Gathering Information About a Community Need[11]

What does your community need?

Use the questions in the following four categories as guides for finding out. As a class, you might agree to explore one topic – for example, how kids get along at school, hunger and poverty, or an environmental concern. Or you might decide to learn about general needs at school or in the surrounding area.

Form small groups, with each group focusing on one of the following categories, and gather information in a different way.

Finding out about _____

(Community need you are researching)

1.Media

What media – newspapers, including school newspapers, TV stations, radio – in your community might have helpful information? List ways you can work with different media to learn about needs in your community.

_____

_____

_____

2.Interviews

Think of a person who is knowledgeable about this topic in your area – perhaps someone at school, in a local organization, or government office. Write four questions you would like to ask this person in an interview.

An interview with _____

Questions I would ask:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

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3. Survey

A survey can help you find out what people know or think about a topic and get ideas for helping. Who could you survey – students, family members, neighbors? How many surveys would you want to have completed? Write three survey questions.

Who to survey: _____ How many surveys: _____

Questions for the survey:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. Observation and Experience

What ways are there to gather information through your own observation and experience? Where would you go? What would you do there? How would you keep track of what you find out?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Next Steps:
Share your ideas. Make a plan for gathering information in the four ways just discussed. If you are working in small groups, each group may want to involve people in other groups. For example, everyone could help conduct the survey and collect the results.

What Teachers are Saying about Investigation:

Our school was examining their sustainable practices and looking for ways to improve. The Kindergarten teachers opened a discussion with their students on what this actually meant in a context that the children could understand. This lead to a discussion about what we could do in the classroom to save resources. Discussions such as this took place in all grade levels. Lower School students decided they could bring lunch in reusable containers, a "zero waste" lunch. The Kindergarteners really grasped the concept and when it became apparent that many students and parents had questions about what exactly a zero waste lunch was, they decided that they would take on the task of defining it. They wanted to reach all the students in the Lower School. With the help of their teachers, they decided to make a video "commercial" to show at an assembly.

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Full lesson plan available at http://tinyurl.com/7a744jv

Google Get a custom Google Docs template for these charts at www.YSA.org/resources