Active Learning with Technology

Active Learning Environments
Table of Contents

To the Facilitator ........................................ iv

Overview .................................................. 1

Module Organizer ........................................ 3

Activity Sequence ........................................ 6

Facilitator Materials and Participant Handouts .................. 11
To the Facilitator

This professional development module is a guide designed for a facilitator who comes to the module with no prior knowledge of its implementation; however, it is assumed that the facilitator has some expertise in providing professional development and in the use of technology in a classroom setting. The role of the facilitator throughout the modules is that of a guide, not necessarily a technology expert. This guide includes the following sections and items:

- The **Overview** of the module provides the purpose, the participant outcomes, a brief module description, the constructivist principles represented in the module, and the instructional strategies and technology used in the module.

- The **Module Organizer** provides the specifics of the module such as the time and facility needed, the participant prerequisites, a general activity description, the grouping strategy, the equipment and material requirements, and other details for facilitator preparation.

- The **Activity Sequence** is the step-by-step guide for implementing the module. The Activity Sequence includes scripted segments in italics, which suggest possible dialogue for the beginning facilitator. It is anticipated that every individual using these modules will adapt this dialogue for his or her own use. While some modules refer to specific software, facilitators may need to adapt the activity to fit software available at the site. The facilitator should examine the Activity Sequence, handouts and software together to get a clear understanding of the module’s instructional intent.

- The **Facilitator Materials and Participant Handouts** section provides a template of the transparencies and handouts used in the module.

The legend below includes the visual cues used to remind the facilitator of the estimated time needed and when to perform various tasks throughout the module. The Activity Sequence of each module highlights the specific tasks required in that module.

**Symbols used throughout the Activity Sequence:**

- Estimated time to complete activities
- Use a projector
- Distribute a handout
- Record participants’ comments
- Software demo or resource
- Watch a video

© Southwest Educational Development Laboratory Foundations 1: Active Learning Environments
Overview

Purpose

• Model a learning environment in which the teacher is a facilitator, and participants are engaged as learners in self-directed, collaborative activities.

• Engage participants in a hands-on learning environment in which several integrated activities, some supplemented with technology, are offered simultaneously.

• Stimulate planning for how participants can create such environments in their classrooms.

• Gather information about the local community that can be used in a subsequent electronic presentation.

Participant outcomes

• Experience the elements of an interdisciplinary, collaborative, technology-assisted learning environment.

• Learn more about their community.

• Reflect upon how they can adapt this instructional strategy to their own classroom.

Module description

Active Learning Environments is the first in a series of professional development modules. Although it is designed to be an introductory activity followed by other modules, it can be successfully presented by itself. This module suggests one way to use a limited number of computers as part of a meaningful and active learning experience.

To begin, the facilitator proposes a real-life situation to the group. After a brainstorming session, small groups of participants visit 3 different learning stations, spending 30 minutes in each, gathering information and planning exhibits for a proposed community museum. Their assignment requires the use of a variety of resources that they find or create. Each of the learning stations represents a different instructional concept.

Upon completing visits to all learning stations, participants remain at the last station to reflect on the session’s activities and determine how this instructional model might be used in their classrooms.

Learning station topics

Learning Station 1: Community Walkthrough

What does our community look like?

Groups use a digital camera to take pictures in their community.
Learning Station 2: Community Culture and History

How did our community come to be?

Print resources and participants’ prior knowledge are used for exploration into the history and culture of the community. Use of a computer with access to community resources on the Internet is optional.

Learning Station 3: Community Profile

Who are we?

Participants use a computer to retrieve community census data from the Internet. They use those data to construct an electronic spreadsheet and chart which reflect the community’s population profile. (If an Internet connection is not available, printouts can be produced in advance and included in the information folder for this learning station.)

Constructivist principles represented in this module

Learners bring unique prior knowledge, experience, and beliefs to a learning situation.

Throughout the activity, participants construct knowledge about an area that holds real meaning and familiarity—their community.

Knowledge is constructed in multiple ways, through a variety of authentic tools, resources, experiences, and contexts.

Participants create schemata for 3 very distinct museum exhibits—a visual display, a statistical exhibit, and a text-based presentation. Each is contextually based (the community museum), is constructed with authentic tools and resources, and draws upon the participants’ own experiences as community members.

Social interaction introduces multiple perspectives through reflection, collaboration, negotiation, and shared meaning.

Working in groups, participants collaborate and negotiate the development of their exhibits and share their reflections.

Learning is both an active and a reflective process.

Participants do the activities and discuss and reflect upon the activities both as learners and as teachers.

Instructional strategies used in this model

• Whole group, facilitator-led discussion
• Collaborative, small group exploration of an interdisciplinary theme
• Specific roles for group members
• Minimal direct instruction for group members rotating through a series of learning stations

Technology used in this module

• Computer with Internet access and spreadsheet software
• Digital camera
Participants
Up to 25 teachers, grades K-12

Time needed
3 hours: 30 minutes for activity introduction, 105 minutes for the body of the activity, and 45 minutes for reflection and whole-group discussion.

Facilities
A room that allows participants to move easily from the whole group discussion to small work groups at separate learning stations. Few computers are needed, and a computer laboratory setting is not recommended. A classroom or library with at least 2 computers works well.

Prerequisites
Computer skills
• Keyboarding skills: typing a URL, entering data, executing commands
• File operations: opening and closing an application, saving to a diskette, and printing a file

General activity description
In a whole group, the facilitator sets up the situation and explains the procedure for the learning stations.

In small groups, participants rotate through three learning stations as learners, and they reflect upon and discuss the instructional implications of the learning station activities.

In a whole group, participants share the highlights of the small group discussion.

Grouping strategy
If possible, assign participants to the small groups before the professional development day. The facilitator may select any method deemed appropriate, based on grade level, teaching specialty, or computer skills. As noted earlier, it is helpful to group those with low and moderate computer skills rather than match low-skilled participants with highly experienced computer users.

Assign each group a color and mark each participant's name tag with the same color. Colored dots are a simple way to code the name tags. This coding is very helpful in the organization of the day.

Twelve to sixteen participants can be assigned to each large group that rotates through each of the 3 stations (i.e. 3-4 persons at each station). If you have 24 participants, you will need to divide them into 2 large groups (i.e. 2 sets of the 3 stations, with 3-4 at each station).

Equipment
This module is spread out across 6 learning stations (see “Grouping Strategy” to accommodate participants). Refer to the Materials and Handouts section of this module for the individual requirements for each station.

1. Community Walkthrough: 2 digital cameras. A Sony Mavica camera was used for this activity. It is a popular camera because it is easy to use and requires minimal technological skills to retrieve the images from the camera. Any
digital camera may be used. The facilitator should become familiar with the operation of the camera and the process for retrieving images from the camera.

2. *Community Culture and History:* You can supplement this station with 2 computer stations with Internet connections and links to local web sites. This is optional, as the station will have a variety of print resources available.

3. *Community Profile:* 2 computers with Internet connections and spreadsheet software such as *Microsoft Excel*

4. A projection device such as an LCD projector or a computer-video adapter

**Materials**

**Facilitator**

Chart paper, easel, and markers for recording whole group discussion

**Each learning station**

1. 1 colored folder for keeping all of the materials and instructions for that station
2. A table tent, station instructions, and group role cards for each station. Templates are included in the Materials and Handouts section.
3. Additional handouts for individual learning stations. Templates are included in the Materials and Handouts section.

**Each group of participants**

1. 1–2 blank, 3 1/2-in. diskettes for data and digital camera images
2. 1 notepad and pencil

**Each participant**

1. Handout 1: Brainstorming Chart
2. Handout 2: Summary/Reflection Activity

**Facilitator preparation**

1. *Community Walkthrough:* The facilitator should become familiar with the digital camera that is to be used. The day before professional development session, make sure the camera’s battery is charged.

2. *Community Culture and History:* Research and gather local resources from such sources as the Chamber of Commerce, local library, newspaper, museums, or history center. Local resources may include brochures, booklets, flyers, and other promotional materials about the community. There should be enough copies so that each Culture and History table has a copy of everything. If possible, ask the participants to bring resources containing information about their community. If using the Internet, it is useful to create a web page that links to a variety of community resources.

3. *Community Profile:* Create an electronic spreadsheet file using Handout 3: Census Data Recording Worksheet as a template. Become familiar with the U.S. Bureau of the Census web site on the Internet, <http://www.census.gov>. Print a paper copy of U.S. Census web site page that pertains to your community—name of community, two letter state code, STF3A link, Table P8—in case the live Internet connection is not available on the professional development day. See Instructions: Gathering Data from the U.S. Census Bureau for details. Review Instructions: Creating an Excel Spreadsheet for entering census data.

4. Make copies of learning station handouts and individual handouts, depending upon the activity. Select one color for each learning station. Make the folder, the table tent, and the directions all the same color for easy management. Group role cards should be color-coordinated according to role; for example, make all facilitator role cards the same color. For durability, photocopy the group role cards and table tents on card stock if available.
5. Pre-assign participants to their groups (see Grouping Strategy).

6. Coordinate dots on nametags with learning station colors. For example, use a different color for each of the stations such as red, green, and blue. Participants with red dots on their nametag will start at the red station, green dots start at the green station, and blue dots start at the blue station. For 1 large group of 12-16, assign single dots and for the second large group of 12-16, assign double dots.

Room preparation

1. Use 1 table or a group of desks for each learning station. Place the instructions, handouts, and group role cards that accompany each learning station in a folder at the station. Arrange 1 table tent on each table. Your color-coordinated folders will help to keep the materials organized.

2. *Community Walkthrough:* Prepare digital cameras by recharging the batteries and taking a test picture. Be sure there is a blank diskette available for each group.

3. *Community Culture and History:* If you are using a computer at this station, open the file or browser page with local resources.

4. *Community Profile:* Check on Internet connection. Open the browser to U.S. Census homepage <http://www.census.gov>. If you are not using the Internet, make printouts from the U.S. Census Bureau web site of your community. Verify the spreadsheet software and add your census recording data file.

5. Prepare a resource table that contains additional local resources (books, pamphlets) and writing supplies (rulers, colored pencils, paper).

Follow-up activities

1. The *Foundations 2: Draw Learning* module has a whole group discussion that asks participants to reflect upon their learning during the *Foundations 1: Active Learning Environments* module.

2. The *Foundations 4: Creating Electronic Presentations* module serves as a summary activity. Participants create an electronic presentation using information from this module.

3. *Module 7: Getting the Word Out* provides an activity for creating a newsletter or flyer about the community.

4. *Module 14: Managing Growth* and *Module 15: Connections* are 2 other modules that have a community theme.
I. Introduction 10 minutes

Participants sit together in a whole group for the discussion. The facilitator introduces *Active Learning Environments* with a series of questions:

*Have you ever thought about what makes your community special? What can citizens of this community be proud of? What does your community have to offer others?*

The facilitator allows participants time to think a few minutes and to offer some responses. Facilitator records participants’ comments on chart paper. If necessary, the facilitator can prompt ideas by asking for examples from history, commerce, recreation, or other areas.

The facilitator then develops the scenario:

*Economic development is a high priority for any community because it is important to preserve our community as an economically viable place to live. The city council has proposed the idea of creating a community museum that will showcase the attributes of our community. The museum is envisioned as a tourist draw that will be the first step in attracting new businesses to the area.*

Because of your familiarity with and contributions to the community, the city council has chosen you to create an overview of possible themes for this museum. What would you say or show about your community?

Our goal this morning is to gather ideas and make plans for exhibits for a thematic presentation about your community. You will use a variety of resources from three different activity stations, some with technology, some without for gathering your data.

When we finish rotating through the stations and gathering data, we will share ideas and think about how you might recreate these activities in your classrooms.

In a subsequent module, you will use these data and materials to create an electronic presentation that will be viewed by the city council for its museum planning.

The facilitator leads a brief brainstorming activity before the learning stations work begins. **Handout 1: Brainstorming Chart** is used to guide this discussion.

Before we separate into our small groups, let’s discuss what makes our community unique. What

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**Symbols Used in Sequence**

- **Estimated time** to complete activities
- **Distribute a handout**
- **Record participants’ comments**
would you like tell others about your community? I’m new to this community—what should I know about it? What would you like to show me?

This chart has options for listing historic buildings, people, geography, and so on. Could you give me an example of a few of these options?

The participants will respond with several suggestions from their town. While the participants will probably find it easy to identify local landmarks, they may not quickly generate a project theme. The facilitator might provide such examples as “The Old and the New” or “Culture in Our Lives” which are themes used by other teachers who have worked on this activity.

As you work at your table and later in your group, try to think of what you want to focus on as a way of viewing your community. Can you think of a theme that might describe your community?

The above explanation provides a real-world framework to guide participants as they gather information about their community.

II. Set up the activity 20 minutes

The facilitator focuses the participants’ attention on their name tag codes which assign each participant to a small group for the morning’s session. The facilitator then explains the 3 learning stations and the activities related to each. Although there are 6 stations in the room, each set of 3 represents 1 “classroom.” This enables everyone to work in smaller groups. During the explanation, it helps to point to the stations as you describe them, and show the materials on the tables. The Group Rotation Charts in the Materials and Handouts section of this module can be used to explain each group’s location during the activity.

The following items should be included and considered in the facilitator explanation.

- **Station 1, Community Walkthrough**, asks the question “What does our community look like?” Participants use a digital camera to photograph something that they think represents their community. Depending on the local situation, participants may need to stay near the building, or they may be able to go to a particular site to take pictures. Emphasize the 30-minute time limit for this station. Some participants may want to take pictures of sites far away from the session. If a camera is available, this could be done during lunch or after the session. If more than two cameras are available, stations one and two could be combined.

- **Station 2, Community Culture and History**, asks a series of questions: “How did this community come to be the way it is today? What was the origin of the people who live here today? Why did they come here? How have they influenced our community, and what contributions have they made? What could you say about our community in terms of its history and culture that makes it unique and important?” Participants share their knowledge of the community and can use the print resources provided to describe their region’s history and culture. They may also use a computer at this station to access a variety of web sites for information. Computer use is optional for this station.

- **Station 3, Community Profile**, asks the questions “Who are the people who live in this community . . . and how many are there? What is their ethnicity? What are their ages? What other information can we find that tells more about the people who live in our community? How have these data changed over the years? Have these changes been important? How have the changes affected our community?” Participants use a free government data resource, the U.S. Census Bureau, to obtain demographic information about their community from either the Internet or printouts of Census Bureau information prepared in advance. Participants are asked to record their
data on an Excel spreadsheet and then display the data in different ways such as a chart or table.

Each group has 30 minutes to work in each station and 5 minutes to move to the next station. Group roles are suggested for working through the learning station activities. The facilitator explains:

At your first station, please distribute the group role cards. I’d like each member to read your instructions aloud and follow them. The roles are similar to the roles your students may use if they work in cooperative groups. Some things to remember:

- Switch roles as you rotate stations. The roles are slightly different at each station.
- If you are using a computer, take turns with the keyboard and mouse.
- Keep track of the time, but I will also inform you when to rotate.

If the participants haven’t interrupted with questions, the facilitator can use this time to ask if anyone has questions. It is important to make sure they understand the logistics of the learning stations before continuing.

Have the participants go to their first learning station based on the color dot on their name tags.

III. Rotation through learning stations

(30 minutes at each station + 5 minutes for moving to the next station)

As groups rotate among the learning stations, the facilitator should move about the groups to offer assistance as needed. Each of the learning stations is designed to be self-explanatory. Though some specific instruction and coaching may be necessary, the facilitator should let the groups work through the station tasks on their own, if possible, solving as many of the questions and problems as they are able.

IV. Summary/Reflection activity

45 minutes

At the end of the 3 rotations, participants remain at their last station for this activity.

Distribute Handout 2: Summary/Reflection Activity.

Distribute chart paper and markers to each group

The facilitator introduces this activity using the handout as a guide.

You were in the role of learner as you rotated through these stations. Let’s take a few moments to change roles and reflect upon how you could use the learning station structure in your classroom. Now, you will reflect as a teacher—and talk with your small group about the reflection questions on the handout entitled: Summary/Reflection Activity. Please record your responses on chart paper, and be prepared to share some of your reflection with the whole group.

Small group discussion: Allow participants 20 minutes to respond to the questions in the handout and write their responses. Walk around and listen to participants as they converse. Offer your insights where appropriate. Some groups may not finish all of the questions, and some groups may become so engrossed in the discussions that they forget to write anything down. The reflection questions are meant to provide the participants an opportunity for reflection on the activity they have just completed. The facilitator should encourage group members to note key points on their chart paper so they can share with others.

Whole group: A representative from each small group posts the chart paper on the wall and the entire group reconvenes for a concluding summary discussion. Approximately 25 minutes are allotted for this discussion which should be framed around the questions posed to the small groups in Handout 2. The facilitator can work off the ideas posted on the chart paper to lead the discussion. The facilitator
may encourage the various groups to share comments heard during the walk-around.

Samples of responses from previous sessions:

**QUESTION 1**

*How would you use this activity in your classroom with your students? What would you change for your students and your classroom? How would you extend this activity to other curricular areas or as a unit?*

**Community Profile:** Based on introduction to U.S. Census, have students develop their own classroom census, doing individual charts, then collaborating for class chart. The data gathered could be: hair color, height, ethnic background, gender, eye color, age, handedness (left/right) family membership, language dominance

Other activities to use with a spreadsheet:

*Language arts:* Keep a family log for a family biography

*Science:* Make predictions based on data.

*Math:* Cost analysis, weather analysis, rain analysis

**QUESTION 2**

*What particular station has the most value or appeal for you and your classroom? Why?*

One group replied, “The camera, because it’s a very concrete activity for small children.”

**QUESTION 3**

*Reflect on the “whole session.” That is, using a computer station in an interdisciplinary, collaborative environment with multiple activities taking place at the same time.*

One group suggested, “We would use the same format, except the activity with the camera would be with the whole class.”

**Follow-up activity**

If *Foundations 1: Active Learning Environments* is to be followed by *Foundations 4: Creating Electronic Presentations*, remind participants to keep the diskettes and information they gathered. They may also want to gather additional information from outside resources.
Facilitator Materials and Participant Handouts

Facilitator materials

Group Rotation Chart

Participant handout templates

Handout 1: Brainstorming Chart (1 per person)
Handout 2: Summary/Reflection Activity (1 per person)

Learning station materials and templates

Learning Station 1: Community Walkthrough

- Table tent
- Instruction sheet
- Group roles sheet; Group role cards
- Group rotation chart

Other materials:
- 1 diskette per group for camera
- A notepad and pencil

Learning Station 2: Community Culture and History

- Table tent
- Instruction sheet
- Group roles sheet; Group role cards
- Group rotation chart
- 6-8 extra: Handout 1: Brainstorming Activity

Other materials:
- Local resources gathered by facilitators
- Printouts of community WWW resources

Learning Station 3: Community Profile

- Table tent
- Instruction sheet
- Group roles sheet; Group role cards
- Group rotation chart
- 6-8 extra: Census Data Recording sheet
- Instructions: Gathering Data from the U.S. Census Bureau
- Instructions: Creating an Excel Spreadsheet
- Hard copies of form P8 of local community

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Foundations 1: Active Learning Environments
The following 30 minute rotations move according to the diagram above:

- Green goes to Red then to Blue
- Red goes to Blue then to Green
- Blue goes to Green then to Red
**Handout 1**

**Brainstorming Chart**

Use this chart to record features about your community. Describe a feature, some history, its importance, and its contribution to the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Architecture</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools, historic buildings, churches, homes, landmarks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Geography</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountains, deserts, rivers, lakes, prairies, forests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Businesses</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Privately owned, publicly owned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Public places</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks, libraries, museums, hospitals, points of interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>People</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic figures, local celebrities, influential people, family members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Cultural influences</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food, dance, music, traditions, stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary/Reflection Activity

Read and discuss the following questions. Record your group’s responses on chart paper. List the names of all group members on the chart paper.

1. Name your current station. Consider your current station in terms of the technology, the content, and the nature of the activity.
   A. How would you use this learning station in your classroom with your students?
   B. What would you change for your students and your classroom?
   C. How would you extend this activity to other curricular areas or as a unit?

2. What particular station has the most value or appeal for you and your classroom? Why?

3. Reflect on the “whole session” that is, using a computer station in an interdisciplinary, collaborative environment with multiple activities taking place at the same time.
   A. How can you use this in your classroom?
   B. What were some of the strengths?
   C. What were some of the weaknesses?
Community Walkthrough
Community Walkthrough

What Does Our Community Look Like?

Instructions

Objectives
Participants will photograph natural and manmade features of the community. These photographs can be used in a presentation.

Materials
1. Digital camera
2. Notepad, pencil
3. Blank diskette

Overview
What does your community look like? What is physically unique about it? The answers can be seen in many places—in its architecture, landscaping, streets, or people. The photos you take can contribute to your presentation.

Directions
1. Distribute group roles.
2. The group will take a walk into the community.
3. Using the digital camera, group members photograph anything they think is distinctive, attractive, or interesting about the community, or anything that provides clues to its history or culture.
4. The group may take as many photos as they wish, but group members should be prepared to select the best 3.
5. Keep a record of each picture.
6. Switch roles so that each group member has a chance to use the digital camera.
7. Return to home base in 25 minutes so the next group has the full time to use the camera.
Community Walkthrough

What Does Our Community Look Like?

Group Roles

Facilitator
1. Read directions aloud to the group.
2. Encourage all group members to participate.
3. Encourage all members to remain on the topic.

Timekeeper
1. Note the time that the group begins the activity and what time they should end.
2. Check the time periodically and inform the group.
3. Ensure that the group returns to the next learning station on time.

Recorder
1. Record all information for each photograph on your notepad:
   • Name or item
   • Location
   • Photographer
   • Time & date

Photographer
1. Learn how to use digital camera.
2. Instruct your team members on how to use the camera.
3. Each participant should take a turn taking photos.
4. Take photos.
Community Walkthrough

What Does Our Community Look Like?
Role Cards

(cut into 4 separate cards after duplication)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photographer</th>
<th>Timekeeper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Learn how to use digital camera.</td>
<td>• Note the time that the group begins the activity and what time they should end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Instruct your team members on how to use the camera.</td>
<td>• Check time periodically and inform the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Each participant should take a turn taking photos.</td>
<td>• Ensure that the group returns to the next learning station on time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take photos.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilitator</th>
<th>Recorder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Read directions aloud to the group.</td>
<td>Record all information for each photograph in your note pad:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage all group members to participate.</td>
<td>• name of item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage all group members to remain on the topic.</td>
<td>• location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• photographer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• time and date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Culture and History
How Did Our Community Come to Be?

Instructions

Objectives

Using available resources and the knowledge of the group members, participants will gather information about the culture and history of the community to develop ideas for their presentation.

Materials

1. Refer to the local print resources at the learning station and additional print resources at the resource table
2. Printouts of selected community and WWW resources
3. Brainstorming Chart

Overview

How did this community come to be the way it is today? What was the origin of the people who live here today? Why did they come here? How have they influenced our community, and what contributions have they made? What could you say about our community in terms of its history and culture that makes it unique and important?

Directions

1. Distribute group roles.
2. Share knowledge and ideas about your community with your group. Discuss the question, “How did our community come to be?”
3. Browse through and read available print and/or Internet resources. Where could you go to get additional resources?
4. Discuss and take notes on information and ideas that you think you could use as a theme for your presentation. You may want to use the Brainstorming Chart to organize your ideas.
Community Culture and History

How Did Our Community Come to Be?

Group Roles

Facilitator
1. Read directions aloud to the group.
2. Encourage all group members to participate.
3. Encourage all members to remain on the topic.

Timekeeper
1. Note the starting and ending times.
2. Check time periodically and inform the group.
3. Alert the group 5 minutes before the end of the activity.

Recorder
1. Take notes on information and ideas that you think you could use as a theme for your presentation.
2. Use the Brainstorming Chart to help organize your ideas.
3. Coordinate ideas for your presentation.
4. Record the names of all the group members on any group products.

Materials manager
1. Review items on the resource table, and inform your group.
2. Gather materials as needed.
3. Return materials to the resource table, and organize the learning station neatly in preparation for the next group.
**Community Culture and History**

*How Did Our Community Come to Be?*

**Role Cards**

(cut into 4 separate cards after duplication)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Materials Manager</strong></td>
<td>• Review items on the resource table, and inform your group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gather materials as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Return materials to the resource table, and organize the learning station neatly in preparation for the next group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timekeeper</strong></td>
<td>• Note the starting and ending times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Check the time periodically and inform the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Alert the group 5 minutes before the end of the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitator</strong></td>
<td>• Read directions aloud to the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage all group members to participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourage all group members to remain on the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recorder</strong></td>
<td>• Take notes on information and ideas that you think you could use as a theme for your presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use the Brainstorming Chart to help organize your ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coordinate ideas for your presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Record the names of all the group members on any group products.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Profile

Community Profile
Community Profile

Who Are We?

Instructions

Objectives

• Gather and use population data from the U.S. Census web site to showcase the diversity of your community's residents.
• Learn to search the U.S. Census Bureau in several ways
• Create a simple Excel spreadsheet and display it in a graph.

Materials

2. A blank Excel worksheet file on the computer desktop screen. Ask the facilitator if you cannot locate it.
3. Census Data Recording Worksheet
4. Instructions: Gathering Data from the U.S. Census Bureau
5. Instructions: Creating an Excel Spreadsheet
6. Printouts of community census data
7. Notepad and pencil

Overview

Who are the people who live in this community... and how many are there? What is their ethnicity? What are their ages? What other information can we find that tells more about the people who live in our community? How have these data changed over the years?

Directions

1. Distribute group roles.
2. Read Instructions: Gathering Data from the U.S. Census Bureau which will explain how to gather data.
3. Find the information on the Census Bureau web site and write it in the Census Data Recording Worksheet.
4. Open the Excel spreadsheet and enter the census data you have gathered in the worksheet. Use the Instructions: Creating an Excel Spreadsheet for entering, analyzing, and creating a graph of the data.
Community Profile

Who Are We?

Group Roles

Facilitator
1. Guide the group through this activity by using Instructions: Gathering Data from the U.S. Census Bureau and Instructions: Creating an Excel Spreadsheet.
2. Encourage all group members to participate.
3. Encourage all group members to remain on the topic.

Timekeeper
1. Note the starting and ending times.
2. Check time periodically and inform the group.
3. Alert the group five minutes before the end of the activity.

Recorder
1. Record census information on your notepad.
2. For future reference, make note of interesting or important information beyond the scope of this activity.

Computer manager
1. Ensure that all group members have equal time on the computer.
2. Remind group members to save important information.
Community Profile

**Who Are We?**

**Role Cards**

(cut into 4 separate cards after duplication)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Title</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Computer Manager** | • Ensure that all group members have equal time on the computer.  
                            • Remind group members to save important information. |
| **Facilitator**    | • Guide the group through this activity by using Instructions: Gathering Data from the U.S. Census Bureau and Creating an Excel Spreadsheet  
                            • Encourage all group members to participate.  
                            • Encourage all group members to remain on the topic. |
| **Timekeeper**     | • Note the starting and ending times.  
                            • Check time periodically and inform the group.  
                            • Alert the group five minutes before the end of the activity. |
| **Recorder**       | • Record census information on your notepad.  
                            • For future reference, make note of interesting or important information beyond the scope of this activity. |
Community Profile

*Census Data Recording Worksheet*

Read Table P8 and record the population number for each racial category below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial Group</th>
<th>Number of Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other race</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Profile

Gathering Data from the U.S. Census Bureau

Instructions:

1. Open your browser to the Bureau of the Census web site <http://www.census.gov>.
2. In the left sidebar, click on Search.
3. Click “Place Search.”
4. Enter the name of your community and its two-letter state code in the appropriately labeled boxes. Note: Do not enter the zip code as this will limit the results to a subset of larger communities or will include surrounding areas of smaller communities.
5. Click Search.
6. Click on the STF3A link.
7. Once you get into the census form, click on Table P8 (Race).
8. Then click “Submit” (always at the top of the page). For your data retrieval option, choose HTML.
9. If you have time, choose more tables from the STF3A link to analyze and discuss.
Recording the data

Once you’ve read your census data, the recorder should jot down the totals for each racial category (e.g. White, 3751) on Census Recording Work Sheet.

1. From your computer desktop screen, either open for an Excel file or open the Excel application.
2. Refer to your Instructions sheet—Creating an Excel Spreadsheet.
3. In the open Excel spreadsheet, enter the population number for each racial group that you recorded on your worksheet.
4. Once you have entered the population data create a graph. Consider the following questions: What kind of graph is most appropriate for these data? Which will help you compare the relative populations? Which will most clearly communicate your observations? Which type of chart is most understandable for visitors to your museum exhibit?

What have we learned?

1. What do you know now about your community that you did not know before?
2. How does the racial and ethnic diversity of your community compare with that of other communities that you know?
3. Why and how do you think some of these groups arrived in this area? How is their influence felt in the community now? What other questions can you think of to ask?

Background Information about the Census

The first census (from the Latin word “count”) was undertaken in 1790 in order to count the population of the United States. Since then a census of the U.S. population has occurred every 10 years. The census has changed over time. The current U.S. Census measures population, income, and housing characteristics.

There are two census forms available on-line:
1. A short form (the *STF1-A) which is sent to most households
2. A long form (*STF3-A), which is really a sample and sent to selected, sample households

For this activity you will use information compiled in the long form (STF-3A).

Census limitations

The census is our most comprehensive source of population data in the United States. Yet the Census Bureau has been criticized repeatedly over the years for the structure of the census form, for its categories, and for the way it gathers data. You will probably notice lots of missing ethnic groups (especially more common groups, like Mexicans) and languages spoken in your community. Remember these data were gathered in 1989. You’ll also notice that Hispanics are not a treated as a race and are broken out as either
Hispanic or Other. This can be very confusing. Despite its obvious weaknesses, however, the census is a rich example of raw and real-world data and can be a wonderful resource. Please ask for help if you have any questions about using the census for this activity.

**Census terms**

**Aggregate**  Total

**Ancestry**  The census allows you to declare more than one ancestry. *Single ancestry* is obvious. Your ancestors were all Irish, Haitian, and so forth. For the majority of Americans who have ancestors from different parts of the globe, *first ancestry* is the ancestry that predominates. So, for example, if three grandparents were French and one Italian, your first ancestry would be French, your second, Italian.

**Group quarters**  Nursing homes, boarding houses, prisons, and so forth. Any residence where unrelated persons live together.

**Imputation**  This is the Census Bureau’s way of telling us that this figure is artificially derived. They couldn’t get the exact number, so they used a mathematical formula to calculate it.

**Linguistic isolation**  The census term for being able to speak only one language. It usually refers to languages other than English.

**Median**  The middle number in a series containing an odd number of items (e.g. In the series 1, 4, 7, 16, 43, the median number is 7). This gives you the simplest breakdown of the ranges of numbers.

**Quartile**  The census takes some data and divides the total into four groups of equal occurrences to look at the total distribution of the data.

**Substituted**  The census can’t count everyone, so they guess at the number of people they miss and try to quantify this group. These missed individuals are termed substitutions.

**Tenure**  Home ownership

**Universe**  The specific population sampled. For example, if you were “surveying” students to see where they wanted to go for a class trip, your universe would be students. In the census, persons would be all people. *Households* would be all households.
Creating an Excel Spreadsheet

What Do I Do After I’ve Gathered My Census Data?

1. Quit out of the U.S. Census. (FILE/QUIT)
2. On your computer desktop (i.e. on the computer screen), either open an Excel file or open the Excel application.
3. If you go into Excel application, you will need to enter the data into the appropriate rows and columns.
4. Enter the population number for each racial group. You can move to the next line by hitting RETURN.
5. To add all of the numbers together in Column B, highlight column B and then click on the Σ symbol. A total sum will be automatically placed in the cell at the bottom of Column B.
6. To create a chart, highlight the information in Columns A and B.
7. Now you’re ready to create a chart. On your menu choose INSERT/CHART, as shown below in the sample.

8. The dialog box lets you choose the type of chart you want. Once you’ve chosen the type of chart you want, click NEXT.
9. Click on the type of format you want for your chart and hit NEXT.
10. Follow the remaining steps in the wizard.
11. After previewing your chart, click Finish. There it is!
12. Save your work! (FILE/SAVE)

If there’s enough time, how about going back into the Census and looking at the ancestry of your community? (Choose table P33.) Perhaps you could make a spreadsheet chart showing the top 5 nationalities in your community.