

## County Solutions Step Nine: Action Campaign

**Time Needed:** One to two class periods

**Materials Needed:**

Student worksheets  
Colored pencils (optional)

**Copy Instructions:**

Reading page (*one page double-sided; class set*)  
Review worksheet (*class set*)  
Campaign templates (*one template per student; it's okay to give the same template to multiple students if necessary*)



This is lesson nine of nine in a series that culminates in a final class project. All steps can be found at [www.icivics.org/curriculum/countysolutions](http://www.icivics.org/curriculum/countysolutions)

**Learning Objectives.** The students will:

- Identify a variety of strategies for building public awareness and support.
- Evaluate the best strategies to use for different objectives.
- Create components of an action campaign for the solution the class chose.

### STEP BY STEP

- ANTICIPATE** by asking students what they think would be the most effective way to get public attention and support for the solution the class has proposed.
- DISTRIBUTE** one *Launch a Campaign* reading page to each student.
- READ** the material with the class, pausing to discuss each campaign method.
- DISTRIBUTE** one *Review Worksheet* to each student.
- ASSIGN** students to complete the worksheet using their reading.
- DISCUSS** the students' answers, using this as a lead-in to the next part of the lesson.
- EXPLAIN** to the class that they will be creating different pieces of an action campaign.
- ASSIGN** individual students to create different components of the class's action campaign. (Some of the components involve writing, so you may want to consider assigning the whole class to work on one or two of these.)
- DISTRIBUTE** the appropriate templates for students to use.
- ASSIGN** students to complete their templates.
- POST** the campaign components where everyone can see them.
- ASK** students to think about the piece of the campaign they created and decide what the next step might be if they were going to put their template into action in real life. What would they need to do? (i.e., find a printing company, call the newspaper, log on to Facebook and start an account, etc.) Call on students to share answers.

# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## It's All About Support

You've studied an issue and you've got a great plan for change. But until you act on it, an idea is just an idea. In order to persuade the county government to change its public policy, you will need support from decision-makers. Often these decision-makers are elected officials. Sometimes they are people at high levels of a government agency. Either way, in order to gain their support you will need to show that enough of the public supports your idea.

### Getting Attention

Gaining public support means grabbing the attention of as many people as you can. It is important to think creatively and strategically about your proposal. Why should people care about your idea? What is your proposal's gut appeal? Consider the difference between Poster A and Poster B.

Once you've got your message, it's time to take it to the streets. How can you get that idea out of your brain, off the paper, and make it go viral? Campaigns use many different methods to reach the public:

**Many people are homeless.**

**Support increased funding for Centerville homeless shelters.**

**Get involved today!**

Poster A

Where will **YOU** sleep tonight?

A)  B) 

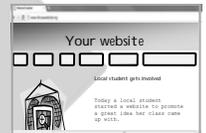
Support increased funding so more people can answer "A."

Find out what you can do:  
[www.CentervilleHomelessSolution.org](http://www.CentervilleHomelessSolution.org)

Poster B

### DESIGN A WEBSITE

Post all the information people need to educate themselves about your issue. Give them a way to contact you and tell them how to get involved!



### MAKE A PRESENTATION

What organizations would care about your issue? Ask to be put on their meeting agenda, then attend the meeting and make a presentation to their members.



### DISTRIBUTE FLYERS

Include the basics of your issue and your proposed solution, your web address and other contact information, and some eye-catching graphics.



### USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Start a Facebook page and a Twitter account, and share them with everyone you know. Keep your page updated and tweet regularly about your issue to keep people paying attention!



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## START A PETITION

Get your supporters to sign a petition or write letters about your issue. Get volunteers to help circulate the petition, and give people form letters they can use to make sending letters easy!



## GET ON THE PHONE

For support from key people, make a personal call. Tell them what you're doing and ask for their support. Suggest specific ways they could help and ask what they would be willing to do.



## HAVE MEETINGS

Have small-group meetings with people in county government and others who are in a position to help your cause. Find out where everyone stands and work toward compromises to meet common goals.



## ALERT THE MEDIA

When you have news or an event, send a press release to local media outlets so they can spread the word. Are any reporters covering your issue? Ask for some air time or a mention in their next article.



## SET UP TABLES

Is an event happening in your community? Ask for permission to set up a table. Talk to people, distribute flyers, collect names and contact information, and have SWAG available for people to take or buy.



## SEND AN EMAIL BLAST

You've gathered all those email addresses -- Now send emails to your supporters giving them updates or asking them to take a specific action.



## WRITE AN OP-ED

Write an opinion article about the issue and your proposed solution. Ask local newspapers to publish it, either as an article or a letter to the editor.



## OFFER SWAG

Mugs, bumper stickers, t-shirts, buttons—people love that stuff! And it gets your message out. Design some cool stuff and sell it to make money for your cause.



# Step Nine: Action Campaign

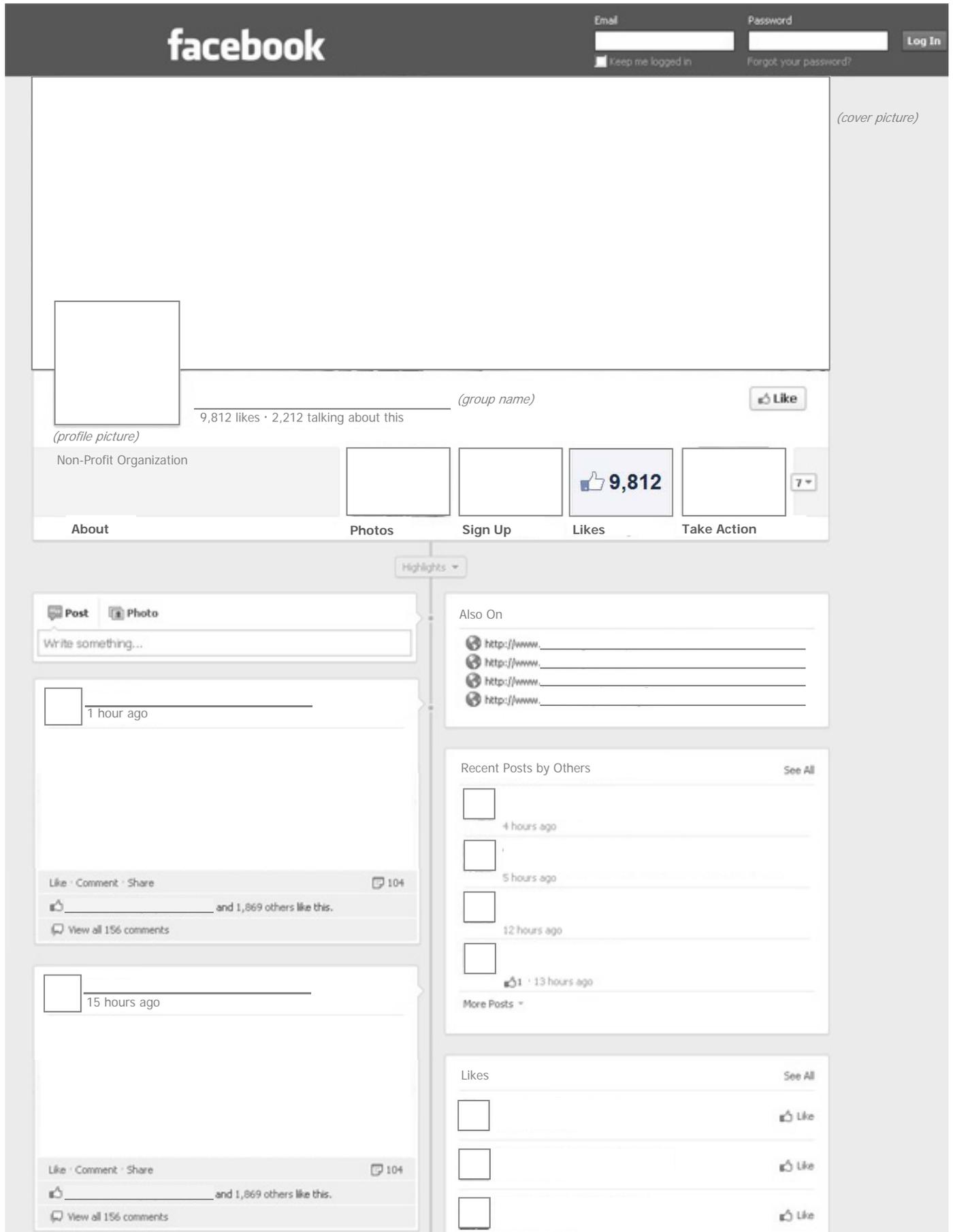
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Strategizing.** List ALL of the strategies or campaign methods that would help you accomplish each of the following goals:

If you want to do this . . .	You can use these strategies . . .
1. Distribute information and talk to people at a county fair.	<i>Set up a table, distribute flyers, offer SWAG, ask people to sign a petition</i>
2. Get people "hooked" on quick updates about your cause.	
3. Gather contact information from people who want to get involved.	
4. Grab peoples' attention in public places.	
5. Ask the manager of a county agency to support your idea.	
6. Educate people in detail about your cause.	
7. Reach as many people as possible at one time with your message.	
8. Discuss ideas with representatives from a county agency and two nonprofit groups.	
9. Follow the efforts of a group that has similar goals and interests.	
10. Give people informative updates about your cause.	
11. Talk to people in person.	
12. Get people discussing your cause and your issue.	
13. Explain your issue to a small audience.	
14. Get people to "advertise" your cause for you.	

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The image shows a Facebook fan page template. At the top, there is a dark grey header with the Facebook logo on the left and login fields for Email and Password on the right. Below the header is a large white area for a cover picture. Underneath the cover picture is a profile picture placeholder and a group name placeholder. To the right of the group name is a 'Like' button. Below the profile picture and group name is a navigation bar with buttons for 'About', 'Photos', 'Sign Up', 'Likes' (showing 9,812 likes), and 'Take Action'. Below the navigation bar is a 'Highlights' dropdown menu. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a post creation box with 'Post' and 'Photo' options and a text input field. Below it are two post placeholders, each with a profile picture, a name placeholder, a timestamp (1 hour ago and 15 hours ago), and a 'Like · Comment · Share' bar with a comment count of 104. The right column contains an 'Also On' section with four URL placeholders, a 'Recent Posts by Others' section with four post placeholders and a 'More Posts' link, and a 'Likes' section with three post placeholders and 'Like' buttons.

# Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...**

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(phone)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(email)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(attention-grabbing headline)

\_\_\_\_\_ - [\_\_\_\_\_]   
(City, State) [Date of release]

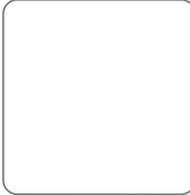
1st paragraph: Make your announcement. Give the most important details.

2nd paragraph: Offer more details about your issue and announcement.

# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SearchHave an account? Sign in

 (name)  
 (username)  
  
(description)

  
\_\_\_\_ TWEETS  
\_\_\_\_ FOLLOWING  
\_\_\_\_ FOLLOWERS

### Stay in touch with \_\_\_\_\_

Join Twitter today

### Tweets

 @   (date)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

 @   (date)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

 @   (date)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

 @   (date)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

 @   (date)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

 @   (date)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Tweets

- Tweets >
- Following >
- Followers >
- Favorites >
- Lists >
- Recent images >



# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



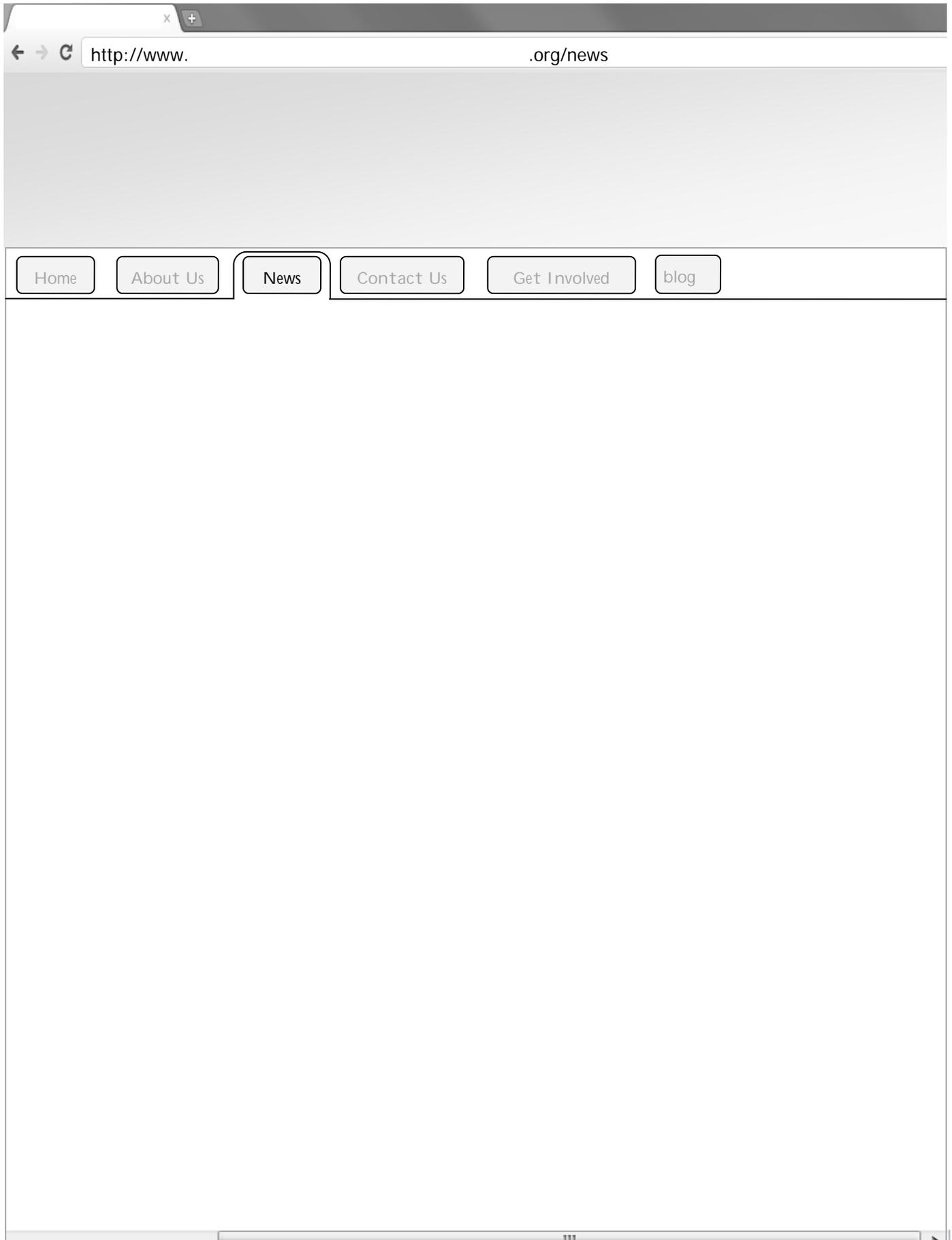
# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



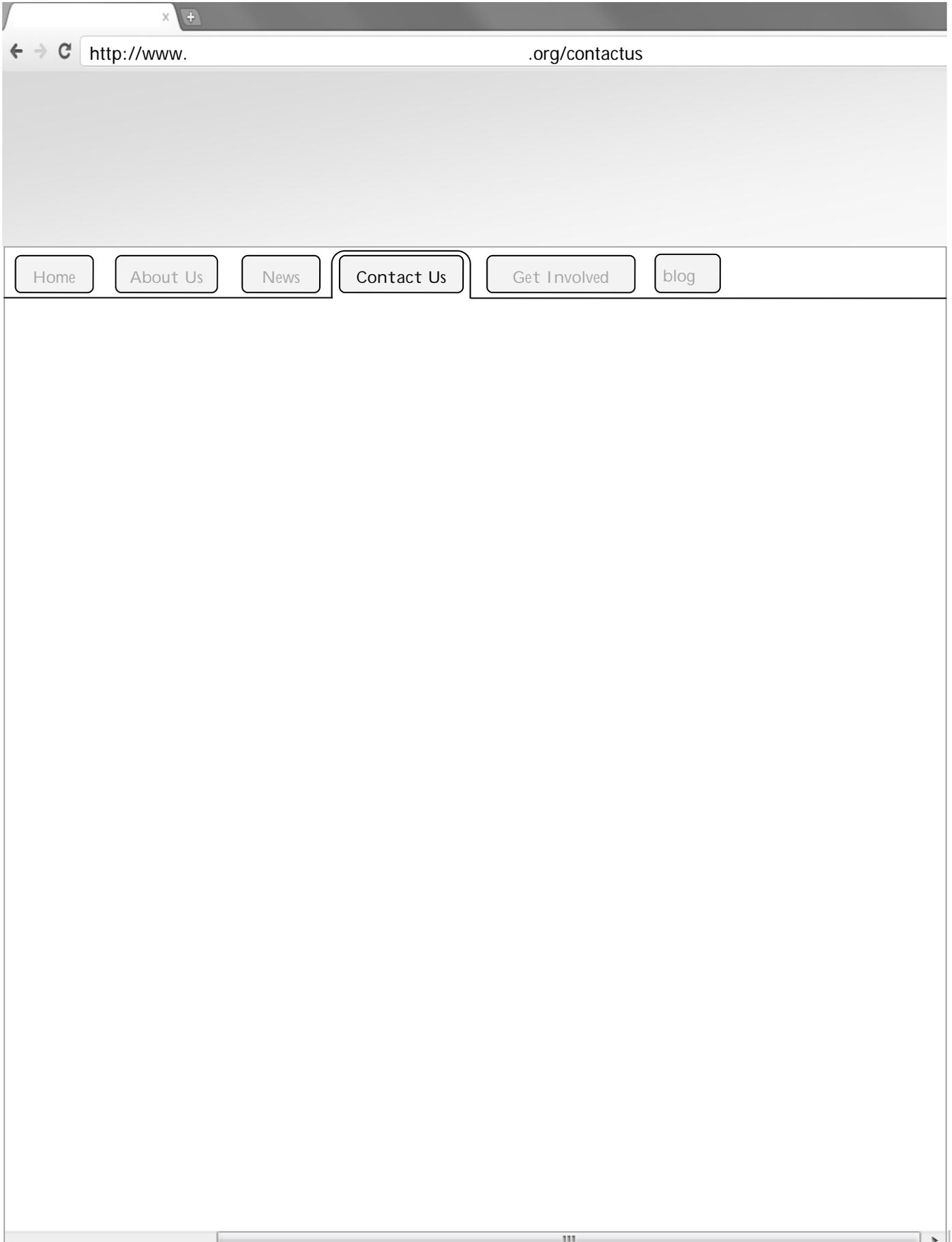
# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



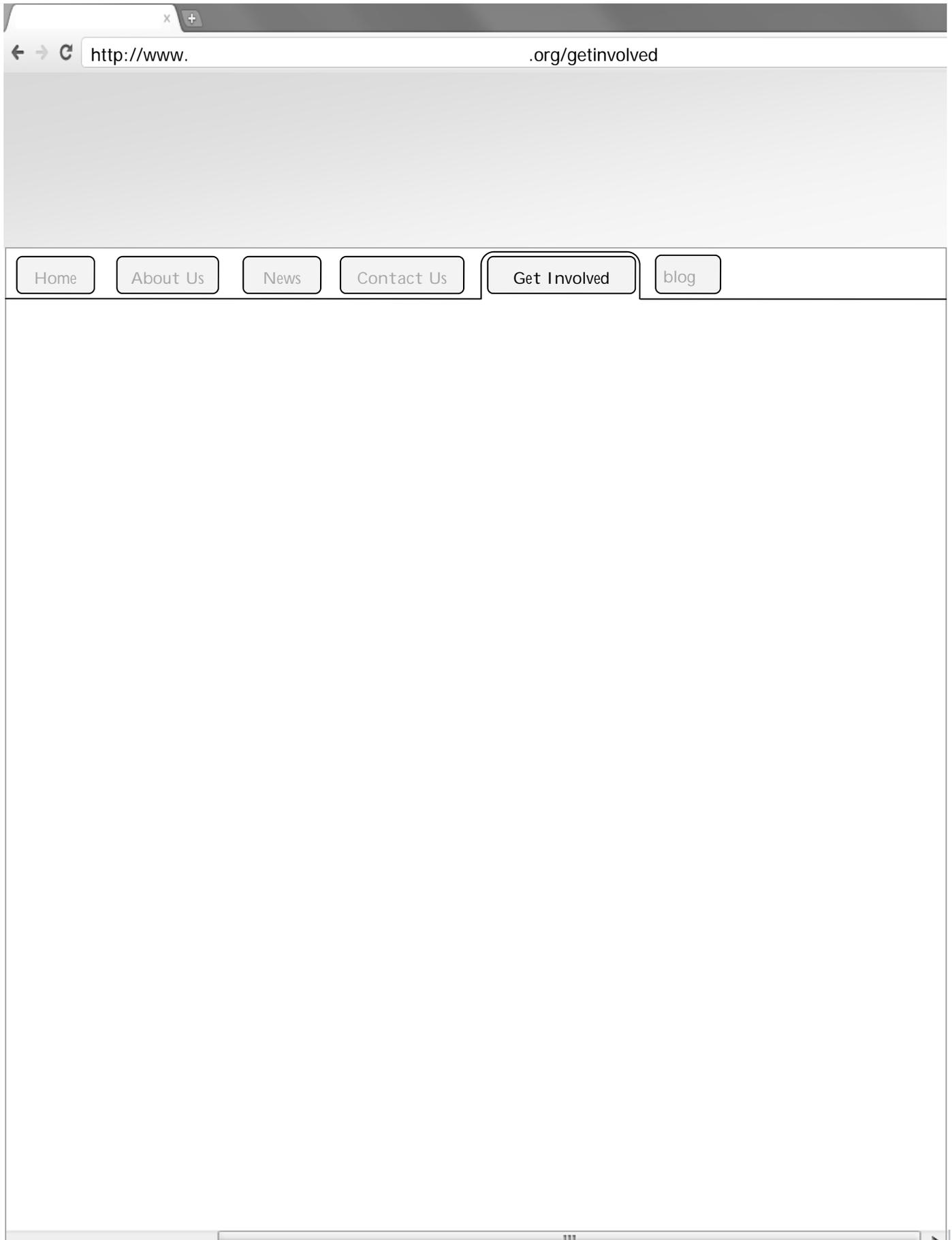
# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

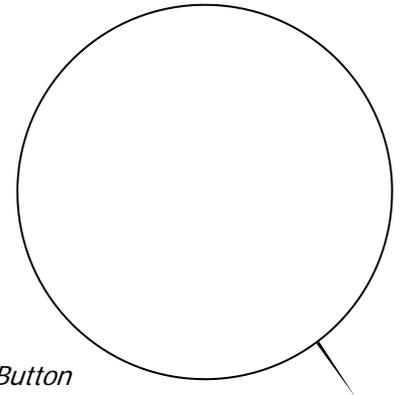
Browser window showing a website template for a blog page. The address bar displays "http://www. .org/blog". The navigation menu includes "Home", "About Us", "News", "Contact Us", "Get Involved", and "blog". The main content area features a large empty box on the left and a series of horizontal lines on the right for text entry. Below the main content area are more horizontal lines for additional text.

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*T-shirt*



*Button*



*Mug*



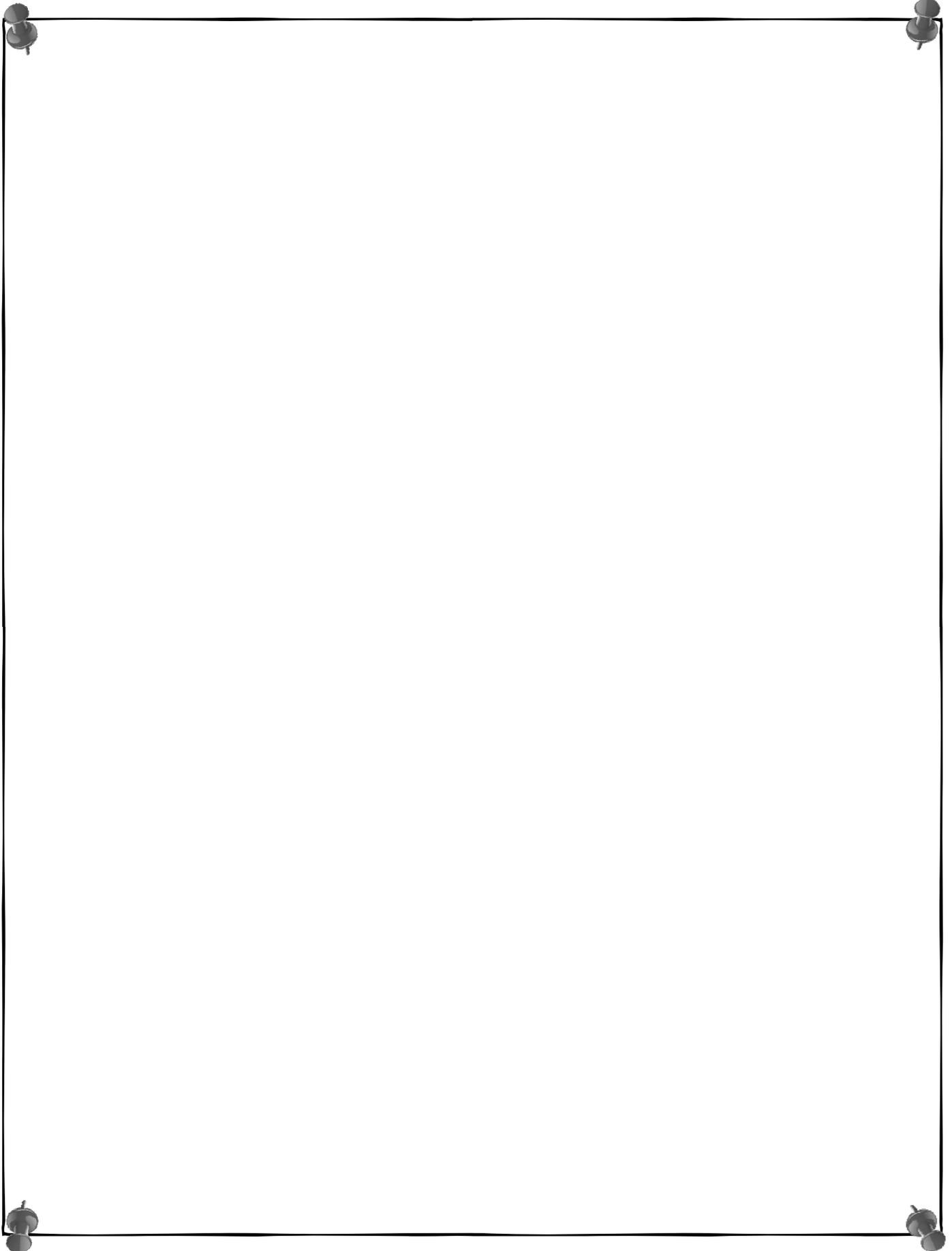
*Pencil*



*Bumper Sticker*

# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

This area is a large, empty rectangular box with a solid black border. It is divided into three horizontal sections by two dashed lines. The top section is the largest, followed by the middle and bottom sections. This layout is designed for a student to write their action campaign plan.

# Step Nine: Action Campaign

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A large rectangular area with a solid border, divided into three horizontal sections by two dashed lines, intended for writing the action campaign details.



# FACEBOOK FAN PAGE

A Facebook “fan page” helps you reach out to supporters and give them a place to engage with your cause. People who “like” your group on Facebook will almost always be people who already agree with your cause. Use your Facebook fan page to keep these people active.

Your group’s Facebook page will include apps that let people get involved, posts and comments to keep your fans updated and talking about important issues, and links to people and groups that are related to your cause.

## Make sure you:

- Design a cover photo and profile picture
- Include your group name and a short description in the “About” section
- Draw icons for your apps
- List other places your group can be found on the web (Twitter, YouTube, your regular website, etc.)
- Create two posts by your group and four imaginary posts from other people
- List three people or groups your group likes



Instructions: Facebook Fan Page



# PRESS RELEASE

A press release is a short, written announcement of an event or development related to your group. The announcement is sent out to try to get the media to cover your story. A press release

is different from regular news because its purpose is to promote a specific event, accomplishment, or change.

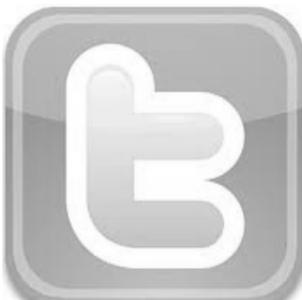
Press releases are a great way to spread the word about what’s happening with your issue or group. Use the 5W + H approach: Tell who you are, what is going on, when, where, and why. Then say how you want the public to respond (attend an event, write a congressperson, etc.).

## Make sure you:

- Fill in your group’s contact information
- Develop an attention-grabbing headline
- First paragraph: Make the announcement and give the most important details
- Second paragraph: Offer extra details
- Use all 5 Ws + H: who, what, where, when, why, how
- Proof read your work!



Instructions: Press Release



# TWITTER FEED

Twitter is a social networking tool that lets you post short messages. A “tweet” is a message that has up to 140 characters and can contain links. You can “follow” other

people’s tweets, and they can follow yours. Twitter can help a group keep followers updated and call them to action.

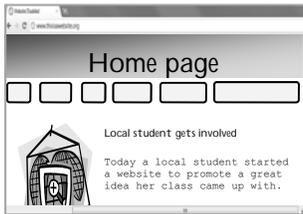
As a group with a mission, you’ll want to use your tweets to keep followers updated, to ask them to take specific actions, and to link them to related information on the internet or to other tweets.

## Make sure you:

- Choose a Twitter handle (the username your group will use on Twitter)
- Include a graphic or picture
- Write a short, interesting description of your group or Civic Solution
- Compose three tweets with information for your followers
- Compose three tweets that call your followers to a specific action



Instructions: Twitter Feed



# WEBSITE HOME PAGE

The home page is the first page people see when they visit your site. Visitors should be able to tell right away who you are, what

your issue is, and why they should care about it. Because you are trying to gather support, visitors should also immediately see where to click to support your cause (not just the “get involved” tab).

A home page should grab the visitor’s interest. Include graphics and a basic introduction to your issue, but make them want to learn more about the issue. (Think: how do movie trailers capture peoples’ interest?)

## Make sure you:

- Describe your issue—at least five sentences
- Include an eye-catching request for visitors’ support
- Include at least two graphics or pictures
- Design a page layout that is easy to read and not too cluttered



Instructions: Website Home Page



# WEBSITE “ABOUT US” PAGE

The “About Us” page tells visitors about the people behind the website. It might explain how the group formed, what the group’s

purpose is, and tell the group’s mission statement. It will also list any partners the group works with, such as government agencies or other groups.

Your “group” is probably your class. Explain how you chose the issue, what your goals are, and develop a mission statement. If your class was going to partner with other groups, who would they be? Pretend as if you have already established those relationships.

## Make sure you:

- Develop a mission statement and include it at the top of the page
- Tell why the class thinks this issue is important—at least three sentences
- Tell what your goals are—at least three sentences
- Include at least one graphic or picture
- Design a page layout that is easy to read and follow



Instructions: Website “About Us” Page



# WEBSITE “NEWS” PAGE

The “news” page offers updates about the latest developments going on with your group and your issue. It can include activities that

specifically involve your group and can also show what has happened most recently with your issue.

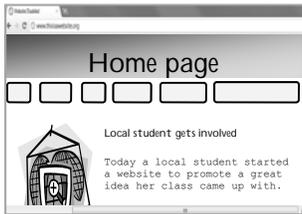
If your group doesn’t have any news to report, use this page to show what has happened most recently with your issue. You can also provide links to other websites that have stories about your issue.

## Make sure you:

- Include at least three news items
- Write an introduction for each news item—at least three sentences
- Include a graphic or picture with each item (drawing is okay)
- Include at least one link
- Design a page layout that is easy to read and follow



Instructions: Website News Page



# WEBSITE "CONTACT US" PAGE

The "contact us" page is very important because it is where people learn how to get in touch with your group.

Since your class probably doesn't have a group phone number or email address, design a contact form for visitors to fill out. Ask for their name, email, and phone number. Give them a place to write a message. Also use ask optional questions. For example, include a checklist where they can mark specific ways they would be willing to help out. You can also include a link where people can donate money to your cause.

## Make sure you:

- Create a contact form
- Ask for basic information such as name, email, phone number
- Include optional questions so you can get more information about why the person is interested
- Give visitors a place to write a message
- Include at least one graphic or picture
- Design a page layout that is easy to read



Instructions: Website "Contact Us" Page



# WEBSITE "GET INVOLVED" PAGE

The "get involved" page should offer visitors specific ways that they can help further your cause. It's not enough to just say, "Get involved today!" What specific actions can people take? What do you hope people will do to help?

The issue you are fighting for will determine exactly what you want people to do. Some common actions are emailing or writing to legislators, participating in fundraisers, circulating petitions, attending meetings, volunteering to staff a table, or making phone calls. Decide what actions your group could ask people to do.

## Make sure you:

- Decide on one activity your group could sponsor (meeting, fundraiser, etc.). Describe the activity in at least five sentences. Ask people to participate.
- Give visitors a list of at least five specific actions they can take. Add at least one sentence to describe each one
- Include at least one graphic or picture
- Design a page layout that is easy to read and follow



Instructions: Website "Get Involved" Page



# WEBSITE BLOG

A blog is a place where you can express your thoughts and opinions about your issue. It should be informative, but it isn't limited to "just the facts." In fact, talking about a controversial subject can get more attention for your post.

To write a blog, first choose a narrow topic for the blog post. Then use a format that will catch peoples' attention, such as "Eight Reasons Why..." or "Top Five Actions for..." or "The Problem With..." (Can you think of others?) Break information into lists, include personal stories, and end with a discussion question.

## Make sure you:

- Choose a narrow topic
- Include a graphic or picture
- Follow an attention-grabbing strategy
- Play off the controversy in your issue
- Use a list, if appropriate
- Include personal stories (your experience or someone else's)
- Include a discussion question at the end



Instructions: Website Blog



# SWAG

SWAG, or “stuff we all get,” is a great way to get your message out to the community. A t-shirt or bumper sticker may not have as much room as a website or

Facebook page, but they are great ways of pushing a slogan or catch phrase.

Before you start on design, think of a few phrases or images that can inform people about your County Solution. You can doodle in the space on the back of this page.

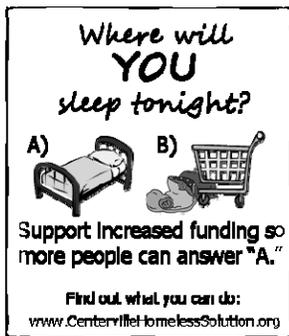
## Make sure you:

- Complete each of the five SWAG items
- Design at least two different slogans/ images for your County Solution
- Be as informative as you can (choose your words carefully!)
- Be neat and creative



Instructions: SWAG

# POSTER



A poster can be very effective for grabbing peoples' attention and making them curious about your issue. It should have few words, but the words it does have should get your message across clearly. Tell the viewer what you want.

When you design your poster, think of a slogan that people can remember. Create a poster that leaves an impact. You want them to walk away thinking, “Wow—that’s a problem I should do something about.” Don’t forget to include contact information.

## Make sure you:

- Grab peoples' attention
- Tell the viewers what you want them to support
- Use both pictures and words
- Use large print that people can read
- Get the class message across
- Include contact information



Instructions: Poster

# TRIFOLD BROCHURE



Brochures are helpful because they hold a lot of information and they are easy to hand out to people. But be careful—too much information can

make the brochure look cluttered.

Include information about your issue and about your County Solution. Offer a list of specific actions people can take to support your cause. Include contact information and a form people can fill out and tear off to give you their contact information.

## Make sure you:

- Design an eye-catching front
- Describe your issue in at least five sentences
- Describe your County Solution in at least five sentences
- Include a list of actions people can take
- Include your contact information and a form to ask for theirs
- Include graphics or pictures
- Design a page layout that is easy to read and follow



Instructions: Trifold Brochure