



DESIGN A SIGN

(30-35 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students work together to invent a slogan and sign for an issue or candidate, and use their math skills to keep sign sizes within the limits set by sign ordinances.

MATERIALS

Design A Sign handout; scissors; red, blue, and green marker pens; white paper

GET READY

- ✓ Gather materials for every pair of students: scissors, red, blue, and green marker pens, and three sheets of white paper.
- ✓ Duplicate one *Design A Sign* handout for each pair.
- ✓ Write the regulations for election signs in Bentonville, Arkansas on the board: *Signs in neighborhoods with houses can be no bigger than 12 square feet in area. Signs on streets with stores can be no bigger than 16 square feet in area. Billboards can be no bigger than 72 square feet in area.* (If you can, obtain this election signage information for your own community from the Planning or Zoning department, and write that instead.)
- ✓ Pair off students. Seat them together.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Ask your class whether they have seen signs near their houses and local stores. Call on your students to repeat what's on some signs.

- ✓ Tell your class that the design of signs and the slogans on them are very important parts of advertising and campaigning.
- ✓ Say, *You are going to come up with a slogan and sign designs. The slogan can be about an issue or a candidate.* (Students can create a candidate if there is no election by combining their first name with their partner's last name.)
- ✓ Say, *Good slogans identify an issue or candidate with something striking and/or positive.* (Give an example: *Breathe Free: Gonzales is a Breath of Fresh Air* or *Don't Care About Pollution? Your Children Will!*) Give the pairs several minutes to invent a slogan.
- ✓ Tell your students that they will be designing three signs for their slogan: a neighborhood sign, a commercial area sign, and a billboard.
- ✓ Ask the students to choose one color for their signs, keeping their slogan in mind. Say, *The cost of using more than one color on sign materials is very high. Choose blue, the color of authority, or red, the color of excitement, or green, the color of the environmentalists, depending on your slogan.*
- ✓ The pairs can use the handout to practice their design ideas and then use paper and markers to create the two signs and billboard. Ask your students to label the height, width, and area of each sign on the back of each piece of paper, making sure they follow the sign ordinances posted on the board.

Thanks to Troy Galloway, Director of Community Development, City of Bentonville, Arkansas, and Karen Brown, former executive director, Kids Voting Arkansas, for their help with this activity.



DESIGN A SIGN (continued)

- ✓ Review the rule for area of a rectangle:
area=length x width. Labeling the dimensions of each sign will make it clear which piece of paper represents the neighborhood sign, the commercial area sign, or the billboard sign.
- ✓ Remind students that when working together they need to cooperate and at times make compromises to their individual ideas.
- ✓ Students can share their sign and slogan ideas with each other, the school community, and adults important to them.

MORE!

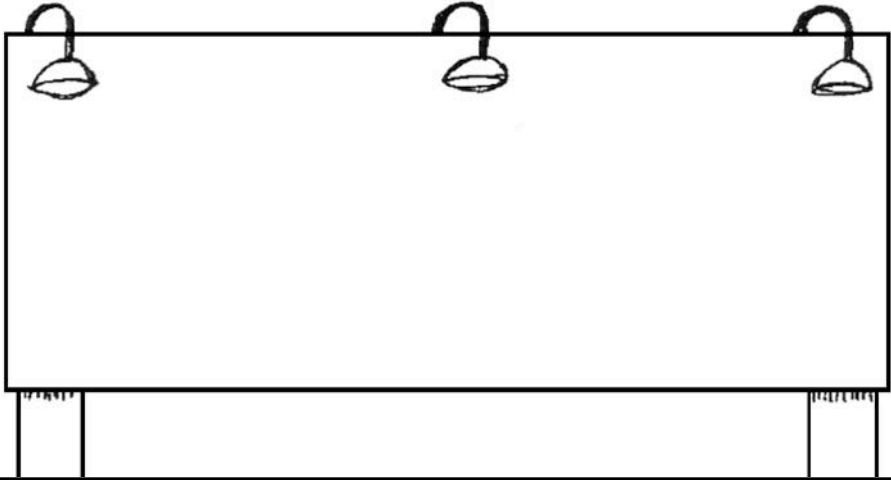

Duplicate extra handouts. Students can copy down slogans they see in their community on the handouts. They can then share these sign ideas and slogans with the class.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What are the purposes of signs and slogans?*
- ★ *Was it hard working together to come up with a slogan and sign designs? Why or why not?*
- ★ *If you had difficulty working with a partner, what did you do to overcome the difficulty?*
- ★ *What impact do you think signs have on the people who see them? Is there any way to find out?*



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BILLBOARD	
NEIGHBORHOOD SIGN	
COMMERCIAL AREA SIGN	