Create A City: An Urban Planning Exercise
Students learn the process of planning a community, while reinforcing their writing and speaking skills.

Author: Gale Ekiss
Grade Level: 4-8
Duration: 3 class periods

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<tr>
<th>National Geography Standards</th>
<th>Arizona Geography Standards</th>
<th>Other Arizona Standards</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ELEMENT ONE:</strong> THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS</td>
<td>Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms Grade 4</td>
<td>Strand 3 Civics/Government Concept 4 Grade 4 PO 3. Describe the importance of citizens being actively involved in the democratic process (e.g., voting, campaigning, civil and community service, volunteering, and jury duty). Grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 PO 3. Describe the importance of citizens being actively involved in the democratic process (e.g., voting, student government, involvement in political decision making, analyzing issues, petitioning public officials).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.</td>
<td>PO 3. Construct maps using symbols to represent human and physical features. Grade 5 PO 6 Construct maps, charts, and graphs to display geographic information. Grade 6, 7 and 8</td>
<td>Concept 2 Microeconomics Grades 7 and 8 PO1 Identify the functions and relationships among various institutions (e.g., business firms, banks, government agencies, labor unions, corporations) that make up an economic system. Grades 5 and 7 PO 5 Describe the function of private business in producing goods and services.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ELEMENT FIVE:</strong> ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY</td>
<td>PO 1 Construct maps, charts, and graphs to display geographic information.</td>
<td>ELA Common Core Standards Writing Text Types and Purposes 4.W.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information. a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer's purpose. b. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.</td>
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<td>14. How human actions modify the physical environment.</td>
<td>Concept 4 Human Systems Grade 4 PO 5. Describe the major economic activities and land use patterns (e.g., agricultural, industrial, residential, commercial, recreational, harvesting of natural resources) of regions studied. Grade 7 PO 5 Analyze the effects of settlement on places (e.g. quality of life, transportation, population density).</td>
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<td><strong>ELEMENT SIX:</strong> THE USES OF GEOGRAPHY</td>
<td>Concept 6 Geographic Applications Grade 4 and 5</td>
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<td>18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.</td>
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PO 3. Use geography concepts and skills (e.g., recognizing patterns, mapping, graphing) to find solutions for local, state or national problems (e.g., shortage or abundance of natural resources).

Grade 5, 6 and 7
PO 2 Use geographic knowledge and skills (e.g., recognizing patterns, mapping, graphing) when discussing current events.

Grade 8
PO 2 Describe ways different groups of people (i.e., Native Americans, Hispanics, retirees) create and shape the same environment.
PO 3 Use geographic knowledge and skills (e.g., recognizing patterns, mapping, graphing) when discussing current events.

c. Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

5.W.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
   a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
   b. Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details.
   c. Link opinion and reasons using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., consequently, specifically).
   d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

Production and Distribution of Writing
4.W.4 and 5.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Speaking and Listening Standards
Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
4.SL.4 and 5.SL.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

4.SL.6 Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

5.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

Language
Knowledge of Language
4.L.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.
   b. Choose punctuation for effect.
   c. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).

5.L.3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
   a. Expand, combine, and reduce sentences for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.

Writing Standards for 6-8 for Literacy in
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Overview

Arizona will continue to grow. According to the last census, the population increased from 3,665,228 people in April of 1990 to 5,130,632 people in April of 2000. This is a 40 percent change in our population. Even though it is inevitable that growth will occur, growth does not always occur in a planned manner. Therefore, it is the concern of informed citizens that our future growth be planned in a manner that helps humans, preserves the environment, and maintains a quality of life for all.

Purpose

This activity will have students work in cooperative groups to design an ideal city—one which is convenient for humans, preserves the environment, and maintains a quality of life for both animals and humans. Students will not only design a city, but they will write an explanation of how geography was used to improve the quality of life in the planning of an environment.

Materials

- White or colored construction paper
- Glue sticks
- Create a City worksheet
- Colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- Rulers
- Scissors
- Six Trait Rubric for Writing

Objectives

The student will be able to:
- create a model of a city using their knowledge of geography skills, especially their knowledge of Human Environment/Interaction.
- write a formal communication in an appropriate format for a specific audience and purpose as well as express their ideas in a clear and direct way.
- deliver a presentation

Procedures

Note: If time is an issue, the lesson can be shortened by deciding the name of the city, where the city is located, and what the urban planning company will be called instead of having the students decide these aspects.

SESSION ONE
1. Introduce this lesson by using the census figures from the overview to discuss Arizona’s
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growth. Then have students cite problems with growth (lack of water, animals being pushed off the land, more pollution, more services needed, more crime, more roads, etc.). Next, have students cite the positive aspects of growth (more diversity of peoples, more opportunities for jobs, more money, more tourism, more amusements, more tax dollars.) Record these on an overhead or chalkboard in two columns: Problems with Growth and Positive Aspects of Growth.

2. Look through the list and pick out a few of the entries. Have the students comment on how geographers could help with the process (i.e., limit the sprawl, make the growth more attractive by leaving untouched areas, helping plan for city services, such as where to put power lines and roads, helping to find more water sources, etc.).

3. Explain the model and writing prompt:
Writing Prompt: You are a geographer with exceptional skills as an urban planner. You wish to be hired by the new town council of ______ (students will need to make up a name) which will be hiring urban planners to create a city near _________ (students will need to pick an Arizona location). The town council has determined that the city of ________ will have all of the features included on the Create a City diagram sheet. In order for you to get this job that will pay very well, you need to persuade the town council that you have the best ideas for the new city.
Now, since this job is so important to you and many ideas are valued, you will be in a planning team of 4 people. Say to the students, "So this task will be done by you and your partners. As a team, you have this great chance at planning a city and creating a company of your own. Be sure to name your company.

The first task for you and your partners will be to create a paper model of the city. Therefore, you will need to create a town plan. Use the Create a City diagram sheet and cut out the facilities listed on it (that were selected by the town council) and glue them on construction paper to create a model of your city. Be sure to think through where you are planning to place each facility. You must use your skills as a geographer to make sure this is the best plan. The goal is to design an ideal city—one which is convenient for humans, preserves the environment, and maintains a quality of life for both animals and humans."

"After you have selected your company name and your model is completed, you and your partners will write a speech that could be presented to the town council. The focus of this speech is to persuade them to hire your company based on your placement of facilities and your reasons why this is the best location for each. This speech must be clear and concise. This means all ideas need to be said in less than 2 pages. Remember that you are competing with other companies for this job. You must convince them that you have the best ideas for the new city."

"You will be judged on the neatness of your model, so use color and work carefully. Your written speech will be judged on completeness of information. Your written speech will be judged on the appropriate format for a speech to a town council as well as are your ideas expressed clearly."

4. Students should have time to begin cutting and pasting on this first session.

Hint: Some students want to add additional facilities from the ones given on the Create a City Worksheet. You can permit this, but limiting them to the white spaces leftover on the worksheet saves paper and will limit their ideas so the city becomes "do-able" in 2 class periods.

SESSION TWO
5. Students will continue to cut and paste on their paper model while discussing the placement of facilities and perhaps keeping track of their logic by taking some notes.

6. Students should begin their rough draft for speech to the town council explaining why the facilities would be best in their selected location.

7. Students will finalize their one to two page speech to the town council as homework.

SESSION THREE
8. Select 1 member from each team to be a member of the town council. Each team will present their model and give their speech to the council.

9. The students will conclude the class by voting for the best plan for the new city.

Assessment

Writing: The written speech can be graded for voice and ideas: Is this an appropriate speech to be given in front of a town council. Are the ideas organized and clearly stated. Mastery will be considered a “4” on the six traits rubric.

Geography: The written speech can be graded for an analysis of geographic skills used. Does the
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Team mention all 5 of these ideas? 1. Why city services (government offices, school, library, landfill, jail, fire and police departments, and prison) were placed in certain areas? 2. Why businesses (office complex, industrial park, cute shops, strip malls, and shopping center) were located in certain areas? 3. Why recreation facilities (golf course, parks, and arts complex) were located in certain areas? 4. Why housing (homes and apartments) was located in certain areas? 5. Why roads (freeways) were placed in certain areas?

Deduct 20% for each missing concept (city services, businesses, recreation, housing, and roads.) Mastery will be considered 80%. Neatness and grammar can also be considered.

Civics and Economics: Students can

Think/Pair/Share on:
- How your company provided a service for the town government.
- What are the elements of an economic system found in any town.
- Why you voted for a certain town plan.
- Why voting is a good thing.

Extensions

The class could list strengths and weaknesses they found in common between the different proposed city plans.

To strengthen their reading skills, students could read newspaper articles on the expansion of cities and the concept of community planning. Then decide whether the author is for or against the proposed plans.

Invite an urban planner to view the models or discuss their profession.