

County Solutions Step Seven: Brainstorm a-Brewin'

Time Needed: One class period

Materials Needed:

Student worksheets

Large pieces of paper (*optional*)

Copy Instructions:

Letter sheets for regulation **OR** action- not both! (*enough so each group has a letter; regulations letters are on half sheets*)

Student roles (*one copy per group, cut up*)

Overhead transparency (*or use a projector*)



This is lesson seven of nine in a series that culminates in a final class project. All steps can be found at www.icivics.org/curriculum/countysolutions

Learning Objectives. The student will:

- Work in a group to brainstorm solutions for the class problem.
- Evaluate potential effectiveness of ideas the class has brainstormed.
- Evaluate the ideas for cost and simplicity.

STEP BY STEP

- TEACHER SET UP** Write each letter in the CAPS acronym on the board with space for student ideas beneath it, or post large pieces of paper around the room. Students will now be brainstorming solutions *that can be specifically* addressed by the county government.
- TELL** the class that today they will brainstorm a solution for the public policy problem you have been studying. Explain that they will use the "Thinking CAPS" method to brainstorm ideas. Each letter in the word CAPS stands for a word that will help them think about the problem in a different way.
 - DIVIDE** the class into groups of 4 students each. You will have several groups for each letter in the CAPS acronym.
 - DISTRIBUTE** one CAPS letter sheet and one set of student roles to each group.
 - EXPLAIN** that they will have 15 minutes to brainstorm as many ideas as possible. Review the guide questions on each letter sheet and make sure the groups understand what to focus on when they brainstorm. Review the student roles and make sure each student has a role. (Recorders will need their own sheet of paper.)
 - TIME** groups for 15 minutes while they brainstorm ideas. Circulate to monitor their progress and answer questions.
 - ASK** student recorders to write the group's ideas on the board or on the paper you have posted for student answers, beneath the letter their group was assigned.
 - REVIEW** the results. As you do, have the class look for 1) ideas that can be combined and 2) ways to build on ideas. Encourage them to ask, "Wouldn't it be cool if...?"
 - TRANSFER** ideas that get the most enthusiasm to a new location. (This is not scientific. We assume you have a good sense of when your class is excited about something.)
 - PROJECT** the *Rank the Ideas* transparency and discuss the four criteria it lists.
 - REVIEW** each idea on the "most enthusiasm" list. Help the class assign each idea a score of 0 to 5 points for each of the four criteria. Mark these down and total the score for each idea.
 - CHOOSE** the idea with the highest score, OR vote between the top 2 or 3.

Thinking CAPS Brainstorming Activity

C = "COMBINE"

Which ideas could be combined to form a solution?

Which parts of county government could join forces to solve the problem?

Which groups could act together with the county government to create a solution?

Complete these statements:

_____ and _____ could come together in order to _____

- OR -

_____ and _____ could be combined in order to _____

Examples:

- The ideas of after-school tutoring and summer jobs could be combined in order to create a program that would train students in life skills and give them jobs where they could practice those skills.
- The county, police departments, and pharmacies could come together in order to provide places for people to bring their unwanted medications.

Thinking CAPS Brainstorming Activity

A = "ADAPT"

What county government resources could be adapted to solve the problem?

What ideas could be copied by the county government to solve this problem?

What have you seen that is similar to this problem?

Complete these statements:

The county government's _____ could be adapted so that _____.

- OR -

_____ could be adapted by the county government in order to _____.

Examples:

- The county's recreation centers and agencies could be adapted so that kids would have a place to learn skills after school and work during the summer.
- The idea of book or movie return boxes could be adapted by the government in order to create a network of drop-off boxes where people can take unwanted medicines.

Thinking CAPS Brainstorming Activity

P = "PUT TO OTHER USES"

What does the county government have that could be used in another way that would help solve the problem?

What resources could be used in a different way,

Complete this statement:

_____ could be used for _____ in order to _____.

Examples:

- Police departments could be used for medicine drop locations in order to give people convenient places to take unwanted medicines.
- County departments and city programs could be used for summer internships in order to give kids places to gain work experience and learn job skills.

Thinking CAPS Brainstorming Activity

S = "SUBSTITUTE"

What could the county government do instead of what it's doing now?

What else could be done?

What other approach could be used?

Complete this statement:

Instead of _____, the county government could _____.

Examples:

- Instead of doing nothing about unwanted medications being flushed into the water system, the county government could work with public health agencies and pharmacies to provide places for people to take unwanted medicines.
- Instead of building roads for cars only, the county government could design roads that can be used by pedestrians, cyclists, mass transit riders, and other motorists.

Step Seven: Brainstorm a-Brewin'

Name: _____

C = "COMBINE"

Which ideas could be combined to create a law that would solve the problem?

Complete this statement:

_____ and _____ could be combined in order to _____.

Examples:

- The idea of mandatory medical clearance and suspension from interscholastic sports could be combined in order to limit young athletes suspected of having a concussion from participating in sports until they provide written clearance from a health care professional.
- Pedestrian-friendly urban design and the idea of promoting active lifestyles could be combined in order to require new roads be built to accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and mass transit riders.



Brainstorming Handout—Regulation

Step Seven: Brainstorm a-Brewin'

Name: _____

A = "ADAPT"

How could a law make use of existing resources?

Complete this statement:

The law could make use of _____ in order to _____ by requiring that _____.

Examples:

- The law could make use of existing coaches and athletic trainers in order to decrease long-term brain injuries to students by requiring that students suspected of having a concussion be removed from the game.
- The law could make use of ongoing repairs to roads in order to make streets safe for all uses by requiring that street design must be updated as repairs are made.



Brainstorming Handout—Regulation

Step Seven: Brainstorm a-Brewin'

Name: _____

P = "PIGGYBACK"

What requirements could the county government attach to something that already exists?

Complete this statement:

The law could require that _____ must also be _____ in order to _____.

Examples:

- The law could require that written clearance from a health care provider must also be required for a student to participate in a sport if she or he is suspected of having a concussion in order to reduce the risk of serious and long-term damage to student athletes.
- The law could require that roads must also be designed for cyclists, pedestrians, and mass transit users in order to make roads safe for everyone and make it easier for people to use transportation other than cars.



Brainstorming Handout—Regulation

Step Seven: Brainstorm a-Brewin'

Name: _____

S = "SUBSTITUTE"

What could the county government do instead of what it's doing now?

Complete this statement:

Instead of _____, the county government could pass a law that _____.

Examples:

- Instead of letting kids continue to play after a head injury if they seem okay, the state could pass a law that requires kids to be taken out of the game if they might have a concussion.
- Instead of building roads that are designed with only cars in mind, the county government could pass a law that requires all new roads be made for use by pedestrians, cyclists, mass transit riders as well.



Brainstorming Handout—Regulation

TASK-MASTER

Make sure your group is keeping to the topic (not discussing lunch!).

Make sure your group is following what it says on your worksheet.

IDEA-PUSHER

Get people to share even their craziest ideas.

Remind everyone not to criticize peoples' ideas.

RECORD-KEEPER

Write down all the ideas your group has.

Write your group's ideas on the class board.

TIME-MINDER

Remind your group how much time is left.

Encourage the group to list as many ideas as possible before the time is up.

RANK THE IDEAS

Rate each idea on a scale of 0 to 5 for each of these criteria:

- Will help the problem in a noticeable way.
- Will be fairly simple to get started.
- Won't be too complicated to operate over the long term.
- Won't be too expensive to run.