

PLANNING GUIDE**10****Students Take Action****Working to Improve the Environment**

Some Project Citizen students described in your book recognized the importance of improving their environment. In response to local environmental damage, students carefully researched and created a plan of action to present to leaders of their community.

How could you improve the environment in your community? Follow the steps below to identify an environmental problem, research it, and formulate a public policy solution.



1. Brainstorm with your classmates and teacher possible environmental hazards in your community. Investigate ideas by researching online, reading and watching local media, and interviewing family members on their opinions on each issue. Ask yourself the following questions:
 - Which environmental issues are of the most concern?
 - Which pose the greatest threat to public health and safety?
 - Which problems could we improve given the resources we have?
 - What support could we get (for example, better testing by public officials)?
2. In small groups, compare your preliminary research findings and weigh the issues. Then, as a class, come to a consensus on the environmental issue you think your class will be best able to address.
3. As a class, decide on a plan of action. Identify the goals you hope to achieve, most importantly improving the environment. Find out what is currently being done, if anything, to solve the problem.
4. Under your teacher's guidance, work with group members to interview experts at a nearby university, government agency, or environmental action group. Also interview citizens who live in affected areas of the community. Meet with members of the local media and provide them with solid facts about why you are undertaking this project and what you hope to accomplish.
5. Participate in a class discussion on what information needs to be put into the hands of local leaders, and how. Then work in small groups to organize all of the information you have gathered in a complete report. Also, create a display that visually explains why the issue is a concern to the community and your class's public policy solution.
6. Ask to present at an upcoming village, town, or city council meeting. Along with your report and display, present statements from citizens, as well as statistics. Explain to the group how this issue affects the health of the community's environment and citizens.