develop criteria for judging the effectiveness of policies and practices
- Apply criteria to a hypothetical school policy
- Identify players and perspectives concerning policies and practices
- Propose alternative policies that might satisfy divergent interests

Time
One class period

Materials
- Role-play handouts
- Tips Card 19

Procedure
1. Explain to students that they will take part in a role-play in order to understand how different people in a community can respond to policies and practices. Explain how the role-play will help them with future Earth Force activities:
   - evaluating an environmental policy or practice
   - preparing a public presentation about policy or practice findings
2. Divide the students into the seven role groups and distribute their role sheets. Make sure all students receive all role sheets.

3. The new policy they will be examining states: “approval for all field trips is to be denied, with no exceptions.” The river monitoring project done by students as part of a science class would be among the banned activities under this policy. Among the people involved in discussing the new policy are: school board members, a student representative, a teacher who supports the policy, a teacher opposed to the policy, a Trout Unlimited spokesperson, a concerned parent, and the school system lawyer. Explain how the role-play will work, using this outline:

4. In small role groups
   - students discuss their roles
   - students select a recorder, discussion leader, spokesperson, and time-keeper
   - students develop arguments for the position on their role sheets (except the “school board,” which develops questions to ask each group)
   - students discuss a possible compromise position that might satisfy everyone

5. In a mock school board hearing, role group speakers present and defend their views before the “school board” (the order of appearance will be decided by the “board”).

6. The “school board” votes on the policy while the teacher debriefs the process with all other students.

7. After the policy is decided, the class discusses the “board’s” criteria and assesses the process.

8. Help groups discuss the sheets and their “testimony” as needed. Prompt them with “a good field trip policy would....” Help the “board” prepare to run a meeting that examines this policy.

9. Let the “board” run the meeting; reinforce that only a group’s representative may address the “board.” Keep the meeting strictly on time.
10. After all group representatives have testified, ask the “board” to make a policy decision.

11. With the remainder of the class, discuss perspective, what makes an effective policy, how to present information to boards, how it feels to “win” and to “lose,” and how they developed and used criteria to judge policy. Explain that they will do the same thing regarding the policy or practice they chose to address through the Earth Force project.

**Teacher Notes**

Create an alternative role play activity dealing with a different school policy, such as “No More Soda Sales in School” or “We Need a Dress Code,” if student interest dictates.

**Extension**

Discuss famous people who have lost at one point in the democratic process and used persistence to win later, such as Abraham Lincoln, Thurgood Marshall, and Susan B. Anthony.
Role Sheet

Supportive Teacher, Mr. Arena

I support the school board's proposed policy. Too many students miss too many classes going on field trips. I am tired of giving make-up tests in my math class to accommodate all these field trips. My other arguments are:

Role Sheet

Opposing Teacher, Mrs. Fields

I oppose the school board’s proposed policy. My students learn so much science by taking and analyzing water from the river. How can I teach real-world science without taking my students out into the environment? My other arguments are:

Role Sheet

School System Lawyer, Ms. Prudence

I support the school board’s proposed policy. We cannot be sure that students won’t be injured while on field trips. If we lose one big injury lawsuit, we won’t have money for sports, teacher raises, or new books. One school in Kansas lost a similar suit and that district lost hundreds of thousands of dollars. My other arguments are:
Role Sheet

“Parents for Basic Education” Spokesperson, Mr. Skinner

We support the school board’s proposed policy. School is about reading, writing, and calculating, not missing class to tour museums or wade in the river. The schools are spending too much money for these trips, and we would rather spend it for basics like more teachers and books. My other arguments are:

Role Sheet

Student Representative, Ms. Hawke

I oppose the school board’s proposed policy. My classmates and I enjoy field trips, especially the river monitoring project. Plus we learn more in one day outside than in a month of some of our classes. It would be unfair to ban all trips. My other arguments are:

Role Sheet

Trout Unlimited Representative, Mr. Finn

I oppose the school board’s proposed policy. My group uses student data to keep up with pollution levels in the river. We can’t swim or fish in the river unless students monitor it. My other arguments are:
**Role Sheet**

**School Board**

We proposed the new policy to improve education, but we understand not everyone will like it. Right now we think it is the best idea, but we will think about other ideas. Here is a list of consequences we predict for each group affected by the policy, along with our questions for each group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Positive Consequences</th>
<th>Negative Consequences</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>District Lawyer</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Trout Unlimited</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

[Image of a web address: www.earthforce.org]
Write in some ideas for adjusting the policy to try to satisfy everyone below.
Celebration and Recognition

There are a number of recognition and award programs for students involved in service learning. In addition to holding a celebration for your students in your school or community, you may encourage them to apply for some of the formal recognition programs below.

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) sponsors two national recognition programs for individuals: the President's Student Service Awards and the Presidential Freedom Scholarships.

The President's Student Service Awards consist of a pin and a certificate of recognition signed by the president and are available to students of any age. Individuals in kindergarten through college who have performed at least 100 hours of service within a 12-month period are eligible for the Gold Award. Youth in kindergarten through eighth grade who have performed at least 50 hours of service within a 12-month period may receive the Silver Award. All schools, colleges, nonprofit organizations, civic groups, religious organizations, unions, or businesses may certify students for the President's Student Service Awards. All Learn and Serve America program participants are encouraged to consider making the President's Student Service Awards a part of their recognition activities. See www.student-service-awards.org/awards_index.htm for more information.

The Presidential Freedom Scholarships program is designed to highlight and promote service and citizenship by students and to recognize students for their leadership in those areas. The application for the program is now available, and high school and Boys & Girls Club officials may begin nominating selected students online. Students currently in their junior or senior year of high school are eligible to be selected for the scholarship. Students in every state and the District of Columbia have been recognized. Through the program, each high school in the country may select up to two students - juniors or seniors - to receive a $1,000 scholarship in recognition of outstanding leadership in service to their community. With funds appropriated by Congress, CNCS provides $500 for each scholarship, which must be matched with $500 secured by the participating school from the community. In addition to the scholarship, students receive a letter of recognition and a President’s Volunteer Service Award pin. See www.studentservicescholarship.org for more information.
CNCS also sponsors the National Service-Learning Leader Schools program, which is a national initiative that recognizes schools for their excellence in service learning. Representing nearly every state, 200 middle schools and high schools have earned designation as Leader Schools. These schools serve as models of excellence for their exemplary integration of service learning into the curriculum and the life of the school. Through recognition and the attendant publicity and peer assistance activities of the recognized schools, this initiative seeks to encourage and increase service-learning opportunities for America's students. See www.leaderschools.org/ for more information.

The Daily Points of Light Award is given each weekday in honor of recipients who exemplify the best of volunteerism, a sense of caring, and responsibility for others that connects citizens and solves community problems. See www.pointsoflight.org for more information.

The President's Community Volunteer Award, formerly called the President's Service Awards, is the nation's highest honor for volunteerism. It recognizes outstanding individuals, families, groups, organizations, businesses, and labor unions engaged in community service that addresses unmet human service, educational, environmental, and public safety needs. The President of the United States traditionally presents these awards at a White House ceremony. See www.pointsoflight.org/awards/president.cfm for more information.

The Harris Wofford Awards, presented by Youth Service America and State Farm Companies Foundation, is a recognition program for the youth service movement to honor the life work of Harris Wofford in "making service to others the common expectation and common experience of every young person in America." The Harris Wofford Awards provide recognition in the following categories:

Individual: An individual between the ages of five and 25 who has demonstrated exemplary commitment and action to involve themselves and other peers in service, youth voice, service learning, and civic engagement activities.

Institution: An institution can be a national, state, or local nonprofit organization, a foundation, or a corporation with a demonstrated record of activity devoted to youth service, youth voice, service learning, and civic engagement activities.
engagement. See www.ysa.org/awards/award_grant.cfm for more information. The AT&T Cares Youth Service Action Fund, sponsored by Youth Service America and AT&T, supports young people as they improve their communities through service on National Youth Service Day. See www.ysa.org/awards/award_grant.cfm for more information.

The State Farm Good Neighbor Service-Learning Award is presented by Youth Service America and State Farm. The award is available to teachers and professors, youth (age five to 25), and school-based service-learning coordinators to implement service-learning projects for National Youth Service Day. National Youth Service Day is the largest service event in the world, mobilizing youth as leaders to identify and address the needs of their communities through service and service learning, supporting youth on a lifelong path of service and civic engagement, and educating the public, media, and policymakers about the year-round contributions of young people as community leaders. See http://www.ysa.org/awards/award_grant.cfm for more information.

The Do Something BRICK Award for Community Leadership is an annual honor that financially supports the best young leaders in America. Each winner receives a $10,000 grant to support their community work, and a national grand prize winner receives a $100,000 grant at a gala awards event each fall. See http://www.dosomething.org for more information.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards honors young people in middle level and high school grades for outstanding volunteer service to their communities. Created in 1995 by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the awards constitute the largest youth recognition program in the US based solely on volunteering. Over the past nine years, the program has honored more than 50,000 young volunteers at the local, state, and national level. See http://www.prudential.com/community/spirit/ for more information.

The State Farm Youth Leadership for Service-Learning Excellence Award recognizes kindergarten through 12th grade service-learning programs and projects that demonstrate outstanding youth leadership. The award focuses on projects showing a high level of youth initiative in all areas of planning, including identifying the authentic need, planning the service, and putting that plan into action. Teams of young people representing
kindergarten through 12th grade service-learning projects can apply. National experts and representatives from the National Youth Leadership Council, the State Farm Companies Foundation, and the Council for Service-Learning Excellence review the applications and select the winner. The award is presented annually at the National Service-Learning Conference. See www.nylc.org/inaction.cfm for more information.

See Tips Card 33 for information about creating a project story for possible publication on the Earth Force website. These may be e-mailed to Kris Maccubbin at kmaccubbin@earthforce.org.