LESSON 6  CONDUCTING A COMMUNITY SURVEY

Overview
Students will gain interviewing skills by surveying members of the community.

Objective
Students will be able to:
1. Explain that people have different values and therefore different opinions; and be able to give examples.
2. Identify stakeholders and determine who should participate in decision-making on specific issues.
3. Design and conduct a survey to gather input from different interest groups on a selected topic.

Procedure
Formulate a survey specific to your community. Suggested length: 20 questions addressing a variety of topics. Our survey included questions in the following three categories:

1. Economic Development and Jobs
2. Natural and Cultural Character
3. Private Property Rights and Concerns
4. Planning for the Future

In each of four Language Arts classes, the students came up with possible survey questions. We adopted some of the questions from a survey that was previously conducted within the county. The class members voted on the remaining survey questions. After consulting with the cooperating teachers, the final draft of the survey was approved. The students took the survey prior to interviewing community members. This was done to familiarize the students with the questions, and to make sure that they understood each question. Students are given one week to survey five people in the community.

Duration
Two to three 50-minute class periods to develop the survey.

Materials
Five survey forms per student.

Key Vocabulary
cultural character, economic development, natural character, opinion, stakeholders, survey.

Subject:
Language Arts
Social Studies
Assessment
Students received five points for each completed survey they turned in. (This greatly increased the response rate!)

Content Standards Addressed

Language Arts
Standard 3.
♦ All students will focus on meaning and communication as they listen, speak, view, read, and write in personal, social, occupational, and civic contexts.

Standard 11. Inquiry and Research
♦ All students will define and investigate important issues and problems using a variety of resources, including technology, to explore and create texts.

Social Studies
Strand V. Inquiry
Students will use methods of social science investigation to answer questions about society.

Standard V.I Information Processing
♦ All students will acquire, organize, interpret, and present information; and use a variety of electronic technologies to assist in accessing and managing information.

Standard V.2 Conducting Investigations
♦ All students will conduct investigations by formulating a clear statement of a question, gathering and organizing information from a variety of sources, analyzing and interpreting information, formulating and testing hypotheses, reporting results both orally and in writing, and making use of appropriate technology.