



CIVIC ACTION PROJECT™

Civic Action Survey

Overview

This lesson provides students with an opportunity to discuss and examine the importance of surveys to measure public opinion about their CAP problem or issue. First, students will form pairs to take turns conducting and responding to a sample survey. Next students will learn about the types of questions that should be included in a survey. Finally students will convene in their civic action groups to brainstorm three different types of questions as the basis for their own civic action survey.

Objectives

Students will:

- Understand the use and purpose of surveys and opinion polls;
- Brainstorm three different survey questions for their own civic action survey; and
- Conduct and respond to a civic action survey.

Materials

- [Handout A: Surveys and Opinion Polls](#) (1 per student)
- [Handout B: Civic Action Survey](#) (1 per student)

Focus Discussion

Explain to students that we often hear results of surveys and opinion polls. Newspapers report them. Politicians cite them to show the public supports their proposals. In debates on issues, people bring them up. Ask students:

- Why are surveys useful?
- How can a survey support your civic action project?
- How many of you have ever taken part in a survey or opinion poll?

Explain to students that today they are going to read a little about surveys and even administer and complete one.

Focus Activity – Conducting a Survey

Distribute [Handout A: Surveys and Opinion Polls](#) (one per student) and ask students to:

- Form pairs.
- Read [Handout A: Surveys and Opinion Polls](#)
- Take turns recording each other's responses to the survey questions.
- When pairs have completed exercise, tally results by asking everyone to indicate their responses with a show of hands.

Shareback

Ask students:

- What is most surprising about the survey results?
- What were the different ways used in this survey to collect information? *Yes/No, multiple choice, likert scale.*
- Was it effective in measuring the level of civic engagement in our classroom? *Why or why not?*
- How does a civic action survey support your ability to choose and complete civic actions for your CAP project?

Creating Your Civic Action Survey

Explain to students that creating and administering their own survey is an effective way of measuring the concern and opinions of others affected by their CAP issue. It's also a

good way to capture good ideas for ways to address it. Today they will convene in their civic action groups and brainstorm at least three survey questions about their CAP problem or issue. Ask students to convene in their civic action groups:

- Distribute **Handout B: Civic Action Survey** (one per student)
- Review section **I. Creating your Civic Action Survey**.
- Instruct each group to brainstorm at least one of each type of question for their civic action survey:
 - A Yes or No question.
 - A multiple-choice question.
 - A likert-scale question.
- When they're done, instruct each group to find another civic action group and take turns testing their survey.
- After each test, each group should provide feedback in response to the following questions:
 - Was the survey too long?
 - Were the questions easy to understand and answer? Why or why not?
 - Was the survey topic (i.e., CAP problem or issue) obvious?
 - Which question was most effective in measuring the concern or awareness of the survey topic?
- When groups have completed testing their surveys, review remaining sections of **Handout B** and answer any questions.

Debrief

Explain that each group will apply feedback and brainstorm an additional three more questions for their civic action surveys.

- Keep your final surveys short and simple (six to eight questions).
- Test your survey with each other or another civic action group before using it with the general public.
- Avoid embarrassing or personal questions by staying focused on what people think and feel about your CAP issue or problem.