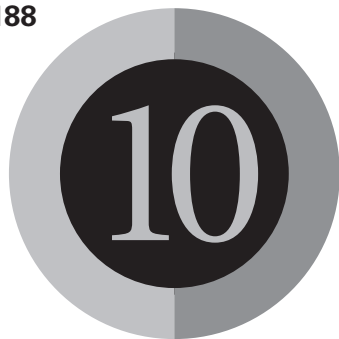# Designing a Project

Overview of Lesson	National Standards for Civics and Government	National Standards for English	National Standards for Health
Students plan, design, lead, complete, and reflect upon a service-learning project of their choosing.	• Forming and carrying out public policy (NSCG III.E.6)	• Conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions and by posing problems. (ELA 7) • Use a variety of technological and information resources . . . to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge. (ELA 8)	• Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to enhance health. (NHES 6) • Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health. (NHES 7)

10

DESIGNING A PROJECT

In this session, teens will determine how they will work together to address a specific crime problem in their community.

TEENS WILL LEARN
- To set goals for their project
- To use the *Road Map* to plan their projects
- To determine the length of their project
- To identify talents they can contribute to their project
- What materials, services, people, or funds are needed to complete the project
- How to evaluate the project's success

TEACHING STRATEGIES

These teaching strategies are included in this session:

- Whole-group Discussion
- Poster
- Small-group Discussion
- Pairs
- Brainstorming
- Journal Writing

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Newsprint and marker
- Handout 1: *Community Works Road Map*
- Six three- by five-inch cards
- Handout 2: *Types of Service-learning Projects*
- Handout 3: *Skills Bank*
- *Road Map* poster (from the *Community Works* kit)
- *101 Youth-led Ideas* (handout from Session 9)
- Project Journal for Session 10
- Paper and pens or pencils for each small group

SUMMARY OF STEPS

PART 1   50 Minutes
Step A. Warm-up
Step B. What Is the *Road Map*?
**Step C. What Is the Problem That Our Project
        Is Designed To Address?**

PART 2   50 Minutes
**Step D. What Activities Can Address
        the Problem?**

PART 3   55 Minutes
**Step E. What Resources Do We Need
        To Solve the Problem?**
Step F. Reflection

BEFORE THE SESSION

1. Refer again to *Youth Leader: Tips for Success* in Session 9.

2. Read the session plan.

3. Consider having one of the teens lead an icebreaker. Invite him or her to look at the ideas listed in the Introduction. Be sure to pay attention to the needs of the group. If teens are eager to begin work on their project, skip the ice-breaker.

4. Decide how you will involve teens in the session as leaders. This is particularly important now that they have chosen their service-learning project. For more information about facilitating teen involvement, consult the Introduction.

5. Hang the *Road Map* poster (teens can use Handout 1 to follow the discussion).

6. Copy the fundraising tips from Step E, #2, on three- by five-inch cards.

7. Make copies for each participant of Handout 1: *Community Works Road Map*, Handout 2: *Types of Service-learning Projects,* and Handout 3: *Skills Bank.*

8. If necessary, make more copies of the *101 Youth-led Ideas* handout from Session 9.

9. Make copies of the journal for this session for all participants.

10. Post the teen-created guidelines from Session 1 in the room.

11. Gather the materials you will need.

P A R T

| STEP A |

 5 MINUTES

Warm-up

1. Review the program.

    ■ Ask teens to think for a minute about the purpose of the *Community Works* program. Ask them to tell what they remember.
    ■ Ask the group members to update newcomers and those who missed earlier sessions. Assign this task to teens on a rotating basis. Explain that it helps build public-speaking skills.
    ■ Remind teens that the sessions have helped them get information and develop skills to avoid being the victims of crime, and learn ways to help others.
    ■ Return their journals with your comments from the last session.

2. Explain the purpose of the three service-learning project sessions.

    ■ Tell the youth that in these sessions they will have a chance to use what they have learned about safety and crime prevention to make a real difference in their community. This is the service-learning part of *Community Works.*

■ They have assessed the problems and issues in their community and selected one problem to address. Now they are ready to design and carry out their youth-led project. This is an opportunity for teens to use their strengths and talents, learn new skills, and work effectively with adults to bring about real change in their community.

3. Describe the purpose of this session.

■ Tell teens that in this session they will develop a *Road Map* to guide them as they work toward solving or improving their specific problem, and they will line up resources for their project.
■ The overall objective is for teens to design a youth-led project. Youth-led means that young people take the lead on everything from the planning to the implementation of the project.
■ Remind teens of the guidelines from Session 1 that they developed for these sessions. Be sure their list is posted on the wall.

STEP B	**What Is the *Road Map*?**

TEACHING STRATEGY

■ Whole-group Discussion

🕐 15 MINUTES

1. Tell teens the *Road Map* is a handy guide for clearly laying out your project idea. During the next part of the session we will learn how the *Road Map* works. It can also be a useful tool for problem solving in other areas of your life. As an example, let's begin by using the *Road Map* to figure out how to get a better grade in math.

■ While you use the poster, make sure that everyone has a copy of Handout 1: *Community Works Road Map* so they can follow the discussion.

2. Start with "Problem to be addressed."

■ It is important to frame the exact problem to be solved. Just saying "my math grade" would not be enough. What do you think would be the best way to frame the problem?
■ Possible answers include improving my math grade, getting a passing math grade, improving my math grade by two letter grades (e.g., moving from F to C). Try to frame the problem so that you will know when you have succeeded.

3. Now refer to the *Road Map* section called "Success." Here we are looking for outcomes. Outcomes are the measurable result of what has changed due to our activities. What are the results of our activities?

■ The first block is for short-term success—so what will short-term success look like? Possible answers include improved test scores, graded homework, class participation, better feeling about my ability to do math.
■ The second block is for long-term success—what will long-term success look like? Possible answers include perform better on tests, anxiety relieved, reduced pressure from parents, better final grade.

4. Look at the "Resources" section. What resources would you need to get a better grade in math? Possible answers include math book, teacher, friend who is good in math, tutor, helpful parents.

5. Go to the "Activities" section. What activities would you need to do success-fully to solve the problem you have identified? Activities are what we do to address the problem. Possible answers include meeting with the teacher and getting help developing ideas, meeting with a friend who is good in math, planning to study math every night for 90 minutes, asking for extra work from the teacher, getting a tutor, doing extra work from the textbook.

6. Now look at the other two sections of the chart.

   ■ "Good Road Conditions" (at the top): What are some things that make you optimistic that you can solve the problem you have identified? Some possible answers include the following: I know I can do the work, I have a good attitude, I have identified a good tutor, my teacher is supportive.

   ■ "Bad Road Conditions" (at the bottom): What are some things that might make it difficult for you to address the problem you've identified? Possible answers include the following: my afterschool job does not have a flexible schedule so I might have trouble meeting with the tutor, I play sports and my math grade is threatening my participation, my teacher is not helpful.

7. Solicit ideas for ways to deal with the bad road conditions. Possible answers include trying to renegotiate your work schedule so you will have time to meet with the tutor and do extra work, meeting with the coach and discussing the problem.

8. Be sure to ask participants if they have any questions about the *Road Map* before going on to the next step.

STEP C

Teaching Strategies

■ Pairs
■ Whole-group Discussion
■ Brainstorming

30 Minutes

What Is the Problem That Our Project Is Designed To Address?

This activity should be facilitated by one of the teens. Meet with some of the teens ahead of the session and go over the steps in the process so they will be comfortable taking the lead. The instructor should assist if needed. This is part of the transfer of leadership to the youth.

1. Ask teens to work in pairs to write a sentence that states as clearly and concisely as possible the problem they decided in Session 9 that they want to address with their project.

2. Participants should work together to frame the problem and complete the *Road Map* handout. The problem statement will lay the foundation for the goals. In thinking about the problem statement and the goals, be sure to consider the following:

   ■ Does everyone agree that it is important?
   ■ Is it clearly stated?
   ■ Does it have a clear ending point? Will we know when we have solved the problem or accomplished the goal?
   ■ Is it workable? Can we meet the goal with the resources we have or that are available to us? (This will be more apparent as you discuss the activities in the next session.)

3. Ask what success will look like when the problem is solved. How will teens be able to tell that they have been successful?

■ The leader should ask the group to brainstorm what they think success will be. What will be solved? What will be changed as a result of the project? Brainstorm for about five to seven minutes. (For example, let's say the group has decided on a park clean-up project. Some outcomes might include the park will look more attractive and more people will use it because it is cleaner and more welcoming to all community members.)

■ When this list is developed, members of the group should discuss it and decide which results are most likely to solve the problem they identified. The group should also sort the list based on short-term and long-term outcomes.

4. Put the group decisions on the *Road Map* poster under "Success." When the success outcomes are listed, teens should take one more look at the problem and their stated measures of success and make sure that they are connected. Some questions that could help include the following:

■ How are the outcomes connected to the problem? Do a reality check—is it reasonable to expect these changes?

■ Have we stated the problem correctly for the outcomes listed?

■ Is there any fine-tuning we need to do at this point?

Wrap-up for Part 1

Congratulate teens on beginning their service-learning project.

■ Be sure that the *Road Map* poster accurately reflects the group's latest planning.

■ Explain that Part 2 will focus on organizing the activities and resources necessary for the success of the group's project.

■ Remember to ask for volunteers to take the lead in the next part of the session.

P A R T

2

REVIEW AND PREVIEW

Continue to encourage teens to take over facilitation duties. Before beginning this session, meet with the youth who will be leading the discussion and review the session plan. If teens volunteered to facilitate, record, and be timekeeper at the end of Part 1, ask them to begin these tasks now.

STEP D

TEACHING STRATEGY

■ Whole-group Discussion

50 MINUTES

What Activities Can Address the Problem?

1. Ask for a volunteer to recap what the group decided in Part 1. What specific problem did teens decide to work toward solving or improving? The key question to consider in today's session is "What activities can address the problem?"

2. Remember that the activities are what we plan to do to solve the problem. Our successes will be the results of our activities. As we plan we will need to keep checking to make certain that we can measure our successes. This is the evaluation component of the project.

3. Tell teens that they can consider some examples of what other teen groups have done, which will assist them in thinking of how they might want to solve their specific problem. (If your group's members already have their activities in mind, use this as a way of making sure that they are comfortable with their decisions; they may want to do some additional activities surrounding their project.)

    ■ Distribute to each teen a copy of Handout 2: *Types of Service-learning Projects* and the *101 Youth-led Ideas* handout from Session 9.
    ■ Read or ask for teen volunteers to read from the lists of project types and ideas until they have a sense of the variety of options available.
    ■ Stop periodically to ask for comments or questions from the group.
    ■ Write teens' comments on the newsprint or chalkboard.
    ■ Ask for other ideas they have about kinds of projects.
    ■ The list is meant only to get teens thinking—not to limit them to projects that others have done.

4. Have teens discuss the pros and cons of possible types of activities that will solve the specific problem they have identified in their community.

    ■ When considering pros and cons, they should think about issues such as the amount of time involved in the project, the knowledge and expertise needed, their interest and enthusiasm level, availability of the necessary materials, and the kind of impact the project will have on the community.
    ■ Sort, combine, and toss out any ideas that the group decides are not workable.
    ■ If a clear choice does not emerge, ask teens how they want to decide which type of project to do.
    ■ Help them make a decision (by voting or through consensus decision making).
    ■ If necessary, remind teens that the project is a group effort, and all should be able to support and participate in it.

5. Use the "Activities" section of the *Road Map* poster to list the activities the group generated and put a star next to the one the group decided upon.

    ■ Congratulate teens on their work. Be sure to ask one of the teens to write the agreed-upon activities on the handout in preparation for the next session.

Wrap-up for Part 2

Congratulate the group on the continuation of its service-learning project.

■ Be sure that the *Road Map* poster accurately reflects the group's latest planning work.
■ The next part of Session 10 will focus on identifying the resources necessary for the project's success. Remember to ask for volunteers to take the lead in the next part of the session.

PART

3

REVIEW AND PREVIEW

Continue to encourage teens to take over facilitating. Before beginning this part of the session, meet with youth who will be leading the discussion and go over the session. If you asked at the end of Part 2 for teens to volunteer to facilitate, record, and be timekeeper, have the teens do these tasks now.

■ Ask for a volunteer to recap what the group has decided so far. What specific problem did group members decide to work toward solving or improving? The key question to consider in this part of the session is "What resources do you need?"

| STEP E | **What Resources Do We Need To Solve the Problem?** |

TEACHING STRATEGY

■ Small-group Discussion

⏰ 40 MINUTES

1. Have teens work in small groups to identify the resources they will need to complete their service-learning project. Use the *Road Map* poster to review the project and the planned activities.

    ■ Ask each small group to choose a recorder and a reporter.
    ■ Distribute paper and pencils or pens to each group.
    ■ Distribute Handout 3: *Skills Bank* to teens and ask each of them to fill one out. The skills bank will help identify all the skills of the young people involved in the group.
    ■ Then ask the group to think about and discuss how to obtain additional resources for their project. Specifically, they should consider their *talents,* the *help* they think they will need (materials, services, people, money, etc.), *other people* who share their interests and goals, and ways to recruit help. Write these five points on the newsprint or chalkboard for teens to refer to as they work in their groups.

1. *Your talents:* The talents you could contribute. Think of what you know how to do, what you do well, and what you are willing to share.

2. *Team building:* Point out that throughout the *Community Works* sessions, teens have participated in team-building exercises. Team building is important to the success of the project. Successful projects hook the interests of teens through involvement in creating the plan, and following through implementation and reflection. Group leaders will need to build team spirit throughout the project. One way to help with this is to plan ways to celebrate important moments in the development of the project. (Pizza, special hats, T-shirts, or buttons can all be part of building that spirit.)

3. *Help needed:* Materials, services, people, or money.

4. *Other people who share your interests and goals:* In the case of a park clean-up, these could include parents with young children, retired folks who use the park a lot, and police who want a safe park.

5. *Ways to recruit help:* Tell other teens, especially your friends, who might want to help; plan to approach businesses about lending or donating needed tools and materials.

■ When all needed resources/materials have been listed, ask a volunteer to combine the lists of all the small groups and record them on a separate sheet of paper. This will be your "wish list." Teens can make copies of it to distribute to anyone who asks what they need.

2. Bring teens back together again as a whole group to discuss their ideas.

■ As each reporter states his or her group's ideas, write comments on a flip-chart (later you will transfer this information to the *Road Map* poster).
■ If groups have the same ideas, indicate this by adding check marks.
■ Share some pointers from other teens about gathering resources for action projects. Distribute to several teens the cards on which you or a teen wrote the fundraising tips and ask them to read the cards aloud to the group. The cards should read as follows:

People give to people, not programs. Establish something you have in common with the donor. Show how real people will benefit.

Ask in person, not with a letter.

Know what you are asking for. Do you need money, equipment, space, a bus, a public address (PA) system, or an endorsement? Be clear about exactly what it is for and have this in writing.

You won't get it unless you ask for it. Take time to research your possible donors so you can explain to them why their help is needed.

Teens are great fundraisers. People admire their determination and commitment.

Remember that everyone can help your cause. Work to get all types of donations, including volunteer time, materials and supplies, monetary support, or a personal endorsement.

- Tell teens that if they need to ask for resources, it is a good idea to practice asking first. They should try explaining their project in 25 words or less. This will help ensure that everyone is thinking about and describing the same project.
- Tell teens that they will allocate tasks and responsibilities for the action project in Session 11.

| STEP F | **Reflection** |

TEACHING STRATEGY

- Journal Writing

  15 MINUTES

1. Relate the session to teens' lives. Take a few minutes to discuss with teens how they worked as a group. What went well? What could have been strengthened?

   - You may want to assign roles to teens for the next session (facilitator, recorder, and timekeeper). If you do this, arrange to meet with these volunteers before the next session to review the plan for Session 11.
   - Tell teens that participation in the next session is essential for creating a successful project. Give them a preview.

2. Turn learning into action.

   - Ask teens what key lessons they learned from this session about doing a successful service-learning project. The point is to get teens to see that setting goals and figuring out what they want their project to do will be important to the success of their project.
   - Remind the group that the *Road Map* can be used to help solve other problems. Can teens think of another situation in which the *Road Map* process might be helpful? What are some examples?

3. Distribute project journal, part 2.

   - These journal pages relate to the beginning of the project. The project journal is different from the other journal sections in *Community Works*. Working on these journal pages will help the participants in several ways: (1) they will recap what they did in the sessions, which will help them keep track of the project; (2) they will be asked to think of some things that will contribute to the discussion in the next session; and (3) they will reflect on their roles in the process and the impact of that experience.
   - Explain the purpose of the project journal to all participants. Be sure they know it is to help them reflect on what they learned and for you to read and respond to what they write. Be clear that you will not be correcting what they write, just reading and responding.
   - Tell the participants you will be looking at the journals. Collect their journals to review them after the session and write short comments. Tell them you will return their journals with your comments at the next session. This gives teens something tangible and provides them with a connection to previous sessions.

HANDOUT 1

Community Works Road Map

Good Road Conditions

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Bad Road Conditions

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Problem to be addressed

Activities

Resources

Success (short-term)

Success (long-term)

H A N D O U T   2

Types of Service-learning Projects

Raising Awareness

1. Providing information or understanding to others

   For example, posters or table tents on crime prevention in the school cafeteria, drug abuse prevention fliers distributed in grocery bags at the supermarket, a billboard advertising a crime prevention hotline.

2. Teaching others

   For example, cross-age teaching, tutoring, peer teaching, instructional skits, being a mentor, teaching elderly people how to be less vulnerable. (One year, New Orleans teens offered conflict management presentations to elementary schools; the next year they wrote and performed skits explaining child abuse and drug abuse.)

Providing a Service to the Community

3. Crime-proofing the environment

   For example, cleaning up overgrown bushes to make burglaries less likely, identifying broken street lights for replacement by the city, painting out graffiti.

Addressing a Social Issue

4. Social activism

   For example, lobbying or testifying before the city council or school board, community organizing, writing to your state legislator or member of Congress, writing an editorial. (In the District of Columbia, teens testified before the city council on a proposed curfew plan; in Pennsylvania, teens lobbied to introduce state legislation on environmental issues.)

5. Hosting or observing a special event

   For example, organizing a rally, parade, community open house, health fair, community forum, or candlelight vigil; observing Crime Prevention Month or Victims' Rights Week.

HANDOUT 3

Skills Bank

NAME_____ DATE_____

We want to create a Skills Bank to identify all of our members' many skills and talents. Please take a few minutes to check off your talents below. Thanks!

Recruitment

___ Lots of contacts, friends
___ Like to call people
___ Like to talk about teen projects

Creative

___ Art (how: _____)
___ Music (how: _____)
___ Dance
___ Photography
___ Videotaping
___ Drama

Organization

___ Take notes
___ Organize special events
___ Make phone calls
___ Make records
___ Keep records

Running a Meeting

___ Facilitator
___ Recorder
___ Timekeeper
___ Logistics

Publicity

___ Like to write
___ Like to talk to groups

Computer Skills

___ Can use word processor
___ Access to computer and printer
___ Can use graphics software
___ Access to Internet/email

Like Working With People Ages

___ 0-5 years   ___ 19-25
___ 6-12   ___ 26-55
___ 13-15   ___ 56-74
___ 16-18   ___ 75+

Additional Skills

___ Athletic
___ Carpentry
___ Mechanical
___ Research
___ Fundraising
___ Cooking
___ Other? Explain: _____
     _____

PROJECT JOURNAL

PART 2

Move Your Project Along

Become a *Community Works* Planner

NAME_____ DATE_____

Planning

Talk is cheap . . . It is the way we organize and use our lives everyday that tells what we believe in."

—Cesar Chavez

My biggest question about our project is

_____

_____

_____

What are some of the things in your community that will either help ("good road" conditions) or make it harder ("bad road" conditions) for your project to work? There is a special area on the *Road Map* for this information.

Good Road Conditions (*Things that help*)	Bad Road Conditions (*Things that make it harder*)

The best skill that I bring to this project is

_____

_____

_____

I'm thinking about what my role is in the project and

_____

_____

_____

What does the group hope to accomplish with the project?

_____

_____

_____

What do I personally want to accomplish with my involvement in this project?

_____

_____

_____

I think that the project will make a difference in our school/community because

_____

_____

_____

Project Notes

_____

_____

_____

_____

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress."

— Frederick Douglass

SESSION 10