

Title: How Can I Contribute To A Better Neighborhood?

Grade Ranges:

 K-4
 X 5-8
 9-12

Subject Tag:

Family and Consumer Sciences

Synopsis:

In this activity, students have the opportunity to explore their personal role in taking responsibility for their neighborhood. They will evaluate what they like and don't like about their neighborhoods and identify an aspect of their neighborhood that they can make better within a week. In doing so, they will reflect on their personal citizen responsibility.

Keywords:

responsibility, neighborhood, citizenship, civic duties

Body:

Class Session #1:

1. Establish focus by asking: "Are you pleased with your neighborhood?" Encourage responses, but keep the discussion general.
2. Move to the board, and using the chart illustrated below, ask students to think specifically about what they like and what they do not like about their neighborhoods.

WHAT I <u>LIKE</u> ABOUT MY NEIGHBORHOOD	WHAT I <u>DO NOT LIKE</u> ABOUT MY NEIGHBORHOOD

3. As students respond, write down (or have a student volunteer write down) each neighborhood aspect in the right category. Encourage as much response as possible. This is usually not a subject that you have to prompt on because most young people have very definite feelings about their neighborhoods. However, if necessary, you might need to use prompts including condition of streets; condition of houses; people's attitudes; presence of flowers, trees, vegetable

- gardens; environmental concerns, such as trash; existence of play/park areas for all ages; and safe areas to cross the street.
4. After you have sufficient responses, ask students to give you a definition of a “neighborhood.”
 5. Guide the discussion by asking: “The neighborhood you defined — whose neighborhood is it?” The point you should reach is the neighborhood is theirs; they live there, they have a personal responsibility to work to maintain it, even improve it.
 6. Return to the chart, and refer to the “like” column. Ask students to tell you why the things they listed are important to them. Encourage responses.
 7. Pick one item and ask the following questions:
 - What if someone came in today and took that item away or changed it in some way — how would you feel?
 - What would you want to do?
 - What would you do?
 - Whose responsibility is it to make sure that those items in the “like” column remain in your neighborhood? (Hopefully, students will respond that it is their individual personal responsibility.)
 8. Move to the “do not like” column. Pick one of the items. Write that item on the board. Ask, “What would it take to move this item from the “do not like” column to the “like” column?” Allow students to brainstorm as many possible solutions as possible.
 9. Ask if they believe their brainstorming ideas are possible. Why or why not? Encourage responses.
 10. Ask students if they believe that positive changes take time and if it’s everyone’s personal responsibility to participate in that change. Encourage responses.
 11. Move to a second chart that you have created on the board or flip chart, as illustrated below. Ask the students if they agree with the time definitions provided for each category. Within reason, accept slight variations.

CHANGES <u>CAN</u> HAPPEN		
SHORT TERM (Now)	MEDIUM TERM (Within 6 Months)	LONG TERM (Beyond 6 Months)

12. Ask students to look at their list of “do not like” items. One by one, have students categorize each of their items into one of the three columns.
13. Once the chart is complete, ask students to look at the short term column on the chart. Ask if they can identify one item that they feel they can take personal responsibility for and work to make a change happen. Encourage some brief comments.

14. Tell students they have one week to work on their selected item. At the end of one week, you will ask for an oral report of their personal responsibility activity.

Class Session #2: (One Week Later)

1. During the time between the two sessions, be sure to keep encouraging students to take responsibility for their actions and complete their tasks.
2. In a guided discussion, use the following questions:
 - How many completed the assignment?
 - How did you feel about your work, your efforts?
 - If you were not able to complete your project, do you think you can over the next few weeks? Do you think if you find someone to help you, it will be easier to complete the task?

In asking questions, encourage students to talk about what they did and how they accomplished the task, as well as what they learned from the effort.

3. Bring closure to the lesson by reminding students that a neighborhood is only as good as the individual members within that neighborhood and that each of us must take the personal responsibility to take an active part in the neighborhood. Taking that personal responsibility allows individuals to grow strong and become active participating citizens in their community.

Objectives:

Students will:

- practice identifying and working on real problems.
- recognize that change produces a ripple effect.
- build personal citizenship skills.
- recognize the personal relationship between themselves and their environment.

Standards:

NY: Language Arts 1. Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding. **3.** Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation. **Family and Consumer Science 2.1.** A Safe and Healthy Environment. Students will know the basic principles of home and community safety. They can demonstrate the skills necessary to maintain their homes and workplaces in a safe and comfortable condition. They can provide a safe and nurturing environment for themselves and others.

NYC: A1b – Improve a system: Develop an understanding of the way systems people, machines, and processes work; troubleshoot problems in their operations and devise strategies for improving their effectiveness.

CT: Language Arts 2 – Producing Texts – Students will produce written, oral, and visual texts to express, develop, and substantiate ideas and experiences.

NJ: Cross-Content Workplace Readiness 3 – All students will use critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills.

Time Required:

Two Class Periods, with a one-week period between

Technology and Materials Needed:

- Board or flip chart
- Series of prepared charts

Recommended Lesson Plan Review Date:**Review Comments:**