

Grade Level

6

Class Periods

2

Goals/Objectives/Student Outcomes:

Sixth-grade students will study the needs of their town and develop a project for the benefit of the town and its citizens. They will research their project, develop a rationale as to why the city council should act on it (this is to include cost, benefit and a scale model) and present their ideas to classmates and the community.

Students will:

- Apply problem solving skills to identify a need in Maquoketa and formulate a plan to meet that need
- Foster an atmosphere of respect and community by working together in teams to develop the best possible solution to the problem they have identified
- Improve research and writing skills by presenting a logical, well documented argument for their project
- Use a "real life" situation to become more familiar with their town, its citizens, and the process of problem solving in city government

Materials:

Supplies for each child:

1. Task checklist—student self-assessment
2. Map of the area
3. Graph paper
4. Informational brochure on the town
5. Large sheet of drawing paper

Background:

The town of Maquoketa is growing. The Maquoketa City Council recently met and voted to investigate possible changes in the city that would meet the future needs of its residents. The city is developing a 10-year plan. All residents are encouraged to think creatively, identify problems, and develop possible solutions. All proposals must meet certain guidelines.

The students were asked to think of a project that would improve the town. The class decided on the best project to be presented to the City Council.

Procedure:

1. Students discuss the issue of growth as it relates to their town and what changes they feel would benefit the residents. Changes could relate to various aspects of community life such as: recreation, transportation, housing, and business.
2. Students decide on a specific problem to work on. Working in teams, they tell why they intend to work on this problem and include the following information:
Who will benefit from this change?
How long will it take to build or complete this project?
Give the estimated cost of the project and explain whether this is expensive or inexpensive.
3. Students draw their own design. Plans should be explicit and in full color to enhance detail. Proposal needs to look professional.
4. Students submit their proposal to the city council.

Assessment of Outcomes:

Students' work is assessed through use of a task checklist. They are given 1 or 2 points for their work in each area. The checklist includes:

Statement of what needs to be changed in Maquoketa. Statement about why you want to work on the problem.

Statement about who will benefit from the change (for instance, children, young adults, the elderly).

Statement about how long it will take to build/complete the project (days, months, or years).

Statement about the estimated cost of the project.

Whether paragraphs are indented and properly formatted.
Correct spelling.

Punctuation and capitalization.

Typed or written in ink.

Design is drawn in large scale.

Design is colorful (crayon, colored pencil, markers, etc.). Design is neat, specific, and includes labels.

Name, hour, and "Social Studies" are written in lower right corner.

Scale

30-28 = A Excellent 27-24 = B Good 23-20 = C Satisfactory

19 = Redo

Extensions and Adaptations:

"Simtown" by Maxis was used as an extension activity on the computer.

Some students may create a model of the town for display at the local historical society.

Resources:

Information from the Chamber of Commerce.