



“HOW'RE WE DOIN'?”

(30-40 minutes over a couple days)

OBJECTIVE

Students survey neighbors and friends to assess the community's perception of its own problems.

MATERIALS

Community Assessment Survey handout;
graphing materials

GET READY

- ✓ Copy two *Community Assessment Survey* handouts for each student.
- ✓ Have materials ready for data graphing.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Say, *In the 1980s, New York City's colorful Mayor Edward Koch used to greet New Yorkers on the street by calling out, "How'm I doin'?" We are going to find out how well our local government is handling major community problems, according to our fellow citizens.*
- ✓ Ask the students to use the assessment survey by assigning a score of 1 (low) through 5 (high) to their community in its handling of the five major problems of U.S. cities:
 - ✓ Growth/decline
 - ✓ Crime
 - ✓ Refuse
 - ✓ Clean water
 - ✓ Traffic and transportation
- ✓ Tell students to exchange, explain, and compare their responses and comments.
- ✓ Ask each group to predict the scores and comments these categories might receive in the community at large.

- ✓ Instruct students to bring home the surveys and administer them to parents or neighbors (with adult permission/supervision). Offer additional handouts to students who intend to interview more than two people.
- ✓ When surveys are returned, have students enter the data on a computer and print out a bar graph for each of the five categories. If a computer is not available, use graphing paper and markers to draw the bar graphs.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What community problem had the best score? Did any comments made by the adults surveyed help to explain the community's success on this issue?*
- ★ *What problem had the lowest score? Which comments by the adults surveyed help to explain why?*
- ★ *Are any of these issues being addressed by referendum? (Ask only if an election is pending.)*
- ★ *What are good questions to ask local officials about these issues? Have the officials already made statements addressing them? Where could we find these?*

MORE!

Invite local government officials (and/or candidates) to respond to the concerns revealed in the surveys, in person or by letter/e-mail.



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COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT SURVEY

How would you rank our community in these areas, on a scale of 1 to 5?
Circle one in each category (1=low; 5=high). Add comments if you wish.

1) Growth/decline

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

2) Crime

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

3) Waste Disposal

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

4) Clean Water

1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

5) Traffic and Transportation

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: