CAPE

Community Action
Projects for the
Environment

LEADER GUIDE

For use during the pilot year of 2022-2023

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CAPE (Community Action Projects for the Environment) is a 4-H program for youth 11-18 years old that guides them through the process of brainstorming, developing, implementing, and reflecting on a project that addresses an environmental issue affecting their community by asking a decision maker to make a change that benefits everyone.

Contents

Introduction

AT THE BEGINNING of every club meeting, 4-H youth pledge their "hands to larger service" and their "health to better living" for their club, community, country, and the world. This guide will assist you in advising 4-H youth as they engage their hands, head, and heart to improve the health of their community and the surrounding environment.

CAPE (Community Action Projects for the Environment) is a 4-H program for youth 11-18 years old that guides them through the process of brainstorming, developing, implementing, and reflecting on a project that addresses an environmental issue affecting their community by asking a decision maker to make a change that benefits everyone. We envision older youth helping to lead this process and the club (or even a subset of a club) implementing a project that improves environmental quality and engages youth in local community life. For example, youth could help identify locations for water-bottle refilling stations in a local park or they could propose a plan for new bike lanes in their community. You will find many other examples of projects throughout this guide. While working on their project, club members will form community partnerships with local organizations and receive assistance from their county Extension agents and others to successfully carry out these projects. You don't have to do it alone! We've created this leader guide to help you and your leadership team support 4-H youth as you all navigate this process.

CAPE is a type of service learning. It is different from some 4-H service-learning projects because youth investigate and select the project. They should be able to explain why their project represents one strategy to help solve an environmental problem.

BRAINSTORM

DEVELOP

IMPLEMENT

REFLECT
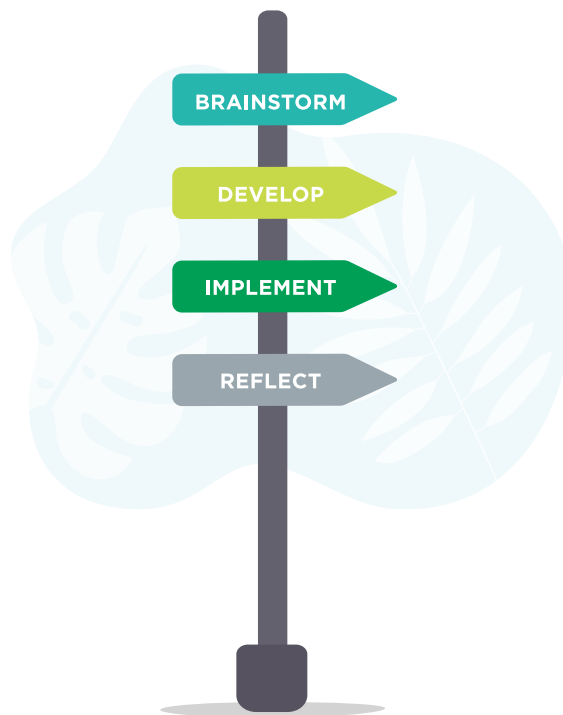
CAPE is designed to help youth learn about issues, identify a project that they are excited to complete, and navigate the policy-making process at the appropriate level of decision making. This is an important process and may require more time than monthly meetings allow. Additional meetings could be virtual. A variety of options are suggested in this guide. Working in the community with community leaders and for the community requires additional preparation that this guide can provide.

CAPE combines the three 4-H project pillars—science, healthy living, and citizenship and leadership—into a single project that takes place over the span of several months. Using this guide, 4-H youth can build and apply leadership skills and work with others as they create a project that promotes a healthy community. Intended program outcomes include increased local civic literacy and governance skills and increased self-efficacy, both individual and collective. Depending on the project and club, the program may also influence positive youth development (e.g., critical thinking, dealing with conflict, decision making) and increase systems thinking skills.

If this is the first project your group has undertaken, or if this group has not worked together before, we suggest the leadership team select a specific geographic area or site for the project within your community. You should pick an area or site that is large enough to offer multiple opportunities for issues and actions, but small enough to be manageable given the age and skill level of your group.

The Skills Bank in Appendix 4 offers several activities that could help your club work together more effectively. Feel free to take advantage of these suggestions whenever you wish.

We hope that CAPE will allow 4-Hers to learn by doing as they engage with their communities and natural environment!

A CAPE project is the combination of making a request for a policy change and supplementing that request with information that makes it persuasive to a community decision maker.

Program Outcomes and Key Definitions

THE CAPE PROCESS uses a service learning and problem-solving approach and is designed to build youth's self-efficacy and civic literacy, while also promoting positive youth development. We've defined each of these outcomes below and provided information on why they are important.

Civic Literacy and Governance Skills: Civic literacy is the knowledge of how to actively participate and contribute to change in your community. Governance is the process by which decisions are made in a community or organization. Through CAPE, youth will learn about community governance and local civic processes, which can help them participate in civic life in their local community and in broader society.

Self-efficacy: Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in how well they are able to do something. The best way for youth to develop self-efficacy and develop problem solving skills is to work on a problem. Through a CAPE project, youth will gain confidence in their skills by addressing an environmental issue in their community.

Collective Efficacy: Collective efficacy is the shared belief that a group can successfully organize themselves and carry out a project. It involves a sense that the perceived goal may not be reasonable for an individual to complete alone, but the individuals can combine and coordinate skills to work together to accomplish the goals. Collective efficacy often complements self-efficacy. Because so many of the challenges facing the world today must be solved together, it is an important component of preparing youth for the future.

Key Definitions

Service Learning: Learning to serve is key to becoming an engaged citizen in any community. 4-H promotes a variety of community service projects. Service learning has two goals. First, participants learn about their community, develop life skills, and reflect on the project they are undertaking. Second, youth serve their community by meeting a need.

Civic Engagement: Civic engagement is about working with others to make a difference in our communities and to address shared social problems through local governance.[1] Civic engagement promotes the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes, such as participating in community efforts, building partnerships, and working with organizations. Through CAPE, youth identify a community decision maker and ask them to do something that will improve their community and environment.

Community: Throughout this guide, we'll use the term community to mean the place where your project is located. For the purposes of selecting a CAPE project, it may be helpful to think about a small geographic area or a specific site. A project could occur in a town, a neighborhood, a park, or even a busy intersection.

Positive Youth Development: Positive youth development refers to an integrated approach to promote young people's well-being. It combines aspects of physical (healthy habits), intellectual (critical thinking and decision-making skills), psychological (confidence and self-efficacy), and social (trust, relationships, and community norms) arenas.[2] By building efficacy and skills, youth will be better prepared to navigate the challenges that life may bring.

Systems Thinking: Thinking in systems means youth can identify various components of an issue or project, understand the connections among them, and realize how influencing one element can cause change somewhere else in the system. While youth may have learned about ecosystems and solar systems, CAPE helps them think about community governance systems and the interactions between the environment and the community. Systems thinking is particularly important in identifying root causes of an issue and defining a CAPE project. It is also a good skill when considering what might persuade a decision maker to take action, because decision makers tend to consider multiple aspects of a problem, which is to say, the system.

[1] Simmons, B., & Monroe M. C, (2020). The Promise of Civic Engagement in Environmental Issues: Synergy of Environmental Education and Civic Education Draft. Available at: https://naaee.org/eepro/resources/promise-civic-engagement-environmental

[2] Schusler, T. M. (2016). Environmental action and positive youth development, pages 141-163. In Monroe, M.C. and Krasny, M.E. (eds) Across the Spectrum: Resources for Environmental Educators. Washington DC: NAAEE.

The Leadership Team

4-H HAS A TRADITION of empowering youth to lead. CAPE represents a perfect opportunity for older youth to gain leadership skills. Consider forming a leadership team of interested older youth and/or the club officers to share the responsibilities of planning a CAPE project, contacting speakers, supervising data collection, leading activities, and guiding the group toward decisions. We suggest that you distribute this CAPE Leader Guide to everyone on your leadership team and work together to facilitate a successful CAPE project. The adult leader may become more of a monitor or advisor, checking that appropriate safety protocols are followed, that speakers understand the nature of the project, and that a deliberative and careful process is followed to allow all youth to grow.

The CAPE program emphasizes the process of exploring issues, seeing connections, and selecting an appropriate project. This may frustrate youth who just want to jump in and take action. We've included activities along the way to help dissipate that good energy, but you may also need to pull on the reins and remind youth that good projects take time. This guide suggests taking three meetings to explore the community and select an issue, and three more meetings to nail down a good project.

The Youth

IN THIS GUIDE, we use the term "club" to indicate the group of youth that are working on a CAPE project, but it could be any group of interested youth. Your entire club may be interested in conducting a CAPE project together. Your County Council may wish to develop a CAPE project. A subcommittee of the council or a club may be best able to tackle a CAPE project. Community clubs have many tasks to manage, so you may wish to offer this as a Special Interest (SPIN) club.

The Time Commitment

LEARNING ENOUGH about a community site to identify an issue and goal, and then planning a project and carrying it out, all take time. To complete a CAPE project within the 4-H year, clubs may wish to use teams to complete different tasks concurrently and share ideas. Other clubs may plan to meet more often, use virtual meetings between regular club meetings, or extend the length of their meetings. Figuring out how and when to meet is one of the first important decisions the leadership team will make, and there are a variety of ways to adapt this guide to meet your needs and constraints. If youth enjoy the process, it is also possible to continue their CAPE project next year with an additional goal. That is often how real change is made in a community—little by little and over time.

Leaders who tested the program recommend meeting twice a month as the project gets started in order to complete the program in one year.

The Process

WHEN GIVEN THE CHANCE to take on a community action project, youth may want to immediately jump to action, as mentioned. CAPE suggests that the process of understanding the issues and debating the merits of various project ideas, although slower, can help youth select a project that is more likely to succeed. For that reason, the first three meetings are about the community issues, not project ideas. It is important to stress to your guest speaker that you aren't asking about projects the youth can do, but issues that concern the community. CAPE is based on the process of community engagement developed by Earth Force, an environmental organization dedicated to helping teachers facilitate community action projects with their students. The CAPE process is structured around eight meetings. In addition to activities that take place during the meetings, each meeting also includes a mission to help keep the momentum moving forward and to help youth prepare for the next meeting. These suggested "homework" assignments are important to the process.

Feel free to supplement these eight meetings with virtual meetings or divide them into more frequent gatherings while keeping the order of information and activities basically the same.

There are a variety of activities in this guide. While we believe all of them are important, if an activity seems less useful for your group, you can shorten it. Several activities in CAPE have been adapted with permission from Earth Force, and several have been used verbatim. Additional Earth Force exercises and resources can be found in the online resources (www.earthforce.org).

In addition to using Earth Force's process and activities, other environmental education resources could be useful as your youth learn about their community. Project Learning Tree (PLT), Project WET, and Project WILD, three award-winning, national environmental education programs, provide engaging activities to help youth explore their local environment. You can find workshops and these resources through your state coordinator (see Appendix 1).

Getting Started

IF THIS IS YOUR FIRST FORAY into community action projects, you might want to skim this entire guide before starting to get a sense of what your club will be doing and where you will be heading. For this pilot test, please go to the CAPE Google Drive (see link to the right) to find additional resources and information that may be useful. If you have questions, please send an email to sffgs-cape@ifas.ufl.edu.

Every CAPE meeting presented here includes an icebreaker, one to three activities, a reflection page, and a mission for youth to complete between meetings. This structure should keep your meetings flowing smoothly and enable youth to interact. Your leadership team can decide if the activities should be shortened, merged, or skipped. Reflecting on the process of conducting a CAPE project is an important part of learning. We've assembled the worksheet, mission, and reflection pages

More materials can be found in the **CAPE Google Drive** at https://bit.ly/CAPEPilot.

in the CAPE Project Book. We recommend using them at each meeting to keep the process on track. And don't forget to use the activities in the Skills Bank (Appendix 4) if you wish to strengthen club members' abilities in communication, teamwork, interviewing, or planning.

Choosing a Community

After skimming the guide, attending a leader training workshop, and/or visiting the CAPE website, the next step is to consider the "community" that your club could explore for their project. This may be a town, a neighborhood, a subdivision, a public park, a community farm, county fairgrounds, or a state forest. It is usually helpful to consider a smaller region or specific site rather than an entire county. In addition, since CAPE action projects seek to ask someone to make a change to improve the environment for everyone, the project should address publicly owned land and involve a decision-making organization. Ideally, there will also be organizations and experts with whom your club can partner. There is a list of potential resources and potential partners in Appendix 2. Choosing the community before your group starts Meeting 1 can help your group focus and move through the CAPE process more quickly.

How to Use This Guide

THIS CAPE LEADER GUIDE walks you and the youth leadership team through the process of planning and implementing a community action project for the environment. Each meeting is designed to take between 1 and 2 hours. In addition to these meetings, you can also schedule field trips, guest speakers, and meetings with partners to assist you. Each meeting will build on the previous activities, so it is important to maintain the order presented here. The age of your youth and type of project they select may require adjustments to these recommended activities.

Pre-meeting among leaders: Get started on the right foot by engaging your youth leaders and co-leaders in an orientation to CAPE, identify a community to work in, and think about potential partners.

Meeting 1

Introduce CAPE to your club with a creative icebreaker, a case study discussion, and a root cause investigation. Wrap up with an introduction to the community and encourage club members to visit the community before the next meeting to complete Mission 1. Don't forget the pre-assessment!

Meeting 2

Create a vision of a healthy environment in your community, practice interview skills, chat with a guest speaker, and identify community environmental issues that might become an area of focus for your club. For their mission, youth will explore agencies and organizations that work in the community on environmental issues.

Meeting 3

It is important to understand who else in the community cares about these environmental issues, what their perspectives are, and whether they could help your group with their project. After thinking about stakeholders, the club will focus on the issues that interest them.

Meeting 4

Now that the group has taken the time to understand environmental issues in their community, members can start talking about project ideas. Use this meeting to explore ideas and to see how other groups collect data, make requests, and work to solve problems. For their mission, youth will read a case study that will help them think more deeply about project ideas.

Meeting 5

The process of making a decision can be rather complicated. In this meeting, the group will experience several ways to make decisions and then use criteria to prioritize a project idea. After the meeting, their mission will be to get to know community partners.

Meeting 6

In this meeting the group will work with a community partner to frame their CAPE project – identifying the request they will make of a decision maker and how that request can be most persuasive. (The decision maker could be an individual, such as the County Extension Director, or a group, such as the city commission.) This might mean they will collect data or develop a demonstration project. They will also create a list of tasks and start their project.

Meeting 7

This meeting provides tips and suggestions for formulating the persuasive request. When youth make their request, don't forgot to record the big event!

Meeting 8

Once the request has been made, the group should celebrate their success with an awards ceremony and party. But first, this meeting provides suggestions for writing a press release and making a presentation about their CAPE project.

Appendices

A variety of resources can be found in the appendices, such as activities to build skills in communication, guidelines for writing proposals, and strategies for interviewing experts.

What Makes a Good CAPE Project?

THERE ARE A HOST of possibilities for a great CAPE project. The challenges in identifying a project are (1) understanding the community so that the right set of options are discussed, (2) considering the skills and resources of the club so that the right set of criteria are used to select a good project, and (3) making sure the youth are interested in and excited about the topic. Since it is often easier to begin the discussion by thinking about projects that address individual changes, we've used those topics to organize the list below. Under each option are potential community projects that ask someone to make a change — converting individual actions to CAPE projects! These are just ideas to prime the pump. Encourage creative discussions within your club. As you can see, a key difference between a typical community service project and a CAPE project is that a CAPE project creates a sustainable improvement by working with one or more decision makers to institutionalize change. Rather than picking up trash in a park on a single day, youth working on a CAPE project could seek commitments from neighborhood groups to adopt the park and keep it clean, for example.

| Individual Projects	Related CAPE Examples
Convert lightbulbs to LED lights to save energy	■ Create a neighborhood goal for everyone to switch to LED lights in their homes. ■ Ask the community to convert to LED lights on streets and in businesses.
Walk more often to reduce dependence on cars	■ Ask community leaders to create a committee dedicated to making the city more walkable, with suggestions, such as plant more shade trees, improve crosswalk signs, create sustainable new walking paths.
Plant a tree	■ Organize a festival to plant more trees on public property. ■ Work with community leaders to develop a tree planting program, including a day to celebrate planting trees. ■ Identify where your community has a sparse tree canopy and find appropriate species and places to plant more trees. ■ Identify trees that could also provide food and suggest that new trees also meet priorities to feed people.

Individual Projects	Related CAPE Examples
Reduce your CO2 emissions	■ Research and collect data on the largest sources of CO_2 emissions in your community and use the data to support asking leaders to create a carbon emission reduction plan. ■ Collect data on the adaptations that may need to be made in your community to live with a changing climate (e.g., create flood walls, improve water drainage in streets, reduce community wildfire risks) and ask leaders to create a community committee to champion such strategies.
Ride a bike	■ Collect data along key transit routes about traffic loads or accident rates to support asking community leaders to create new, accessible bike lanes to preferred destinations. ■ Identify where bike racks are needed and request them. ■ Promote bike riding by partnering with a local group to sponsor a series of tours and field trips by bike.
Use less water	■ Ask leaders to implement the use of grey water for watering public plants/lawns. ■ Work with community policymakers to reduce lawn irrigation (e.g., only watering on certain days, or at night). ■ Ask leaders to repair leaky pipes in public buildings and to encourage the repair of leaky pipes in privately owned buildings and homes. ■ Ask leaders to create guidelines for water-conserving appliances in public buildings. ■ Create a community-wide goal to reduce the amount of water used by households and public entities.
Reduce single-use plastic	■ Ask leaders to impose a policy banning or reducing plastic use in businesses (e.g., banning plastic bags, plastic straws, and Styrofoam takeout boxes). ■ Encourage a community-wide goal to reduce purchasing particular products or foods in single-use plastics and to replace them with reusable/compostable options.

Pre-meeting among Co-Leaders

WE RECOMMEND holding a meeting among leaders of your club to discuss the CAPE process and to identify a community for the club to focus on. It may be helpful to review pages 5 – 13 of this guide during this meeting. Additionally, discussing potential community partners who would help you in the community you've selected is helpful. A good partner is an individual or organization with knowledge of the issue and experience working with community leaders. Even before the club has decided on an issue, you might ask someone who is familiar with the community and with several environmental issues to help your club explore potentially meaningful, interesting, and important projects. You could reach out to potential partners ahead of time to give them some background on CAPE and invite a representative to be a guest speaker in Meeting 2. Making those connections before you start the process may help everything go more smoothly.

Meeting 1

Meeting 1 introduces CAPE and the process of being an engaged citizen to your club and determines the level of interest and willingness to embark on a project. The icebreaker engages youth in a discussion of their ideas about environmental citizenship. Two activities use a short case study to introduce the idea of a community action project for the environment and then explain the importance of addressing the root causes of environmental challenges. The discussion at the end of the meeting introduces the community that youth will be exploring.
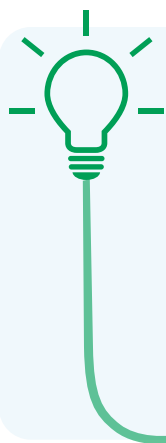
INSPIRATION STATION[3]

Plant for the Planet is a foundation that was created by a 9-year-old German boy, Felix. This foundation has planted more than 500,000 trees in Germany, which Felix says help sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Felix worked to rally his community and other children to plant millions of trees to offset energy-use emissions.

[3] Learn more at https://cleanet.org/resources/43160.html

Preparation

1 The leadership team should select a community and site that will be the focus of the club's action project. This could be a public park, a neighborhood, or a small town. We suggest using criteria to select the best community site and sharing these criteria with your club. A good community site should be public property, have easy access (so youth can get to it), have a decision-making entity, have associated groups or people who can be or provide resources, and be constrained or challenged by an environmental issue. If your group provides compelling reasons to change to a different community or site, you may have to reconsider your selection.

2 Obtain or produce copies of the CAPE Project Book for each participant or make copies of the worksheets for this meeting: **Environmental Citizen Worksheet** in **Icebreaker 1: What is an Environmental Citizen?** If you are meeting virtually, review the slide show and make adjustments.

3 Review the *New York Times* article, "N.Y.C. Bans Pesticides in Parks With Push From Unlikely Force: Children" (https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/24/nyregion/pesticide-ban-nyc.html) and be prepared to use this as a case study to lead a discussion during the meeting. There is also a shortened version of the case study available as a discussion tool in **Activity 1.1: Case Study Discussion.**

4 Review the video (**Activity 1.2: Exploring Root Causes**) and make copies of the **Cause and Effect Tree Worksheet** in **Activity 1.2: Exploring Root Causes** and **Reflection 1.** Make sure you have a way to show the video to your club.

Materials

■ **Slide shows for virtual meetings:**
▸ Icebreaker 1
▸ Activity 1.1: Case Study Discussion

■ **Worksheets:**
▸ Icebreaker 1: Environmental Citizen Worksheet
▸ Activity 1.2: Exploring Root Causes
▸ Reflection 1
▸ Mission 1

■ **Video:**
▸ Activity 1.2: Exploring Root Causes

■ **Reading:**
▸ Activity 1.1: NYC Bans Pesticides in Parks

■ **Pre-assessment survey**

■ **Supplies:**
▸ large pieces of paper
▸ markers or pens
▸ tape
▸ a way to show the video

💬 Icebreaker 1

What is an Environmental Citizen?[4]

📋 **Description:** Working in small groups, youth will brainstorm the tools and skills that they will need to conduct a CAPE project.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to describe at least three key attributes of an environmentally active citizen.

🕐 **Time:** 15 minutes

🖊 **Materials:** Large pieces of paper, markers, tape

An environmental citizen is a proactive member of the community who understands the importance of being a steward of the planet's natural resources and is committed to using civic actions to sustain them. If you are working with a youth leadership team, ask for volunteers from that group to lead the activity or parts of the discussion.

1 Explain to your club that you are exploring whether to pursue a long-term project in your community that will ask them to be environmental citizens. To help your club decide if they are interested in a CAPE project, invite them to consider the skills and tools that environmental citizens need.

2 Ask the group as a whole, "What is an environmental citizen?" They might say someone who lives here and cares about the environment, or someone who is active in making the community's environment a better place. Both are correct, but the latter is consistent with CAPE concepts. After you discuss responses, continue with the following:

■ Imagine you are an environmental citizen – what attributes or characteristics would you have? These can be physical, mental, emotional attributes – real or made-up. For example, an environmental citizen might need eyes to see environmental issues in their community or ears to hear concerns of other community members. Draw all the attributes that your group thinks are important on your paper.

3 Divide youth into groups of two to four. Give each group a large piece of paper and some markers. Ask the group to draw an outline of a human figure on the paper (see image). If you are working virtually, a Google Jamboard or Miro page can enable youth to work together (https://jamboard.google.com and https://miro.com).
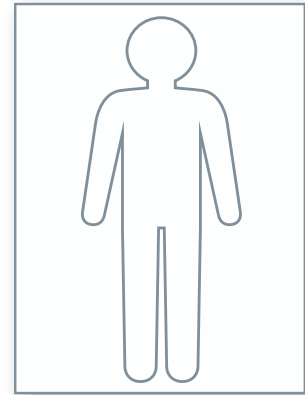
4 Give youth 10 minutes to draw these attributes on their environmental citizen and have them label and describe each attribute they add. Encourage them to describe at least five attributes and draw them on their paper. You might use these questions to prompt their thinking:

■ How would an environmental citizen use their mouth or feet?
■ How would an environmental citizen use the 4 H's (head, heart, hands, health)?

Example attributes:

• *A head to analyze community issues*
• *A heart to care about environmental issues and community members*
• *Sturdy shoes to march to city hall*
• *A bag to hold their letters to government officials*

5 When groups have finished drawing, ask each to present their environmental citizen. Create a "gallery" to display these "Environmental Citizens" around the room or keep them for later reference. Students may want to update their environmental citizens with new attributes as time goes on. These can also be used at the end of Meeting 1.

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[4]Adapted with permission from Earth Force, EarthForce.org.

⚙️ Activity 1.1

Case Study Discussion

📋 **Description:** Using a case study and interactive discussion, introduce a youth-led community action project.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to describe three key elements of a CAPE project.

⏱️ **Time:** 15 minutes

🖊️ **Materials:** Optional newspaper article

If you are working with a youth leadership team, ask them to lead the activity or parts of the discussion. You may want to review the full article: (https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/24/nyregion/pesticide-ban-nyc.html).

1 Provide the following information to your club and ask guiding questions: A group of kindergarten students were dismayed to learn that city parks, such as the one where they play games and sit on the grass, are sprayed with herbicides and pesticides. The city posted warning signs to keep dogs and children away from the recently treated areas, but the students wondered if those toxic chemicals were really necessary. Then ask the club:

- What information would the students need to know to convince others this is a concern?

After learning more about the issue, students became more concerned about the chemicals and believed alternatives existed. The students presented their concerns to the parks department and the city council, and although one member was convinced, others were not. As a result, nothing happened. Pesticides were simply the most effective way for staff to keep the grass free of weeds and damaging insects.

- What strategies could the youth try next?

As others found out about the concern, the students met with public housing residents and environmental groups to form a larger coalition. Together they convinced enough city council members to pass a bill that bans the use of toxic chemicals in city parks and public areas.

- How long do you think it took these students to obtain this solution?

It actually took seven years! Those kindergarteners were in 7th grade when the city council finally banned herbicide and pesticide use in city parks and public areas. While that may be discouraging to some youth who want to see faster resolutions to problems, it is also the reality. Important changes take time. For your CAPE project, it is critical to think about issues and projects that can achieve some type of resolution within the 4-H year so youth can feel successful, or to create short-term goals along the way to the ultimate goal so that they see progress.

- What other potential actions could they have tried that might have taken less time?

There are usually a number of potential projects that could affect a particular concern—and begin to move the community toward solutions to the challenge. It is important to imagine a variety of solutions

rather than getting stuck on the first idea, because you may not have the resources or time for the most obvious solution. Here are other potential activities that could also have addressed the pesticides in the park concern:

- Create a program where park managers are rewarded for using less toxic methods to reduce pests and weeds.
- Provide information to increase awareness of possible alternatives to remove pests.
- Create a "media event" that raises awareness about the problem.
- Host a community town hall meeting where people can learn about the issue from all perspectives.
- Write a report listing the places that have already banned pesticides and why.
- Research potential problems with these chemicals.

2 To review, ask your club:

- What are some key elements of a successful community action project?

Possible responses:
Addresses a community problem, builds partnerships with others,

explores alternatives, seeks a change in the way things happen.

Use this example to clarify the terms we'll be using in CAPE:

- The **issue** was human health and safety in city parks.
- The **concern** was people may be harmed by sprayed pesticides.
- The **project** was to ask the city council to ban sprayed pesticides from use in public parks.
- The **partners** were The Black Institute and members of public housing complexes near city parks.

3 Summarize by stressing that in a CAPE project, 4-H youth think about the change they want to see and consider which decision maker they might influence to help make that change.

What's Next?

Selecting a CAPE project means knowing about the issue and about who has the ability to make changes. But it also means understanding that issue and what causes it, and the causes of those causes! By digging down into an issue you can think about how a CAPE project might affect the root causes.

⚙️ Activity 1.2

Exploring Root Causes[5]

📋 **Description:** Using a case study, explore various causes and effects associated with a problem and potential actions.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to identify and explain multiple root causes and consequences of an issue.

🕐 **Time:** Show a 5-minute video and lead a 15-minute discussion.

🖊️ **Materials: Cause and Effect Tree Worksheet,** computer, or another device for showing video.

In the previous case study, youth became concerned about the use of potentially toxic chemicals in public parks and play spaces. They could have come up with some simple ideas of how to help address this issue, such as posting flyers about the problem in the park. The problem is, increasing awareness would not have led to a long-term change. To find an effective solution, they explored the root causes of that problem. If the toxic chemicals were commonly used because that was how people were trained, then the parks department needed to retrain their staff and purchase new equipment. Making a new regulation addressed this root cause by compelling the city to change its practice.

In this activity, youth will brainstorm the possible sources or causes of a problem and the possible effects of that problem. A good CAPE project isn't just an activity that improves the environment, such as a litter pickup. It helps create a long-term change that improves the environment by addressing a root cause of the problem. This activity will help your youth imagine a good CAPE project by looking at both the scope and scale of an issue and the roots of the problem.

1 First, watch the ▶️ **5 minute video** about Root Causes with your group (it is in the Google drive, https://bit.ly/CAPEPilot). Also, create copies of the sample **Cause and Effect Tree Worksheet** or direct youth to their CAPE Project Book.

[5]Adapted with permission from Earth Force, EarthForce.org.

2 Next, ask your group if they can think of any environmental issues affecting their country or region. Keep in mind that if you select a broad environmental concern, such as climate change or plastics in the environment, the effects (number of branches and leaves) and root causes (number of roots) may quickly become overwhelming. We suggest selecting a more specific and local concern. If you would like to use the previous case study as an example, a sample completed worksheet is included on Page 22.

A. **Cause and Effect Tree:** An Exercise in Root Cause Analysis
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Effects

Environmental Concern

Root Causes

Adapted with permission from *Earth Force*
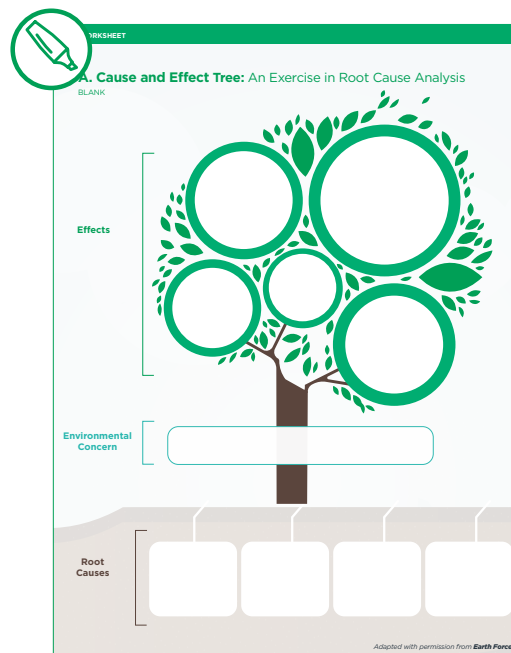
Activity 1.2: **Exploring Root Causes** continued …

3 Ask youth to work with a partner or in small groups. Give each group a copy of the **Cause and Effect Tree Worksheet.** Ask them to write the issue (environmental concern) they've chosen in the space at the center of the tree.

4 Prompt youth to think about the immediate effects this environmental concern has and potential secondary effects that might also occur. They should write these in the branches and leaves of the tree. You may wish to prompt their thinking:

- Who or what is most affected by this concern?
- Is everyone affected equally?
- How could this problem affect other aspects of our community?

5 Then help youth dig deeper to explore the root causes of this concern. Why did it occur? Why is it continuing? Is there controversy around the issue? Is there a policy that addresses this problem? Can a new policy change the situation? Ask youth to write their ideas of the root causes in the squares near the roots of the tree.

6 Ask the groups to explain some of the effects and causes they identified and

Cause and Effect Tree: An Exercise in Root Cause Analysis
CAUSE/EFFECTS/CONCERN

Effects:
- Kills some native plants and insects
- Pollutes waterways through runoff
- Reduces pollinator populations
- May affect human health
- Reduces food for some birds

Environmental Concern: Toxic chemicals are sprayed in public parks and public play spaces

Root Causes:
- City budgets automatically include pesticides
- Pesticides are inexpensive and effective
- City parks landscape with plants that need herbicides to survive
- Pesticides are only way city knows how to kill pests

Adapted with permission from **Earth Force**

remind youth that there are many ways to perceive a problem. How can they find out if any of these ideas about causes and effects are valid? For example, they could ask an expert or talk to people in the community. Thinking about effects and root causes is an important strategy for systems thinking and will help your group select a great CAPE project.

THIS CONCLUDES the activities in Meeting 1. However, you will want to wrap up the meeting by introducing the concept of a CAPE project and the community in which the group can explore environmental issues. Ask if they are interested in conducting a project, and encourage them to explore this area as they complete Mission 1 before your next meeting. You will want to form the habit of asking youth to briefly jot down some of their thoughts on the reflection page at the conclusion of each meeting (this will help track the growth of their skills). And don't forget to ask youth to complete the self-assessment to help evaluate your CAPE program! Please see the Leader Wrap-up.

1.2: Cause and Effect Tree: An Exercise in
Root Cause Analysis Worksheet

BLANK

Effects

**Environmental
Concern**
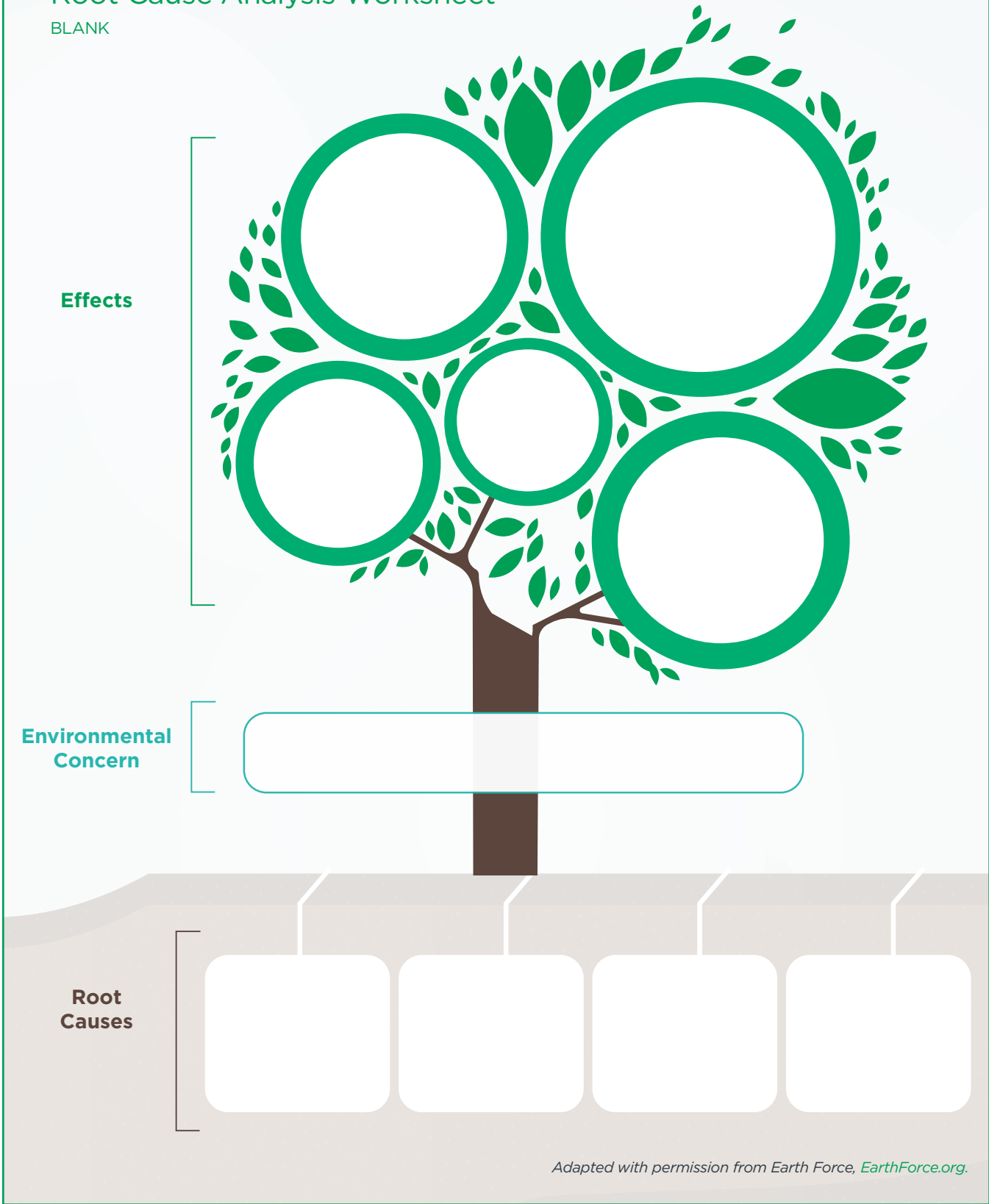
**Root
Causes**

Adapted with permission from Earth Force, EarthForce.org.

1.2: Cause and Effect Tree: An Exercise in Root Cause Analysis Worksheet

COMPLETED EXAMPLE

Effects

Kills some native plants and insects

Pollutes waterways through runoff

Reduces pollinator populations

May affect human health

Reduces food for some birds

Environmental Concern

Toxic chemicals are sprayed in public parks and public play spaces

Root Causes

City budgets automatically include pesticides

Pesticides are inexpensive and effective

City parks landscape with plants that need herbicides to survive

Pesticides are only way city knows how to kill pests

Adapted with permission from Earth Force, EarthForce.org.

✅ Leader Wrap-up

Introduce CAPE and the Community

If you have not already talked about CAPE with your group, introduce the concept of CAPE by explaining that the club can consider conducting a different kind of environmental service project this year. It is different because the club will first explore the issues in the community. Explain to youth that it is important to take the time to do this exploration and not jump ahead to selecting or starting a project. Clubs might waste time and resources by starting an activity that does not actually address the problem. Another difference is that their CAPE project will request that a decision maker create a change to protect or improve the environment. Throughout the process, youth will be learning skills they can use for any future project—you should always start with collecting information, finding partners, and considering ways of making a sustained difference. They also will become skilled environmental citizens.

The first letter of CAPE stands for "Community." This is the time to talk about the community the group will explore. Obviously, each youth is a part of several communities, and some of them are nested within each other—their school community; their church community; this 4-H club; their subdivision or neighborhood; a farming community; their town or city. You can get them started by suggesting which community their CAPE project could work with.

Ask youth to confirm the requirements and attributes of the community:

- Does it have public property? Is it accessible?
- Does it have a decision-making authority?
- Are there organizations or staff who care for the environmental aspects of this property?

Introduce your community and site to your group through three lenses: **Place** (where is it, what are the boundaries, what land does it include, what is the ecosystem), **People** (who lives there or who visits, how do they interact with the land), and **Governance** (people who makes decisions about this place, who have authority for this place, and who influence those who make decisions; and the organizations that have something to do with this place). Contact someone from the community who makes decisions about the community and knows about the environment and ask them to be a guest speaker at Meeting 2.

Explain Mission 1

Is the club willing to proceed? Is a subgroup interested in pursuing a CAPE project? If you have some willing participants, please ask them to visit the community if they aren't already familiar with it. They should focus their attention on the Place component of the community. **Mission 1: Explore Your Community** provides some ideas of what they can observe and explore during a visit. You may provide a few more ideas of what they could observe to facilitate the discussion in your second meeting.

Depending on their familiarity with the environment in this community, you may also wish to do an activity at your meeting or ask that youth complete an activity as part of Mission 1. Appendix 1 has suggestions for high quality environmental education activity guides that can help your club members learn about climate, forest, wildlife, and water issues.

Reflect

Ask everyone to review the gallery of Environmental Citizens that you posted on the wall. As youth begin this new project, ask them to think about which skills and attributes they would like to develop during this project. Using **Reflection 1**, ask them to write a few sentences about why they have selected this skill or attribute and how they will know if they have succeeded. These reflections should occur at the end of every meeting and will help you and your agent evaluate the growth in youth skills.

If your club is participating in the CAPE evaluation, please ask them to complete the Self-Assessment form at this time (find it in the CAPE Google Drive at https://bit.ly/CAPEPilot).

Reflection 1

Name: _____

CONSIDER the gallery of Environmental Citizens your club has produced and write a few sentences in response to each of the following questions.

Which skills and attributes do you already have that will be helpful in your CAPE project?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Which skills would you like to develop through CAPE?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mission 1: Explore Your Community

Name: _____

BEFORE your next club meeting, visit the community site you have selected and conduct some research about this community. You can use this worksheet to help guide your investigation and you can also take additional notes. At this point you are exploring the environment, focusing on forests, wildlife, and water. You are also interested in understanding how climate change might impact aspects of this community. What questions do you have?

1 What is the name of this community?

2 Where is the community located?

3 Do people live here? About how many?

4 Are there forests in this community? How would you describe them?

5 What wildlife is likely to live in this community? What evidence do you see?

6 What type of surface water (stream, lake, river, or retention pond) is in this community? Where does it come from, and where does it go? Is this water clean or polluted? Is there evidence that the amount of water changes over time?

7 How might projected climate changes, such as higher temperatures, more or less rainfall, or rain at different times affect this community? If you don't know, how could you find out?

8 What would you like to know more about? Who could you ask or how could you find out?

9 Write down a few characteristics that are important in this community. Draw lines between the characteristics to show the connections between them. How are people connected to the environment? How are they all linked together?

10 Are there any obvious environmental issues affecting this community?

Meeting 2

Meeting 2 is designed to help youth identify environmental issues that could be addressed in their community. Two points are critical as you get started: (1) The group should not begin by identifying project ideas for action taking, they should start by identifying problems. This slower approach helps them consider projects that address the concerns in the community and should result in a more meaningful endeavor. Some research to understand the issues helps them evaluate project ideas and then commit to one. (2) The project they take on should ask a decision maker (individual or group) to make a change to improve the environment for everyone. CAPE projects focus on community engagement, not individual change. As they think about community issues, they should also think about who makes decisions about that issue in that community. Some issues are more easily addressed at the individual level, but CAPE projects are at the community level.

Preparation

(1) Review the meeting materials.

(2) Invite a community or environmental leader who understands how decisions are made in your community to give a short presentation at your meeting, focusing on three local environmental issues. Ask this guest to talk about what's going well in the community, as well as potential concerns (see **Appendix 2** for ideas about a guest speaker). Remind them that their job is not to give the club project ideas, but to help the group understand the issues and how decisions are made. Remember to give the group at least 30 minutes at the beginning of the meeting to complete the icebreaker and **Activity 2.1: Interview Skills** before welcoming the speaker.

(3) Divide responsibilities among your leadership team so everyone has a role. Think about how each youth leader can be responsible for leading a portion of an activity, for example.

Materials

■ **Slide shows for virtual meetings:**
▸ Icebreaker 2: Creating a Community Vision
▸ Activity 2.1: Interview Skills
▸ Activity 2.3: Identifying Community Environmental Issues

■ **Worksheets:**
▸ Reflection 2
▸ Mission 2

■ **Supplies:**
▸ large sheets of paper
▸ loose leaf paper
▸ index cards
▸ markers
▸ pens/pencils

INSPIRATION STATION[6]

Children in a Boys and Girls Club in the western U.S. prepared a speech that described climate change and its local impacts. They presented it to 60 community members and officials at a city council meeting. The speech included an appeal for permission to start a tree-planting campaign. The plan was approved and the city planted trees in local parks and created a plaque to commemorate environmental stewardship.

[6]Trott, C. D. & Weinberg, A. E. (2020). Science education for sustainability: Strengthening children's science engagement through climate change learning and action. *Sustainability,* 12(16), 6400.

Icebreaker 2

Creating a Community Vision

Description: Youth draw a picture of what an ideal community would look like in terms of how people interact with the environment.

Objectives: Youth will be able to identify at least three key differences between their ideal community and their real community.

Time: 20 minutes

Materials: Large pieces of paper and markers, tape

By drawing a picture of their ideal community, youth will visually represent their goals and aspirations for the community, which can help spark discussion about the differences between the actual community and their ideal. It may be helpful to ask youth to think about the community as it is now and as it could be now, rather than in a distant future.

1 Start the activity by asking youth to think about what their target community COULD look like.

Use these guiding questions to facilitate the discussion:

- What might a healthy environment look like in this community?
- How might people interact with the environment in your community?
- What types of resources would be available? To whom would they be available?

2 Divide your club into small groups of three or four. Pass out markers and large sheets of paper. Ask each group to draw their ideal community for people and the environment. Encourage them to be creative, but also realistic! If you are meeting virtually, use breakout rooms and Google Jamboard so youth can describe their community on digital sticky notes.

3 After 10 minutes, ask each group to briefly present their drawings or descriptions to the rest of the club.

4 As a group, discuss the differences (gaps) between the ideal visions for your community and the actual community. For example, an ideal community might have bike paths or hiking trails, while the actual community does not. This is a great way to start identifying potential issues in the community that you could address with your CAPE project. What questions do the youth have about the limitations in the community that prevent their visions from becoming reality?

The following questions may be helpful as you facilitate this discussion:

- Which efforts could be conducted independently by individuals, and which require community organization, support, and action?
- Which community organizations or government agencies are already working on closing these gaps (for example, nonprofit organizations, women's groups, neighborhood associations)?

Examples of gaps between an ideal and actual community and questions:

- *My ideal community promotes more sustainable transportation by providing a bus service and dedicated bike lanes, but in my actual community everyone drives their own car everywhere.* **How could the community increase access to environmentally-friendly transportation options?**
- *My ideal community has lots of habitat for native wildlife, but housing has replaced natural areas in my actual community.* **How could the community restore habitats for wildlife?**

5 After the discussion, if the youth have identified a gap that they are concerned about, ask them to imagine what the root causes of this concern are and what the consequences of it continuing in the community might be. You can remind them of the Root Causes Tree they completed at the last meeting. What questions could they ask their guest speaker about concerns, effects, and causes? If they have not identified a concern, ask each to write down two questions about environmental issues in the community.

⚙ Activity 2.1

Interview Skills

📋 **Description:** Youth learn how to develop interview questions and practice interviewing their peers.
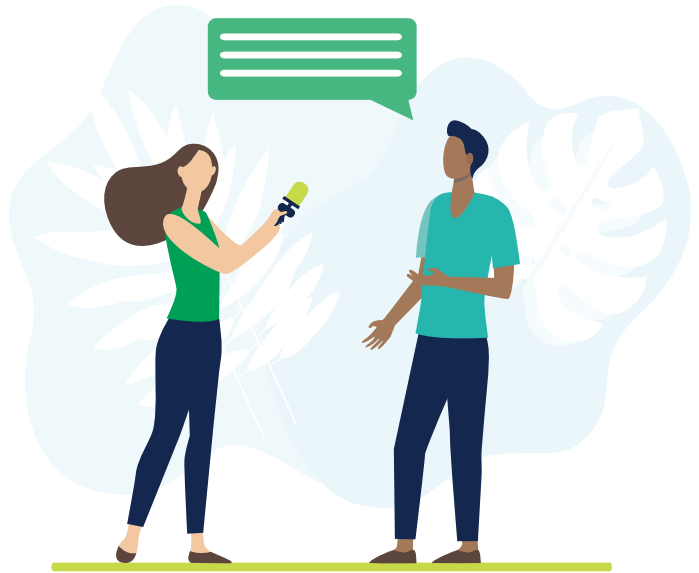
🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to develop appropriate interview questions and conduct an interview.

⏱ **Time:** 15 to 30 minutes.

✏ **Materials:** Index cards for each participant, pens or pencils, paper for taking notes.

The CAPE process involves understanding your community's environmental issues and choosing a decision-making group to ask to change or create a policy. As youth research their issue, they may find that they need additional information. A great way to get additional information is to interview an expert, such as a leader of an organization, a government official, or a ranger at a local park. This activity helps youth build interviewing skills and helps them prepare for the guest speaker you have invited.

What makes a good interview?

An interview is a conversation with a purpose–to gather information from someone who has relevant expertise. Experts are often excited to share their knowledge with others. Reaching out to experts and asking for an interview is a great way for youth to gain information about the issue they have chosen for the project. It is also an opportunity for youth to practice communication skills. They might be nervous to ask an expert their questions, so it may be helpful to practice with peers.

1 Start by asking youth what makes a good interview. Discuss the types of questions that will help them extract the information they need from an expert. What are examples of good questions to ask? How specific do the questions need to be? As they give examples, write them on a board or flip chart to reference in the next step.

TIP **Questions that can be answered with "yes" or "no" are conversation stoppers**. Revise those questions (to encourage people to talk) with "why" or "how" or "when." Start with easy questions that people might want to answer, such as *"How did you get interested in ..."* or *"When did this issue first come to your attention?"* **Probes are follow-up questions that help you dig a little deeper.** It is helpful to have some that can be readily asked when needed, such as, *"Can you tell me more about...?"* or *"Can you provide an example of...?"* **Don't forget to ask the really important questions.** Ask about project ideas and decision makers, such as, *"What are two actions..?"* and *"Who would make decisions about this issue?"*

2 Now that youth have brainstormed question ideas, identify one youth who has some knowledge or expertise on any subject and is willing to be "interviewed" by the club. This person might play a sport at school or have recently traveled to an interesting place. First ask youth to think about what they want to know and then figure out a question that will elicit that information. It may be helpful to ask your volunteer expert to leave the room while the rest of the group brainstorms good questions together.

 Activity 2.1: **Interview Skills** continued …

3 When you have about 5 good questions, retrieve the expert, and ask the first question. Ask if someone would like to ask a follow up probing question before moving to the remaining questions.

4 Once all the questions have been asked, lead a discussion about the activity.

- What questions elicited the best information? What made those good questions?
- Were there any questions you think could be improved?

- What type of questions should come first, and which ones are better later in the interview?

Now that you know what makes a good interview question, work as a group to create a list of questions for the guest speaker selected to speak on community issues.

Need more practice with interviewing? See Appendix 4 for an additional activity.

Activity 2.2

Guest Speaker

Description: Youth listen to a guest speaker talk about community environmental issues and decision-making systems and ask the speaker questions.

Objectives: Youth will be able to identify and explain at least three environmental issues in their community that they can explore. Youth can explain how decisions are made in the community.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Paper and pencil for writing or their CAPE Project Book.

We recommend inviting a guest speaker from the community to help identify environmental issues that youth could explore through a CAPE Project. The guest speaker should be familiar with issues and opportunities within the community. If the speaker represents a decision-making group, they will also be able

explain how decisions are made. For example, you could invite a town council member, the head of a local environmental organization, a city planner, or the individual in charge of managing the site the group has selected. All these roles represent **governance**—these people help make or influence decisions about the community or site. When you invite the speaker, ask them to talk with youth about three environmental issues in the community and how decisions about these issues are made. Youth should be prepared to ask questions. For the issues that the speaker suggests, youth should probe to learn more about root causes and consequences as well as how solutions might be identified.

⚙️ Activity 2.3

Identifying Community Environmental Issues

Description: Youth review what they learned from Mission 1 and from the guest speaker. They make a list of important environmental issues in their community.

Objectives: Youth will be able to identify three to five important environmental issues in the community.

Time: 20 minutes.

Materials: Paper, markers/pencils.

For Mission 1, youth explored their community and learned about different environmental issues. In **Activity 2.2,** youth heard from a guest speaker who shared more information about environmental issues in their community. In this activity, youth will present their findings from **Mission 1** to the group and discuss the similarities and differences between their findings and compare this information to what they heard from the guest speaker. They will also summarize the issues presented by the guest. They will then work together to identify the top three environmental issues in their community.

1 Ask each person to briefly share something they learned about their community from either their mission or the guest speaker. What was most interesting? What surprised them? What environmental issues seem to be most important in their community? Make notes on the key issues they mention.

Use the following questions to discuss the key issues:

■ What are some of the most obvious environmental issues in your community?
■ What are some of the less obvious, but still important, environmental issues in your community?

2 Using a large sheet of paper, ask youth to develop a list of the top three to five environmental issues in their community. This list should be based on the group's findings and on the group discussion.

Environmental Issues in the Community

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

THIS CONCLUDES Meeting 2. Remind youth to complete their reflection pages. This is the time to explain Mission 2. For Mission 2, you will need to assign youth to the issues they identified. Each group will research and learn more about local organizations or agencies that work on each of the priority issues.

Reflection 2

Name: _____

THINK ABOUT what you have learned so far about your community, its potential environmental concerns, and what questions you have about these concerns.

What role do you think the residents of the community might play in helping to resolve the environmental issues in the community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Pick one of the environmental issues that was mentioned and make a list of some people who may be able to tell you more about this concern, the problems it creates, and the root causes that created it. What do you need to know?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mission 2: Who's Who?

Name: _____

EVERY COMMUNITY has a number of different agencies and organizations. Some are government agencies – e.g., at the town, city, county, state, or national level. Some are nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that work to protect the environment (e.g., Native Plant Society or National Audubon Society) or the community (e.g., United Way, Chamber of Commerce, Red Cross). Service organizations also work on a variety of issues for the benefit of a community (e.g., League of Women Voters, Kiwanis Club). And there are many more!

Divide the group into the number of issues they identified (in Activity 2.3) and ask each youth to find three agencies and organizations that work on this issue in your community. This information goes on the top row. Then they should try to answer each of the questions in this chart with information from the Internet. It is fine if youth work individually on the same issue; they can compile their results at the next meeting.

Answer each question for three organizations that you discover for the issue:	Organization or Agency 1 _____	Organization or Agency 2 _____	Organization or Agency 3 _____
What is the organization's purpose or mission?			
What is its connection to the issues you identified?			
Is it a governmental, nongovernmental, or service organization?			
How does the organization make decisions?			

Meeting 3

Meeting 3 gives youth a chance to report on which stakeholders and decision makers are concerned about or involved with each of the priority issues. After a discussion of possible issues, it might be obvious that one represents an interesting and important topic for the CAPE project. If so, you'll be able to continue with that focus. If several issues are still of interest, the group can continue to explore them all, but it will be helpful to begin to narrow the options by the end of this meeting.

INSPIRATION STATION[7]

The Stow It-Don't Throw It Project is a youth-driven marine debris prevention and ocean conservation program focused on protecting marine environments while educating others to do the same. The project engages youth in preventing the negative impacts of improperly disposed of monofilament fishing line. Youth assemble and distribute personal-sized fishing line recycling bins to anglers and boaters, while also providing education on sustainable fishing practices. Youth also teach fellow youth and community members about ocean conservation. The project was originally envisioned by a Florida 4-H youth member after an internship at Mote Marine Lab in Sarasota, FL. Through his work with Mote and other 4-H members, the project came to life. It is now a program in other states, including North Carolina and New Jersey.

[7]Learn more at http://stowitdontthrowitproject.weebly.com

Preparation

1 Review the meeting materials and make copies of the **Activity 3.1: Stakeholder Mapping Worksheet** or direct youth to their CAPE Project Book.

2 Prepare for Activity 3.1 by creating a large version of a stakeholder map on paper if you are meeting in person or use the slideshow for a virtual meeting.

Materials

■ **Slide shows for virtual meetings:**
▸ Activity 3.1: Who is Involved?
▸ Activity 3.2: Which Issues Are We Interested In?

■ **Worksheets:**
▸ Activity 3.1: Stakeholder Mapping Worksheet
▸ Reflection 3
▸ Mission 3

■ **Supplies:**
▸ paper
▸ pens/pencils, markers
▸ sticky notes

Icebreaker 3

Review of Who's Who

Description: Youth review the organizations they researched in Mission 2.

Objectives: Youth will be able to list organizations and groups that work on each of the community environmental issues they have identified.

Time: 15 minutes.

Materials: Mission 2 worksheets, paper, and pens.

Arrange youth in their issue-groups from Mission 2 and ask them to share their worksheets with each other to see whether the information they collected is the same or different. Ask one person from each issue group to present information about one organization they explored to the entire group. Then ask if anyone found a federal agency with a local office working on these issues? A state agency? A local municipal office? An NGO? Review the primary organizations working on each issue.

⚙️ Activity 3.1

Who is Involved?[8]

📋 **Description:** Youth begin to identify the connections between stakeholders and the selected issue

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to identify a group that the club might work with to help address this issue in their community.

🕐 **Time:** 20 minutes.

✏️ **Materials: Stakeholder Mapping Worksheet,** sticky notes, markers.

What is a stakeholder?

A stakeholder is someone who has a direct interest in an issue, including those who are affected by the issue and those who have the power to influence the issue and solutions. Some stakeholders may benefit from the issue, while others may be negatively impacted. Stakeholders are always people. Animals and landscape features are not stakeholders, even though they may benefit from environmental actions.

For example, in the case of the pesticide ban, stakeholders would include city park managers, city government officials, park visitors, pesticide companies, the people who visit the park, and the children advocating for the ban. Everyone living in New York City or voting for the city council members would be more distantly affected by this issue. Since they pay taxes and are affected by city policies, they are secondary, or indirect stakeholders. To select a good issue for a project and a potential partner, youth need to understand how the direct or primary stakeholders are involved in the issue and the decision-making process.

If the group has explored more than one issue, ask subgroups to develop one stakeholder map for each issue.

1 Start by explaining what a stakeholder is and provide youth with an example. Use the following questions to help youth think about all the stakeholders involved in the issue they are exploring. Their work on Mission 2 should help them answer these questions! Use the following questions to launch a discussion.

- Who cares about the issue?
- Who makes decisions about the issue?
- Who benefits economically?
- Who wants the issue to be resolved or fixed?
- Who has power or influence to change the issue?

2 Ask youth to fill out the **Stakeholder Mapping Worksheet.** If multiple youth investigated the same issue, they should work together to fill out the worksheet. First, youth should write their issue in the circle in the center. Next, add stakeholders in the circles

around the center. Then, summarize the stakeholders' relationships to the issue on the lines connecting the circle to the issue. These should be people with a direct relationship to the issue—they are directly affected by it or have direct responsibility for it. If an important group is only indirectly involved, they can be written into a circle in the corner.

3 Ask youth to consider which stakeholders have more power or influence, and which have less. Ask them to draw a star around the most influential stakeholders. Highly influential stakeholders are those who possess the power to change the issue, while less influential stakeholders are interested in the issue, but do not have much power. Some of them, however, can influence the more powerful stakeholders.

Note: The group may want to come back to these stakeholders to obtain their support when the project is developed.

4 Is there a stakeholder group on the diagram that has responsibility for making decisions about this issue? Ask youth to draw a big circle around this group, as it may become the target for the project.

5 Finally, take a look at the stakeholder map. Is anyone or any group missing? For example, consider the role of the media, experts, and community organizations. Are all the influential stakeholders on the map?

6 Ask the group to think a bit more about the organizations and groups that are already working on this issue, or that might be interested in joining an effort to address this issue. Do they belong on the map? To help identify organizations, you might ask county Extension

IKSHEET

Stakeholder Mapping

Create a map of the stakeholders relevant to your issue. Start by writing the issue in the center. In the **first set of circles** write the names of the stakeholders who are closely and directly related to this issue. Label the **second set of circles** with the names of stakeholders that are less directly connected to this issue, or that might influence the primary stakeholders.
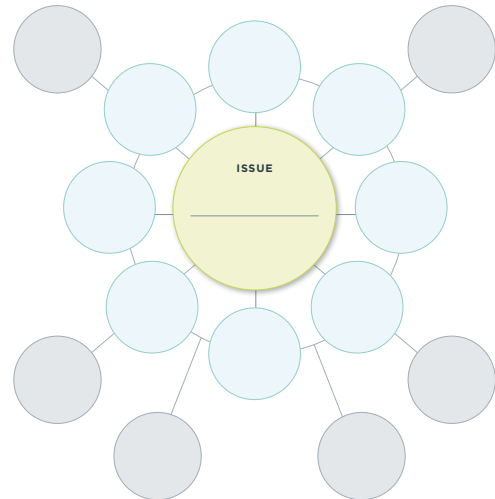
agents who work with this issue about organizations or individuals (such as Master Naturalists) that are involved. The League of Women Voters, for example, might have a subcommittee that is invested in this issue.

7 Use your map to discuss potential partners to assist you in the development of a CAPE project. Which group might be in a position of influence, or which people might have insightful suggestions about how to address this issue? Invite one or two of them to be guest speakers at your next meeting. It may be helpful for a leader to contact the organization in advance and explore ways to formalize how they might work together.

Note: Keep the stakeholder mapping diagram as a resource. The club may keep coming back to it to consider partners, decisions makers, and people who can influence decision makers.

3.1: Stakeholder Mapping Worksheet

Create a map of the stakeholders relevant to your issue. Start by writing the issue in the center. In the **first set of circles** write the names of the stakeholders who are closely and directly related to this issue. Label the **second set of circles** with the names of stakeholders that are less directly connected to this issue, or that might influence the primary stakeholders.
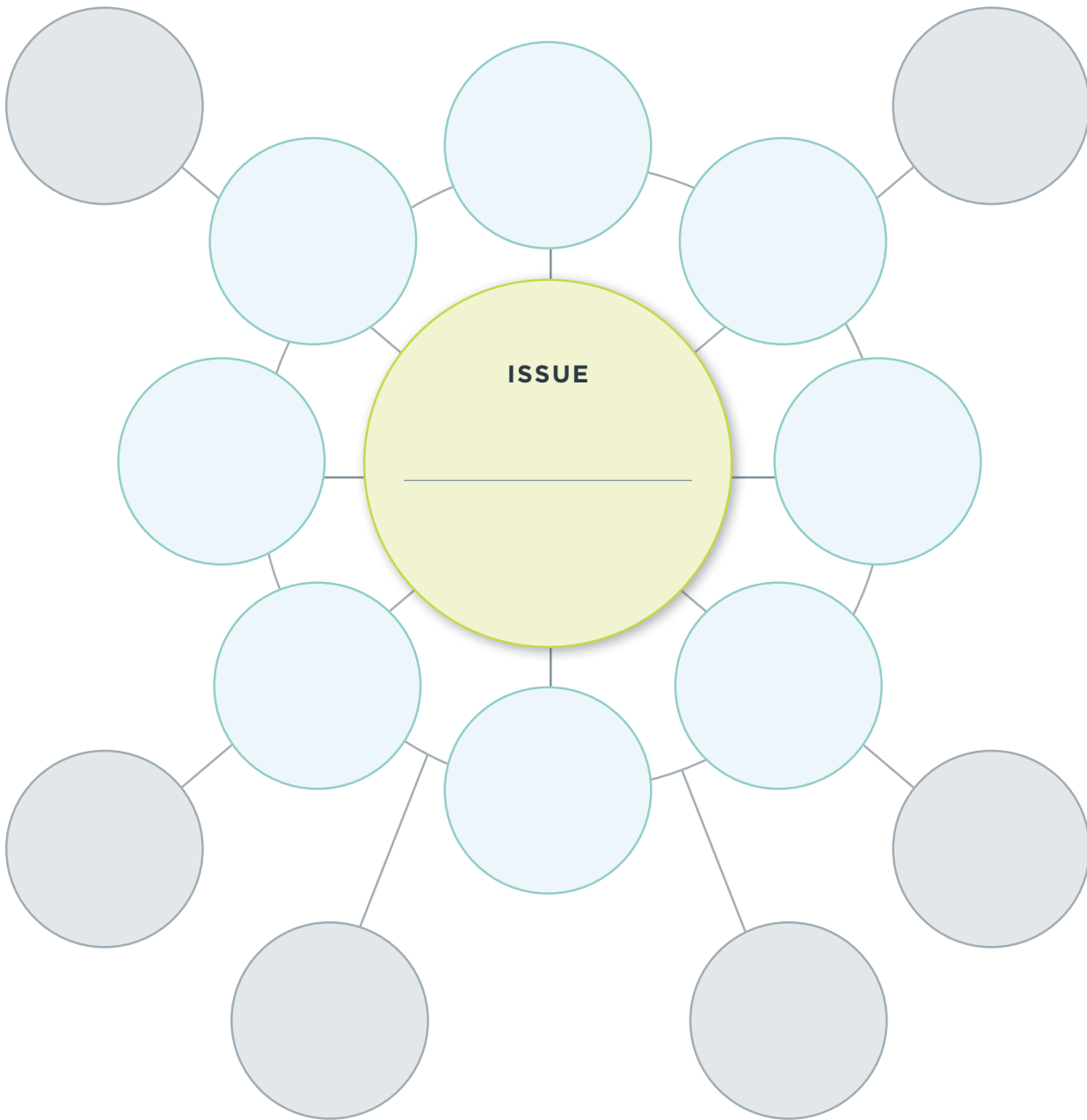
ISSUE

_____

⚙️ Activity 3.2

Which Issues Are We Interested In?

📋 **Description:** Youth reflect on each of the issues they are discussing and weigh their appropriateness for a CAPE project.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to explain the advantages and disadvantages of several issues in the context of a CAPE project.

🕐 **Time:** 20 minutes.

✏️ **Materials:** Notepaper or computer to record ideas.

1 At this point, your group should have a list of potential issues to pursue for a CAPE project. Since the club won't be able to pursue CAPE projects with every issue, they will need to narrow their options and select one to focus on. If the best choice is obvious, please continue on to Mission 3. If there are several contenders, please use this discussion to elevate one or two issues. Introduce the need to compare and contrast the priority issues and ask the group to identify the qualities they find important and interesting about each issue. Make sure to keep a record of these notes as they may be useful later. It might be helpful to remind the group that a CAPE project has two components: **asking someone to do something and making that request persuasive by providing supporting evidence or information.**

2 Suggest that there are several criteria that should help youth identify a good issue for a CAPE project. They have just talked about two of them: (1) It should be an important issue to the community, and (2) it should be interesting to the club members. Additionally, there are two more criteria: (3) it should have a possible partner - an individual or group who is also working on this issue who can help. Review the stakeholder maps to see if each issue has this possibility (several groups or agencies might be better than one). And (4), the individual or group who has the power to make decisions about this issue should be part of a community decision-making system, or at least open to public input. You may not know the answer to this last question before the group identifies a project, but it is worth considering. Anything to do with private property, for example, will be difficult to change. Businesses are usually private, but many of them serve customers and are willing to listen to what the public has to say. Public agencies or organizations at the community scale (e.g., with city policies, school rules, park regulations) might be easiest to address through a CAPE project.

3 Lead a discussion about the benefits and challenges of the issues, noting the four criteria described in Step 2 until the group can eliminate a few issues, or until one rises to the top. Make sure everyone believes this is a good choice and note any caveats that will need to be addressed as the group moves forward, such as whether you can find a good community partner and/or whether you can identify a feasible project that addresses the issue over the next few meetings.

AS YOU WRAP UP Meeting 3, you might congratulate the group for keeping an open mind, considering multiple issues, and focusing on those that are most interesting to them. Ask members to keep the stakeholders in mind and consider a group that might become a good partner – probably one that is working on this issue, has credibility in the community, and wants to work with a youth group! Organize Mission 3 by dividing the group into two teams and giving a different assignment to each. Remind them to complete their reflection sheet.

Reflection 3

Name: _____

THINK ABOUT the stakeholder mapping activity you did today.

Why might it be important to understand different stakeholders' perspectives when working on environmental action projects?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What challenges might you encounter when discussing the issue you have selected with different stakeholders?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mission 3: Community Connections

TEAM 1: Your mission is to collect more info about the community issue(s). What have you learned about the root causes of each issue? Who is affected by each issue?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

TEAM 2: Your mission is to collect ideas from other communities that have tackled these issues. You can learn from their experience. Try to find at least three examples of what other communities have done.

Example 1: _____

_____

_____

_____

Example 2: _____

_____

_____

_____

Example 3: _____

_____

_____

_____

Meeting 4

In Meeting 4 youth discuss their issue in more detail and begin to generate project ideas. This is a good time to be creative and to learn from others. At this stage, it may be helpful to invite a guest speaker or to work more closely with a community leader or partner organization. Between meetings, the leadership team may also wish to chat with community leaders for their insights. If the club has selected one issue, you are in good shape. If the group is still considering two issues, please do Activity 4.2 twice, or divide your club so that youth consider project ideas for both issues.

INSPIRATION STATION[9]

In another Boys and Girls Club project in the western U.S., children created an education- and action-oriented website designed to raise awareness about climate change and inspire action in their community. The website was launched at a gallery event where children presented photographs they took to convey their connection to climate change in their community.

[9]Learn more at https://doi.org/10.3390/su12166400

Preparation

1 Review the meeting materials.

2 Use a large piece of paper to sketch out the chart in **Activity 4.2: Explore Project Ideas** if you are meeting in person or use the slide show if you are meeting virtually.

Materials

■ **Slide shows for virtual meetings:**
▶ Activity 4.2: Explore Project Ideas

■ **Worksheets:**
▶ Reflection 4

■ **Reading for Mission 4:**
▶ Raptors and Rat Poison (https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/raptors-and-rat-poison/) Shortened version in Appendix 3

■ **Supplies:**
▶ paper
▶ pens/pencils, and markers.

⚙ Icebreaker 4

Report on Mission 3

Description: Youth report on what they learned about the issue when completing Mission 3.

Objectives: Youth will be able to summarize what they've learned about the issue in their community and to provide three examples of how this issue has been addressed by other communities.

Time: 15 minutes.

Materials: Notepaper to record ideas.

Ask both teams to share what they learned about the issue(s) in their community and how other communities have addressed the issue(s). Could the experiences from other communities inform your club's activities?

⚙️ Activity 4.1

Policy or Practice?[10]

📋 **Description:** Youth discuss the difference between a policy and a practice and focus attention on policies and a decision maker who could affect their issue.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to list one policy and one practice related to their issue.

🕐 **Time:** 10 minutes.

✏️ **Materials:** None

Before your group brainstorms project ideas, it would be helpful to review what constitutes a CAPE project. One easy way to focus on requests for changes at the community level is to understand the difference between a policy (usually applied to a broad situation for a long time for the benefit of a community) and a practice (usually a choice people make as individuals).

A **policy** is a rule, law, regulation, or official mandate that is intended to benefit the community for a long time. While we often think of policies as laws or regulations at the government level, policies exist in lots of places. Schools, Extension offices, universities, grocery stores, offices, and businesses all have policies that guide how people function and what they do. A **practice** is an individual choice and action; if everyone adopts the practice, it can become a cultural norm. A **cultural norm** is something that most people in a group accept as common practice. For example, in many communities, household recycling has become a cultural norm.

Policies often encourage individual practices, and there may be several different practices that people could adopt to comply with a policy. Here are some examples of policies and practices:

Policy	Practice
Charging for paper grocery bags	Taking a reusable grocery bag to the store
Elementary education for all youth	Home, public, or private schooling
Ticketing drivers who do not stop for a red light	Stopping for a red light

Policies can incentivize practice (rebates on solar energy installations) or punish practice (tickets for driving without a license). Use the following examples to help youth make distinctions between policies and practices. Help youth remember that CAPE projects aim to address policies related to an issue for the betterment of the community and the environment over time.

1 Explain the difference between a policy and a practice. Use the following list to ask youth which are policies (raise their hand) and which are practices (cross their arms).

- Youth must be between the ages of 5 and 18 to enroll in 4-H. (4-H national policy)
- Bringing a gift to a birthday party. (practice)
- Driving on the right side of the road. (federal policy)

---

[10]Provided with permission from Earth Force, EarthForce.org.

- Washing your hands after using the toilet. (practice)
- Restaurant workers must wash their hands after using the toilet. (policy)
- Recycling. (practice)
- Turning off the water while brushing your teeth. (practice)
- Littering is not allowed on highways. (state policy)
- Planting a tree to commemorate a relative. (practice)

- Limiting the height and location of flowers at a grave (cemetery policy)
- No shoes, no shirt, no service (restaurant policy)

2 Explain that the goal of a CAPE project is to ask someone to consider or change a policy. Focusing on the policy that could be changed will help youth consider project ideas. This will help you transition to the next activity.

Activity 4.2

Explore Project Ideas

Description: Youth brainstorm project ideas that could address a local policy to affect the issue they selected.

Objectives: Youth will be able to describe two policies that could address their issue.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Chart and markers.

1 The last activity helped the group think about policies! For each issue that the group is still discussing, engage them in a discussion about the concern, the root causes of that issue, their vision of what they would like to see changed, and a decision maker who might be involved in creating that change. You might wish to review the ideas that were generated about stakeholders **(Activity 3.1)** for these issues. Is there a stakeholder who is also part of a decision-making group? Are the leaders of the stakeholder groups potential decision makers? These could

be the people youth would ask to support or create a new policy. Suggest that a decision maker is more likely to seriously consider a policy change when presented with evidence that explains the scope of the problem and possibilities for a solution. This should be the focus of a CAPE project: asking someone to do something and making the "ask" persuasive by providing supporting information. From this foundation, start brainstorming project ideas. Here are some examples of CAPE Projects that focus on policy changes with four different decision makers:

School	Local Government	County	Local Park
Vision: The school is Carbon-Zero, emitting no more carbon dioxide than is sequestered.	**Vision:** More people ride bicycles in your community to reduce carbon emissions.	**Vision:** The county fairgrounds are an attractive, comfortable, and safe place to visit.	**Vision:** The local park is an attractive, comfortable, and safe place to visit.
Concern: School waste contributes to greenhouse gas emissions.	**Concern:** There is no place to safely lock a bike out of the way of pedestrians.	**Concern:** Fairgrounds are hot and ugly.	**Concern:** Dog poop is on or near the popular paths for walking and jogging.
Decision maker: Principal or school superintendent	**Decision maker:** Planning board, city manager, or city council	**Decision maker:** County Extension director or county commission	**Decision maker:** Park manager or agency that owns the park
Policy change: Ask your school to implement a policy to separate and compost food waste in the cafeteria.	**Policy change:** Ask your city government to implement a policy that bike racks are provided on all city properties.	**Policy change:** Ask the county to implement a policy to devote annual funding for fairground improvements and maintenance.	**Policy change:** Ask the park managers to implement a policy that requires citizens to pick up their dogs' poop on and near public park paths.
What you can do: Describe and weigh food waste at your school. How much waste could be diverted, in pounds, if your school started composting? Identify a location for a compost bin and the cost to build it.	**What you can do:** Create a map of all of the bike racks currently available in your community (or in a part of your community). Count the number of bike riders or bikes locked to railings. Propose new locations for bike racks.	**What you could do:** Conduct a survey of 4-H members and parents to understand their concerns about the fairgrounds. Take photos of unappealing areas. Draw pictures of ideas to make those areas more attractive.	**What you could do:** Count the number of dog-walkers in the park. Raise funds to install dog poop bag stations and waste cans in the park or convince park managers to add this request to their annual budget.

2 Organize youth into small groups and ask them to think about the environmental concerns they have identified, as well as a decision maker and stakeholders who likely would be interested in those concerns. Then, ask them to brainstorm possible projects for each concern that could address existing or new policies. What new policies could help improve the issue(s)? Make sure they take notes for all their ideas!

CONCERN AND ISSUE	1	2
DECISION MAKER AND STAKEHOLDERS		
PROJECT IDEA 1		
PROJECT IDEA 2		
PROJECT IDEA 3		
PROJECT IDEA 4		
PROJECT IDEA 5		

3 When the groups are ready to report, take notes on their ideas to complete the chart above. If you have more than five ideas for projects, try to reduce the list. You might suggest that one change should precede another, leaving something for future clubs to work on.

WRAP UP the meeting by congratulating the group on how far they have come by using a deliberate, purposeful, and methodical process for exploring concerns, root causes, and stakeholders. Introduce Mission 4 and remind youth to complete Reflection 4.

Reflection 4

Name: _____

So far you've done a number of activities with your club members to investigate and consider an issue and develop a project. What are some of the advantages to working in a group?

_____

_____

_____

_____

What are some of the disadvantages of working in a group, and how could you try to overcome them?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mission 4: Raptors and Rats

EVEN WITH A VISION, decision maker, and project in mind, it will take some thought and planning to create a strategy that will result in the change you want to see in your community. Reviewing and discussing a case study can help youth think strategically about a CAPE project.

Before the next club meeting, please read the short story "Raptors and Rat Poison" by Cathy Bell. You can find this article online at https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/raptors-and-rat-poison/. A shorter version of this article is provided in **Appendix 3.** As you read, try to answer the following questions and take notes. You'll discuss the article and your answers as a group at the beginning of your next meeting.

Think about the following questions while reading:

- What problems did brodifacoum solve? Why was it a good way to kill rats?
- What problems does brodifacoum create? Why is it a bad way to kill rats?
- Why was it important to exempt agricultural supply stores from the ban?
- Why was it still sold to customers after it became illegal to sell in non-ag stores?
- What was the vision — in what way did Lisa want to solve this problem?
- What information was easy to collect to help inform a policy?
- What did Lisa do to strategically help speed up the regulatory process to protect birds?

Meeting 5

Meeting 5 uses the Raptors and Rats case study to clarify your club members' thinking about CAPE project possibilities. Youth will also learn about different ways of making decisions and use what they have learned to start selecting the perfect CAPE project for your club.

Preparation

1 Review the meeting materials.

2 Use a large piece of paper to write out the lunch options in **Activity 5.1: Who Decides Times Five** for rank voting if you are meeting in person. Use the slide show if you are meeting virtually. You will also need a blank chart of the **lunch criteria** (sample on page 54).

3 Prepare a large version of the **Criteria Based Decision-Making Grid** in **Activity 5.2: Select Criteria and Compare Project Ideas** for the group, make copies of the worksheet for individual youth, or direct them to use their CAPE Project Book.

Materials

■ **Slide shows for virtual meetings:**
▸ Activity 5.1: Who Decides Times Five
▸ Activity 5.2: Select Criteria and Compare Project Ideas

■ **Prepare a chart (or use the slide show) for:**
▸ The table of lunch options in Activity 5.1: Who Decides Times Five
▸ The grid in Activity 5.2: Select Criteria and Compare Project Ideas

■ **Worksheets**
▸ 5.2: Criteria-Based Decision-Making Grid
▸ Reflection 5

■ **Supplies:**
▸ small pieces of paper
▸ sticky notes/dots

Icebreaker 5

Strategic Thinking about Raptors and Rat Poison

Description: Youth discuss the Raptors and Rat Poison case study.

Objectives: Youth will be able to describe the qualities that make a good CAPE project.

Time: 15 minutes.

Materials: Copy of Raptors and Rat Poison article for reference.

Gather in a circle and ask one of the youth leaders to lead a discussion about the Raptors and Rat Poison article. After they cover the questions from Mission 4, ask the group to summarize the case by using the following questions to make sure everyone understood the article:

Ask youth the following:

- **What problems did brodifacoum solve? Why was it a good way to kill rats?** The rats eat the poisoned bait and leave the area to find water. Therefore, they die away from the bait rather than in people's homes.
- **What problems does brodifacoum create? Why is it a bad way to kill rats?** Other animals may eat the bait or eat poisoned rats and be harmed. Brodifacoum can bioaccumulate in the food chain if poisoned animals are eaten by other animals, killing animals that were not originally targeted.
- **Why was it important to exempt agricultural supply stores from the ban?** Producers need to kill rats to 'protect their grain and livestock.'
- **Why was it still sold after it became illegal to sell in non-ag stores?** Store owners were allowed to sell the rest of their stock after it became illegal.
- **What was the vision — in what way did Lisa want to solve this problem?** Lisa wanted to educate the public about the ecological dangers of rat poisons and spread the message that birds of prey are a natural form of rodent control and should therefore be protected.

- **What information was easy to collect to help informa a policy?** Checking stores to see if they were still selling brodifacoum.
- **What did Lisa do to strategically help speed up the regulatory process to protect birds?** (Hint: these might be examples of a CAPE project!) Lisa started a coalition to educate the public. She also requested that the city ask businesses to stop selling the poison; then she asked other cities to do the same. She also recognized the businesses that stopped selling the poison.

The following questions will help your group use this article to think about the strategic development of a project:

- **What was the concern? What was the root cause that the group decided to address?** Raptors dying from rat poison. Availability of rat poison to residents.
- **Who were the decision makers who could affect the problem?** Store owners and municipal government leaders
- **What did Lisa ask, and of whom, that was easy for them to agree to and made a significant difference (this is a strategic effort called "seeking a small win"[11])?** The city of San Francisco sent letters to businesses requesting they stop selling second-generation anticoagulants (e.g., brodifacoum).
- **How did Lisa and her team follow up?** Following the procedures of city governance, they sent letters to city councils requesting that they pass resolutions to stop selling second-generation anticoagulants.
- **What else did Lisa and her team do to make their request powerful?** They started an award program to commend businesses that stopped selling the second-generation anticoagulants.
- **And finally: What can you learn from this example that you can apply to your CAPE project?** It is useful to collect information about a practice in order to ask for a change in policy and develop awards to honor those who voluntarily make a change that is good for the environment. It is interesting to see how a small start snowballed into a regional effort.

[11]A small win is something that is easy to accomplish. It helps by creating enthusiasm and a sense of accomplishment among group members. A strategic small win is something that leads to another step, and another.

Activity 5.1

Who Decides Times Five[12]

Description: In this activity, youth explore five different ways of making a decision about what to eat for lunch.

Objectives: Youth will be able to describe and explain the process and importance of democratic decision-making.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Small pieces of paper, dots or sticky notes, list of menu options posted on the wall or board, and **table of criteria** (see blank version of the chart on page 52).

Selecting an issue may be easy if everyone gravitates toward one important need. That's called consensus. But is it a good decision? Good decision making may require several steps, particularly if people disagree. The decision-making process should also be clear to everyone so they can trust the outcome. Before you move onto the next activity, it is important for youth to understand democratic decision making. Use the following scenario and activity to help your club members compare and contrast different types of decision making. They already have used at least one of these processes to select an issue. Soon they will select a project. How decisions are made is critical to a healthy democracy.

What is democratic decision-making?[13]

In representative democracies, the government gets its power when citizens participate in the political decision-making process. Democratic decisions are most often made by voting or by consensus. Making decisions by voting is easiest for large groups and most often results in a clear winner and loser. When voting, there is "majority control" meaning the group with the most votes is the "winner" of the decision. Decisions made by a consensus mean that all participants can live with the final outcome. This style of decision-making is more time-consuming than voting, more often used with small groups, and requires a strong commitment from the group, but in the end, everyone should be willing to proceed with the decision. By participating in a decision-making process through CAPE, participants will learn basic principles of effective democracies, which can help prepare them to be active citizens in their own communities.

1. Explain to the youth that they will be using five different voting strategies to decide what they will prepare for lunch tomorrow (i.e., they will make the decision five times). The challenge of solving this problem is that everyone is going to have to eat the same thing. They have the following choices:

    - Peanut butter and jelly sandwich
    - Macaroni and cheese
    - Pepperoni pizza
    - Tossed salad
    - Turkey and cheese sandwich on gluten-free bread

2. Use each of the five voting strategies below to select an item from the menu.

Public Vote: For the first strategy, ask everyone to select one item from the menu that they want to eat tomorrow and put their hand in the air when you ask for votes for that item. Record the number of votes for each item. The total should be the number of people in the club. If you have a tie, you can suggest that both items will be available.

Private Vote: For the second strategy, ask everyone to select one item from the menu that they really want to eat tomorrow but this time the vote will be private. Provide everyone with a small piece of paper and ask each person to write their choice and pass it in, without sharing their response with anyone. Tally the responses. Is the result the same as the public vote? Ask the club what could be the reason that a private vote is different from a public vote? Ask them to imagine how influential people might sway a public vote, or how undecided people might "follow the leader."

Rank Vote: This time give each club member three sticky dots or sticky notes and ask them to indicate which menu item they would like to eat tomorrow by selecting three items (each with one dot), two items (with one or two dots) or one item (with all three dots). Ask them to put their dots on the list of menu items you have on the wall. When they have finished, the number of dots should be three times the number of youths. Is the winner the same as with previous strategies? What might account for the difference? Should someone who feels strongly be able to sway the decision by piling all their dots on one item? What does this do to others' votes? If some people don't really care what they eat, is this the best way to create a good group decision?

Consensus Discussion: Rather than selecting the lunch option based on the most votes, this style of decision making asks the group to discuss the benefits and drawbacks of the options until the entire group agrees. It may be too much to ask that everyone will WANT the same thing, so consensus discussions are usually completed when everyone CAN LIVE WITH one option. To do this process, ask five people to each speak in favor of one menu option. Why should everyone select this option? Then ask for a hand vote, with people putting up their hand the whole way if they want it, and people putting up their hand half-way if they can live with it. If they don't want it, they don't put up their hand at all. Everyone can vote for as many items as they wish. Count the number of people voting for each (it doesn't matter how high their hand is). If you do not get full consensus (everyone voting) for at least one option, ask those who could not live with the option to state their reason and vote again. If there is some reason why none of the options will get a consensus agreement, ask the group to generate another menu option that works for them. (Cheese pizza with gluten-free crust, perhaps?)

Criteria Voting: The fifth strategy is a more deliberate version of the consensus discussion. In this example you provide four criteria that could be used to select the lunch option: availability, taste, nutritiousness, and time for preparation. (See sample chart below.) For each menu item, the group should decide how well the item meets the criteria and together provide one point for each criteria met. (You can award half points for "somewhat meets the criteria," but that might take more time than you have today!) Points are allocated in reference to the other options, so you might ask, "Which are the fastest to prepare?" and give them 1 point. The winner would be the item with the most points.

Note: This is probably how you selected an issue – by discussing how well the issues met four criteria in Activity 3.2. Which Issues Are We Interested In?

	SAMPLE CRITERIA				
FIVE LUNCHES	**Ingredients available**	**Great taste**	**Nutritious**	**Less than 15 minutes to prepare**	**TOTAL POINTS**
1. Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich					
2. Macaroni and Cheese					
3. Pepperoni Pizza					
4. Tossed Salad					
5. Turkey and Cheese Sandwich On Gluten-Free Bread					

3 After the group has experienced these different styles of decision making, discuss the pros and cons of each using the following guiding questions:

- Which approach is most fair? Which enables the quietest person to have a voice?
- Does one process feel more satisfying to everyone? Why?
- To what extent should the decision be good for the person with the most allergies (in other words, most vulnerable)?
- In what types of decisions would this be important and not so important? How should a group decide how to decide?!

- When should society accommodate the most vulnerable and when does a decision infringe on the rights of others?
- In what types of decisions is it important to protect the most vulnerable?
- When is it not practical to have multiple options and let people choose, how should decisions reflect individual needs?
- Does someone's choice affect others in a harmful way? Is that potential harm more important than the freedom to choose?
- What solutions do you think are helpful to create a thriving community?

⚙️ Activity 5.2

Select Criteria and Compare Project Ideas[14]

📋 **Description:** The group creates criteria that they can use to make an informed decision about which project to pursue.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to state the benefits and disadvantages of their project ideas.

🕐 **Time:** 30 minutes.

🖊️ **Materials:** Poster paper and marker/white board and dry-erase marker/chalkboard and chalk; **Criteria-Based Decision-Making Grid Worksheet** for each participant (see Step 5).

In this activity, youth create criteria to make an informed decision and use democratic decision-making to arrive at consensus on a project idea to pursue. Youth will select criteria, evaluate each option, and decide on a project idea. It is important that all participants agree on the criteria and ultimately, the project idea, because all of the following work will be based on the decisions made in this meeting. More work will need to be done before youth start their project, however. They will define the details of their project and link it to a policy change in Meeting 6. Remember that a CAPE project has two components: asking someone to do something and making that request persuasive by providing supporting information.

What are criteria?

To make decisions we use some form of criteria to narrow down our options and arrive at a final selection. Criteria are the standards or considerations that help us make decisions. For example, something as simple as deciding what to wear each morning means thinking about the activities for the day, the weather, and what is clean. Some youth will also consider who will see their clothes, and how they will be perceived. Ask youth what criteria they could use for decisions they might make, such as which TV show to watch, when to do homework, or where to go with friends?

[14]Adapted with permission from Earth Force, EarthForce.org.

1 Deciding what to eat for lunch in the last activity is an example of using Criteria-Based Decision-Making in daily life! Remind the group of the criteria they used.

The more points awarded, the more closely the option matches your criteria. In the lunch example, what was the "best" choice. What if individuals have different tastes and allergies? Their scores would be different, of course. And this is an important thing to discuss: Should the individual scores be averaged, or should the group agree on one score? Everyone's voice should be heard, but what is the best way to achieve that goal in your group?

2 As a group, discuss the criteria that they could use to select a CAPE project to address their environmental issue. Try to come up with three to five criteria. Below is a list of suggested criteria that could help your group think about the advantages and disadvantages of different project ideas. Important points to consider when developing your group's project might include whether everyone can be engaged and the overall environmental impact of the project. You and your club members are encouraged to develop your own criteria based on your discussions, although too many

criteria can actually make the process more difficult. Don't worry about coming up with the perfect criteria and best project right now; your partners can help at the next meeting.

Suggested Criteria

- This project idea is interesting to everyone.
- This project will contribute to a more sustainable community.
- This proposed solution will not be controversial in this community.
- We have the time we need to complete the project
- We have, or can get, the resources we need to complete the project.

3 After discussing the suggested criteria and adding additional ideas, choose the three to five criteria that will be used on the **Criteria-Based Decision-Making Grid** and instruct youth to add these in the first column of the worksheet. Consider how each item will be scored. For example, the first item in the sample list would be 1 = interesting to everyone; 0.5 = interesting to half the group; 0 = interesting to very few.

4 Now you need projects to score! The group came up with several ideas at the end of Meeting 4 in activity 4.2. No doubt they have advanced some of these ideas and thought of new ones. Ask the group to generate a list of ideas that 1) target root causes of the concern and 2) involve asking a decision maker to make a change. (Remember: these aren't just

criteria, they are requirements!) Use the top row to list the projects the group is considering. If you have several great ideas, perhaps subgroups can each take a few to compare. Rate each project against each criterion with 0 for does not meet and 1 for meets completely. They can use partial points if a project "somewhat" meets the criteria. Total the scores at the bottom.

Note: This activity can be done individually on the worksheet (and score sheets can be averaged for the entire group) or done as a whole group through discussion.

5 Once everyone has voted and scores are tallied, look to see if one project is the clear winner, or if several score in the top tier. If one is on top, great! You are ready to move forward. If there are a few that are relatively close to the top, you may consider having a second round of voting with just those projects to decide on a winner, or you can comfortably proceed with several projects in contention. There are some suggestions below to guide your discussion. Ask your club:

- How was the group vote similar to what our community's citizens do when voting in elections? How was it different?

- What more would you like to learn about the high scoring project ideas? (You can use these suggestions to identify a guest speaker for your next meeting!)

AT THIS POINT, the group might have a project in mind! This is a good time to let them know what will come next as they continue this process. All good ideas need development. At your next meeting, please invite someone who can take the group's vision and goal and turn it into a project with steps and tasks. That could be an Extension agent, a decision maker, someone from a stakeholder organization, or an active member of the community. You might consider officially asking them to be your "partner" in this effort – someone who can help provide advice and guidance and that has commitment to this concern and to youth engagement. Remember to introduce Mission 5 and remind youth to complete Reflection 5.

5.2: Criteria-Based Decision-Making Grid Worksheet[15]

LIST THE CRITERIA you and the group think are important on the left side and identify the project ideas across the top. Then rate each project on each criterion on a scale with 0 being does not meet and 1 being meets very well. (Remember you can use partial points if the project "somewhat meets the criteria.") Tally the columns to see which project best meets these criteria. Is this the best project idea?

	PROJECT IDEAS				
	Project 1 _____	**Project 2** _____	**Project 3** _____	**Project 4** _____	**Project 5** _____
CRITERIA _____					
_____					
_____					
_____					
_____					
TOTAL					

[15] Adapted with permission from Earth Force, EarthForce.org.

Reflection 5

Name: _____

Which voting process did you prefer? Why did you prefer that voting process?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do you think it is important to include everyone's voice in decisions that affect the group? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mission 5: Get to Know a Community Partner

Your mission is to complete one of these tasks before Meeting 6. Please take notes here.

1 Attend a meeting that a potential partner organization is conducting and make observations here.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2 Look up the website of a potential community partner and find out what they have been doing.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3 Invite a member of the partner organization to visit your site with your group. Ask questions, make observations, and take notes here.

_____

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_____

Meeting 6

In Meeting 6, youth continue to discuss their project ideas as they work with a guest to refine the request and to identify which decision maker to approach. They also explore ways they can make their request more persuasive, such as collecting data or developing a demonstration area.

Preparation

1 Contact one of the stakeholder groups identified in Meeting 3 or someone you know from the community who works on these issues and ask them to attend this club meeting. Tell the guest what the club has done to date, the project idea(s) they are considering, and the policy the group would like to change. Ask the guest speaker to give the group feedback on their project idea and help them work toward a feasible policy request. Think about how this stakeholder or organization might be able to help your club with the project, and how the club might help with their activities.

2 Make copies of the **Task Planning Worksheet** and **Project Flow Chart** or ask youth to use their CAPE Project Book.

Materials

■ **Guest from your partner organization.**

■ **Slide shows for virtual meetings:**
▸ Activity 6.1: Focus on a Policy
▸ Activity 6.2: Make it Persuasive

■ **Worksheets:**
▸ Activity 6.2: CAPE Project Flow Chart
▸ Activity 6.3: Task Planning Worksheet
▸ Reflection 6

■ **Supplies:**
▸ large sticky-note pads or paper
▸ tape
▸ markers, pens/pencils,
▸ notecards, Decision Maker Descriptions (see Icebreaker 6)

🗨️ Icebreaker 6

Be Persuasive!

📋 **Description:** Youth create persuasive statements to get something they desire.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to identify an individual's perspective and match it with a request.

🕐 **Time:** 20 minutes.

✏️ **Materials:** Enough Decision Maker Descriptions for each triad in your club; notecards.

Use this icebreaker to help the club members think about how to appeal to someone's interests and persuade them to agree. This will be important as they think about their project in Activities 6.2 and 7.1.

1 Divide your club into groups of three and give each group a scenario. Each scenario includes a decision maker with their interest or motive and a request that is being made by someone. Ask each group to first think if there are other motives that would compel this decision maker to approve the request. Second, ask each group to come up with at least two reasons why the decision maker should support the request that

resonates with their motivations. For example, a city commissioner would be interested in supporting something that their voters want, because this will help them win reelection. A babysitter might want parents to believe that their children had a fun and safe evening, so they might be hired again.

Sample Scenarios:

- A classroom teacher wants parents to believe the students will succeed.
  REQUEST: Students are asking for less homework.
- A park manager wants visitors to come to the park and be safe.
  REQUEST: Visitors are asking for a better map.
- A city commissioner wants to reduce taxes.
  REQUEST: Voters are concerned about crime.

2 Give the groups five minutes to work together and ask them to prepare a skit. One person will be the narrator who will set the stage and introduce the decision maker. The third person is making the request.

3 When each group has presented, ask the club to explain how the requests link to the motives in each case.

💡 **INSPIRATION STATION**[16]

Twenty-three third graders in Pleasant Valley, NY, learned about the negative environmental impacts caused by polystyrene foam that is used to make a common type of cup used by restaurants across the country. The students conducted research on the environmental impacts caused by the foam cups and discovered that the material has poor biodegradability as well as carcinogenic properties and toxicity when burned. The students wrote letters to government leaders and addressed the Dutchess County Legislature. The result of the youth-driven project was the approval of a resolution prohibiting the use of polystyrene foam cups and food containers in chain restaurants within the county and in county facilities such as the local fair. The county executive signed the law into effect surrounded by the students who led the initiative at the local elementary school.

[16]https://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/story/news/local/2017/11/03/third-grade-class-project-leads-polystyrene-foam-ban-dutchess/828572001/

⚙️ Activity 6.1

Focus on a Policy

Description: A member of a local community group, agency, or expert involved in the issue is invited to your club meeting to offer ideas about what others are currently doing on this issue, to help your club think about ways they could assist with existing efforts, and to help your club develop policy requests and strategy ideas related to the issue.

Objectives: Youth will be able to explain how their request addresses a root cause of the concern. Youth will build a relationship with an organization that is working on this issue in their community.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Notepad and pens or pencils.

1. The club has a vision of what they want to see in their community, and they have identified an environmental concern that is a barrier to achieving that vision. They know about the stakeholders and decision maker that could help create the change they want to see. Remember that the goal of a CAPE project is to ask someone to change a policy so that there is a long-term improvement in the environment. This activity will help youth think about how they could shape their project idea into a policy request that could result in a sustainable change.

   Welcome your guest speaker and ask the youth or youth leaders to give the speaker a short presentation on the criteria-based decision-making grid you created in Meeting 5. Explain that this is how the group scored these project ideas that could help achieve their vision for change in the community. Ask the speaker to comment on your selection and to identify additional criteria that may help the group select the decision maker and request.

2. Encourage youth to ask questions to find out what is being done, who is doing it, what is not happening, and what is needed. Help youth explore ways they could assist an existing effort, or ways the club could support the work of an existing organization.

3. If, after your discussion with the speaker, youth are still excited about the project idea, start listing and brainstorming the types of changes that a decision maker (or decision making group) could support to help address the root cause of this problem. If you need to select among several good ideas, ask your partner to help develop criteria and rank the options. You want to choose a request that the community will agree is a good idea, that seems feasible, and that builds on work that has been done.

4. With your guest, ask the group to complete the following sentences (feel free to adjust the sentences to fit your situation). This may take some discussion and exploration of several potential policy requests:

In our community, _____is an important environmental concern that is creating several problems, such as _____. The community leader or organization that can address this concern is _____. We would like to ask _____to develop or change a policy so that _____.

THIS IS THE FIRST PORTION of your CAPE project! The group has identified a policy change that could help address the root cause of their concern. Now ask your partner to help you brainstorm how to make this request persuasive by collecting information, creating a demonstration, or making a compelling case.

⚙️ Activity 6.2

Make it Persuasive

📋 **Description:** Youth will imagine what will persuade the decision maker to approve their request.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to describe why a decision maker should be persuaded to act.

🕐 **Time:** 30 minutes.

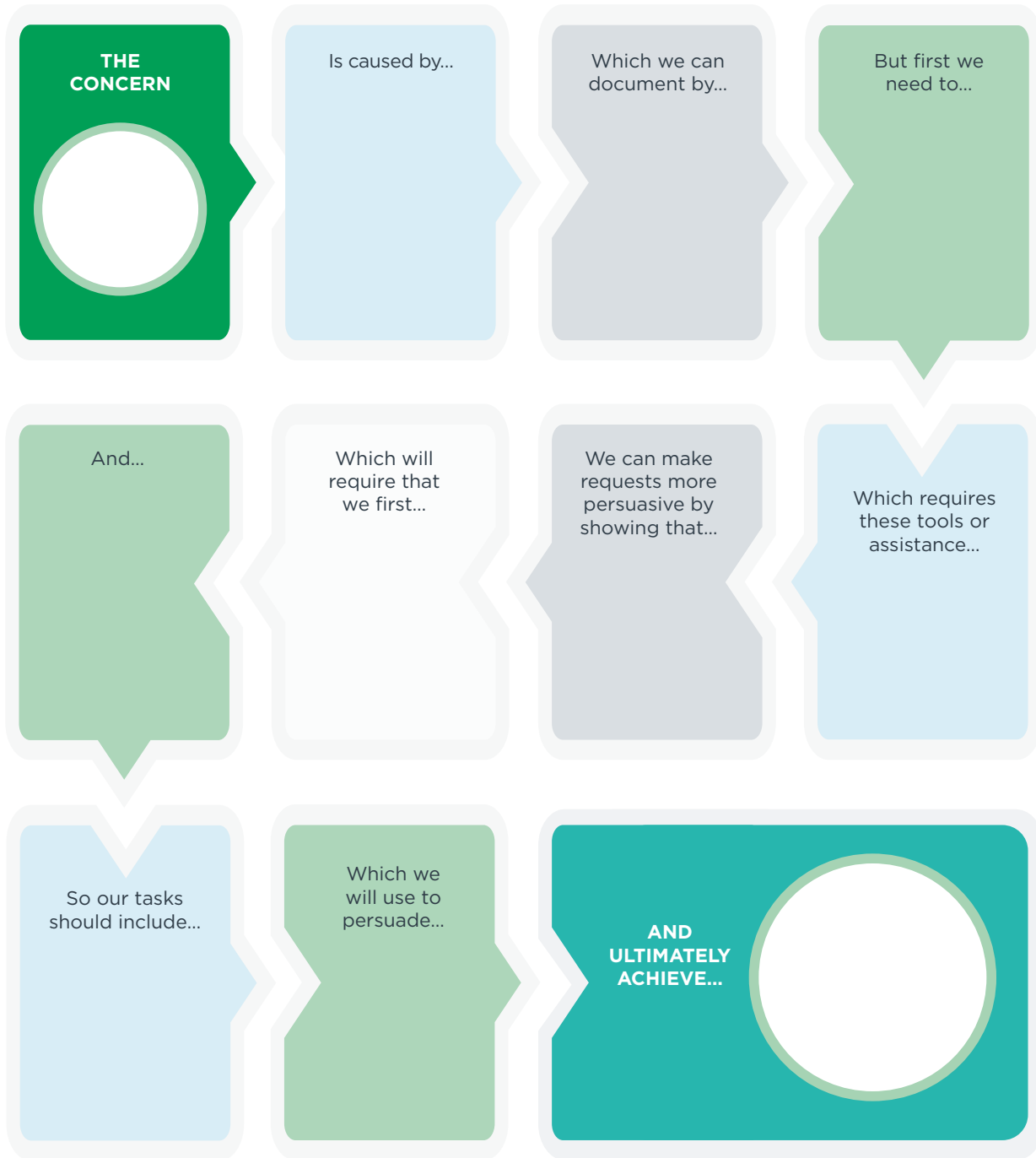✏️ **Materials:** Copies of the **Project Flow Chart** or CAPE Project Book.

---

1 In the previous activity, the club identified the request they will make to a decision maker and began to address the root causes of their concern. There is a lot they already know about this issue as a result of their deliberations. Introduce the **chart** (see next page) and ask youth to complete the boxes at either end and as many of the circles in between as they can. The rest of this activity should help them complete the empty circles.

2 Explain that there are likely MANY strategies that can help persuade a decision maker to adopt a new policy. Ask your partner to explain the types of information that this decision maker is likely to find compelling and persuasive. It may help to consider the interests that this decision maker is likely to have. What do they care about? How can this policy help advance their concerns? Also ask if there any existing regulations or other policies related to your request that should be noted. Then ask the group if that gives them any ideas of what they might do as part of their CAPE project to make their case. For example, to convince some city administrators to encourage compliance with existing tree mitigation regulations, one club

took photographs of new development that they thought failed to meet the established criteria. If your concern is about local pollinators, you may want to ask the county to stop mowing roadsides when flowers bloom; the club could also make a map of roads that have wildflowers or provide examples of other states and counties that have similar regulations and design a "No Mow" sign.

3 Ask the group to brainstorm what information the decision maker might need to approve the club's request. Then ask how the club could obtain that information. Some information might be too difficult to obtain or take too long. What is reasonable and possible? When you land on a good idea for this portion of the CAPE project, use the prompts in the Project Flow Chart to chart your path to your vision!

6.2: CAPE Project Flow Chart Worksheet

THE CONCERN

Is caused by...

Which we can document by...

But first we need to...

And...

Which will require that we first...

We can make requests more persuasive by showing that...

Which requires these tools or assistance...

So our tasks should include...

Which we will use to persuade...

AND ULTIMATELY ACHIEVE...

⚙ Activity 6.3

Make a Plan

Description: Youth assemble the information they have collected and created to date and formulate a plan for their project. Depending on the project, the partners, and their knowledge of the issue, this could be very specific and detailed.
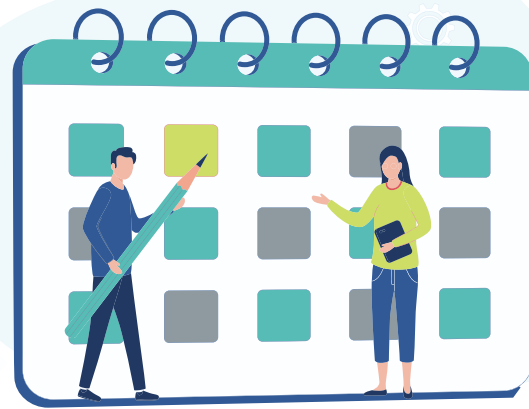
Objectives: Youth will be able to describe and justify the steps and tasks their project will entail.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Copies of the **Task Planning Worksheet** or CAPE Project Book.

With the vision, the policy request, and the activity to generate the persuasive information, the club has everything they need to map out their CAPE project tasks. Work with your leadership team and partner to decide how to organize this activity. You could assign a youth leader to be the master notetaker for the group, completing the worksheets on a computer and projecting their work to the group (which could also be done virtually), for example.

1. Cluster the steps in those boxes on the **Project Flow Chart** into tasks. Then assign each task to a subgroup of youth and ask them to use the **Task Planning Worksheet**[17] to identify who will do what by when.

2. When subgroups have completed their worksheets, ask them to report to the group and discuss how each group will get information they need in the time you have. Will the group be able to get everything done?

3. As each group gives their report, everyone can provide additional ideas and clarifications, noting the overlap between tasks, and checking that the end date of one task enables future tasks to use that information effectively. Will everything be accomplished in the right order? How are the partners involved? What else is needed to complete the project?

4. Make sure revisions and suggestions are noted on the **Task Planning Worksheets** and get ready to assemble everything into a plan.

NOW YOUR GROUP IS READY to work on its CAPE project! Make sure everyone has a role and, if there are extra tasks, ask for volunteers to complete them. Help the group stay focused on what needs to happen and identify the dates by which the task groups will report to the rest of the club. This may be a series of virtual meetings. Mission 6 is implementing your project. Take whatever time the club needs. When you are ready to summarize the accomplishments and work on the request to the decision maker, move to Meeting 7.

If you need resources to conduct your project, the group now has enough information to write a proposal to a potential funder. The format for a proposal is in Appendix 4.

[17] Adapted with permission from Earth Force, EarthForce.org.

6.3: Task Planning Worksheet

Task Name	Group Members:
Goal:	People in the community we are working with:

STEPS IN THIS TASK:	RESOURCES NEEDED:	DATE THIS WILL BE DONE:	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Possible obstacles:

What does success look like?

[18]Adapted from Earth Force, EarthForce.org. Committee Task Sheet

Reflection 6

Name: _____

Now that you have decided on a project, how do you feel about your group's ability to make a difference in your community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What challenges might you encounter when carrying out your project and how will you overcome them?

_____

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_____

_____

_____

_____

Mission 6: Project Launch

Use the task list worksheet you filled out in Activity 6.3 to launch your project. Check in with other subgroups to make sure they are working and can complete their tasks by the appointed date.

Meeting 7

In Meeting 7, youth put themselves in the shoes of the decision maker they are asking to create or change a policy. As they think about that role, youth develop a persuasive pitch that they can use. Practice makes perfect!

Preparation

Materials

1 Review the meeting materials.

2 **Activity 7.1: Write the Pitch** includes tips from online resources. It may be helpful for youth to access these online resources or have printed copies to review while writing the pitch.

■ **Slide shows for virtual meetings:**
▶ Icebreaker 7: Project Check In
▶ Activity 7.1: Write the Pitch

■ **Worksheets**
▶ Reflection 7
▶ Mission 7

■ **Supplies:**
▶ paper, pens/pencils
▶ a way to access online resources

💬 Icebreaker 7

Project Check In

📋 **Description:** Youth share at least one thing they've done for their project and one thing they need to do after the meeting.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will identify next steps they need to take to complete their project.

🕐 **Time:** 10 minutes.

🖊️ **Materials:** None.

Use this icebreaker for any meeting you have during the project implementation phase to help the group move forward.

1 Stand in a circle and ask each youth to provide a brief update on their progress. If youth have been working in small groups, a representative from each group can give the update. One member of the group can serve as a scribe, noting the progress that has occurred and writing a list of actions that need to take place after this meeting.

Ask youth to respond to the following questions:

- What has been accomplished since the last meeting?
- What is needed following this meeting to move the project forward?
- What do they need help with?

2 After all youth have presented, review the list of next steps. Ask each group if they have what they need to conduct their next step, or if they need something from another group, or partner. Write down the names of youth who will be responsible for carrying out each action. Make sure everyone knows what needs to be done after this meeting and that everyone has a role to play.

💡 **INSPIRATION STATION**

Heirs To Our Oceans[19] is an organization that empowers youth to teach other youth and adults about the human impacts on our oceans and waterways, the importance of allowing all voices to be heard in conservation, and how to support vulnerable communities. Youth of all backgrounds are encouraged to engage in water conservation and leadership training while cultivating the skills needed to make real-world changes. Members meet with lawmakers of their respective countries, with state representatives, and with local governments to ask them to support bills and ordinances that protect oceans and waterways. They also organize beach sweeps and systematically identify which brands are represented in the plastic debris they find. They then upload this information to a large public database as part of an effort to hold corporations accountable for their plastic waste.

[19]Learn more at https://h2oo.org

⚙️ Activity 7.1

Write the Pitch

📋 **Description:** Youth think about the motivations that drive their decision maker (the individual or group they will ask to change or develop a policy) and create a persuasive statement to support their request.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to create a persuasive pitch.

🕐 **Time:** 45 minutes.

✏️ **Materials:** Access to online resources, pens/pencils, paper.

1 An essential part of the CAPE process is working to improve an issue by asking someone to develop or change a policy. To persuade people in power to make the change, youth will need to "pitch" their idea in a way that appeals to a decision maker. They have considered what they need to demonstrate that their idea is viable and relevant (Activity 6.2) and conducted a project to find supporting information. To prepare an effective pitch, they should first remember what the decision maker cares about and/or what might motivate them to agree. If the group is not sure, the first step is to research the goals and interests of the decision maker they plan to approach. It may be helpful for youth to refer to work completed in Activity 3.1: Who is Involved? The following questions may help guide youth, which may have been discussed in Activity 6.2.

Ask the youth:
- What are the goals of the decision maker?
- What are the interests of their stakeholders?
- How does your request relate to these goals and interests?
- What are the drawbacks of your request (e.g., cost, time, etc.)?

- What are the benefits of the decision maker implementing your request? (Think about current community goals, perhaps around equity and access.)

2 Ask youth to share how they believe the project addresses the decision maker's interests. What else have they learned during the process that might help frame the request? Lead a discussion about the information that is most important. What should they include in their request? It may be helpful to write the responses on a board or compile them into one document.

3 Now that youth have gathered the relevant information, they can write a persuasive pitch. Begin by discussing the parts of a persuasive pitch and some tips you might share with the youth.

1. Start with what you want the decision maker to do: what is the issue and the request you are making? Briefly describe your project and what you have done.
2. Then explain why this is important and why they should act: explain how the request relates to their interests/ goals and their stakeholders' interests. Remind them of what is important.
3. Provide details about the benefits of making the change: tell them what will happen if they implement the change.
4. Consider how to frame the request: ask youth to think about how they react when someone tells them what to do. What makes it easier to say "yes"?

PITCH WRITING TIPS

- It is important to be upfront about the associated costs of making the change. If you aren't sure, at least provide some estimates from similar projects or ideas suggested by your partners and the experts you consulted.

- Decision makers are busy people. Be sure to keep your pitch concise to ensure the decision maker has time to read it.

- Consider the current issues with which the community is wrestling. Can your group's request be tied to, and help mitigate, another problem? Some issues that people are interested in addressing are affordable access to housing, education, health care; climate change adaptations, or economic development.

- When you can, it is helpful to use graphics and visuals to make your point.

- Keep the pitch short and to the point. Ideally it would be less than half a page.

- Try to gently suggest this is a good idea that they want to support. Ideally, relate it to something they have said or approved so the new request may be a logical extension of a previous policy or one in process.

Have youth pair up to write a draft request.

4. Ask youth to share their requests with the group. From here, you can have the youth vote on which is their favorite based on criteria or goals. They may want to combine ideas from several good pitches and craft a new one.

5. If you have time, continue to edit, revise, practice, and finalize the pitch. You might need to use a virtual meeting to complete the work. Then ask your partner organization for feedback on the pitch before delivering it to your chosen decision maker.

These are helpful resources to help write persuasive requests:

- https://mitcommlab.mit.edu/be/commkit/policy-elevator-pitch/
- https://ssir.org/articles/entry/eight_tips_for_communicating_ideas_to_busy_policymakers
- https://www.ablebits.com/office-addins-blog/2014/04/04/request-letters-format-samples/

Example Hypothetical Pitch

Hi, our names are Sandy and Kaylin. We are from the Sunshine County 4-H club and are conducting a project as part of the Community Action Projects for the Environment (CAPE) Program. We would like to talk with you about the decline in pollinators in our community. Over the last year, we've been conducting research about this issue, and we've learned that some butterfly populations have declined by 80%! The main problem seems to be habitat loss. We are concerned about this issue because pollinators help farmers produce food and flowers are pretty. We think that other people in Sunshine County are concerned about this issue as well because butterfly plants are very popular in the garden shops. After looking at how other communities are addressing this issue, we think that one potential solution could be using county roadsides as butterfly habitat. That would mean planting flowers and not mowing them until after they have set seeds. We are hoping that you might be willing to ask the county roads department to convert 20 miles of county roadsides to butterfly habitat every year to help address this issue.

Reflection 7

Name: _____

THINK BACK to the gallery of Environmental Citizens your club has produced and write a few sentences in response to each of the following questions.

Think about the decision-making process in your community. What opportunities do people have to become environmental citizens?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Think back to when you first started this CAPE program. What has your group learned from the process? What are you happy about?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Mission 7: Practice, Tweak, and Make the Pitch

Name: _____

ASK A SUBGROUP TO MEET before the scheduled presentation to practice and revise their pitch until everyone is happy with it, then work together to consider how to deliver it. Your club's request can be a letter or a presentation (in-person or virtual) to your decision maker. Help them think about how they can make the pitch most effective. A telephone request, for example, is ephemeral. An email is not very formal. A letter to the editor might get attention. You want to aim for the decision maker to listen and to be open to possibilities. Don't forget to take photos, or even a video of the Big Event!

NOTES:

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Meeting 8

In Meeting 8, youth will work as a group to reflect on the CAPE process, create a press release and presentation to share the project with their community, and celebrate their CAPE project success.

Preparation

1 Gather worksheets, photographs, products, and reflection summaries from past meetings to have reference points for building the project story.

2 Collect and bring awards, ribbons, or certificate-making materials to the meeting.

3 Prepare and bring some snacks for the celebration!

Materials

■ **Post self-assessment survey**

■ **Slide shows for virtual meetings:**
▶ Icebreaker 8: Create Secret Awards
▶ Activity 8.1: Write a Press Release

■ **Worksheets**
▶ 8.1: Your Press Release
▶ 8.2: Prepare a Presentation

■ **Supplies:**
▶ photos
▶ certificates or ribbons
▶ pens
▶ paper
▶ tape
▶ scissors
▶ food for a party!

💬 Icebreaker 8

Create Secret Awards

📋 **Description:** Youth reflect on the CAPE process and create secret awards for other youth in the club to honor their contributions.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to state how different members contributed to the CAPE project.

🕐 **Time:** 10 minutes.

🖊 **Materials:** Notepaper.

Congratulations! You've completed the CAPE process. You all deserve to take the time to celebrate! Even if the larger goal has not yet been attained, it is important to create a sense of closure to the project. As a leader, it may also be important to recast the goal so that your youth feel a sense of accomplishment. We recommend throwing a little party with food and drinks at your meeting. To commemorate the process in a creative way, ask the group to create an awards ceremony. After all, everyone likes to get a pat on the back, especially if it is personalized and unique. But first the youth have to create the awards!

1 Start by asking the group to reflect on the CAPE process and remember all they have done. Assign each youth to suggest an award for at least two other club members - how did each contribute? Perhaps one youth was always encouraging other members, so that person might receive "The Best Cheerleader Award." Another youth might have done a great job gathering funds for your project; their award might be "The Best at Collecting Donations" award. Ask youth to do this in secret so the awards are a surprise.

2 While the group is working on the next activity (Activity 8.1), ask your youth leaders to help you select the best or most unique award for each youth and make a certificate or "ribbon" with the award title for each member. They might have to come up with additional awards to guarantee one for every club member.

⚙️ Activity 8.1

Write a Press Release

📋 **Description:** Youth reflect on the CAPE process and write a press release about their project.

🎯 **Objectives:** Youth will be able to write an effective press release and find media outlets that might be interested in their project.

⏱ **Time:** 30 minutes.

✏️ **Materials:** Project documents, photos from CAPE project, **Your Press Release Worksheet**

Now that the group has completed your project, it's time to share the story. During this meeting, your group will work together to develop a press release about your project to share with media outlets (e.g., newspapers, local television) in your community. As they work through this activity, it may be helpful to retrieve past meeting reflection summaries to remember all the steps your group completed to create and implement your CAPE project. To save time, we recommend assigning half of the youth to this task and half to Activity 8.2: Preparing a Presentation. The results can be shared after the two groups have had time to work on their assignments and create a draft press release and presentation.

A press release is one way to share your success with the community. Press releases can be used to create awareness of the project for local media, who may contact you for more information. Write the release so that it reads like a news story. Focus on the important work of the club, its members, and the partners and experts who participated. Remember also to mention the decision maker and the stakeholders as appropriate.

1. First brainstorm with the group a focus for the press release. What is newsworthy? What should the community know about your project? You have several elements that make your story interesting—youth taking action, an important environmental

issue, and a local and current topic— these are elements of a good news story! Consider how the first sentence might grab people's attention. Use the tips and the template below to write a press release. Make sure the final version follows the same format as the template.

PRESS RELEASE WRITING TIPS

- The first sentence is called **the lead** and should describe something important and local that just happened or will happen soon. For example, "County Commissioners heard from local youth about ways to protect the environment at last night's commission meeting."

- Make sure to answer the **5 Ws and H** in the first paragraph: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

- Include **one or two quotes,** which are the exact words from someone involved in the project. The first quote might be from someone in a position of leadership, such as your partner organization, a community leader, or your 4-H agent. The quote can point to the importance of the project. Your second quote might be from a group member who explains the experience and what they learned. If the club has completed their request of the decision maker, quotes from them would be valuable to include.

- Press releases are typically **three to four short paragraphs.** Ask an older youth to edit and revise the press release to make sure only the most important information is included. Consider the following guidelines for creating the press release: make the first paragraph about the accomplishment, the second about the background and importance of the project, the third about the youth and what they did to prepare for this action, and finally something about what they learned and what the group hopes going forward.

- **Proofread** the press release before it goes to the 4-H Extension agent in your county. Press releases should be free of grammar and spelling errors.

Activity 8.1: **Write a Press Release** continued …

2 Your County Extension or State Extension Service will be interested in checking and formatting the club's press release before it is released. Contact the appropriate media coordinator and ask for their assistance in finalizing and distributing the release. They will be able to use AP guidelines and help you embargo the release if appropriate.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DECEMBER 1, 2022

Ten New Bike Racks in City Thanks to Local Youth

LEMON, FL—The first of ten new bike racks was installed today near the corner of NW 43rd Street and 53rd Avenue with a small ceremony marking the successful partnership between the Sunshine 4-H club and the city parks and recreation department. The County 4-H Agent, Cherry Smith, announced that the entire process was led by youth who are dedicated to improving their community and the environment.

After becoming concerned about the lack of sustainable transportation options in the city, the 4-H group convinced city officials to install bike racks in 10 new locations throughout the city. The entire process took over 11 months.

In January, the 15 members of the Sunshine 4-H Club conducted a survey of bicycle racks in the city and identified 10 areas where there were no racks within a 0.5-mile radius. In May, they presented their findings to city officials and asked them to install bike racks in these areas to encourage more residents to use bicycles. The city agreed and they have worked closely with the youth to design new bicycle racks and to raise funds for their installation.

Both residents and city officials are excited about the project. One resident who works near one of the proposed sites said, "I've always wanted to bike to work, but have never had a place to lock up my bike. Now, I can get in better shape while going to work." Edward Apple, a member of the Parks and Recreation Department said, "Our department has talked about installing more bike racks for years, but we never got around to it. The initiative that these youth took helped kickstart a project that is really important for our city!"

Over the last year, the 4-H group has been participating in the Community Action Projects for the Environment (CAPE) program, a new 4-H program that engages youth in a project that addresses an environmental issue affecting their community by asking someone to make a change that benefits everyone. They chose to focus on sustainable transportation and these bike racks are the result of their year-long effort.

For more information about CAPE Projects or other 4-H programs, contact Mary Berry, 352-222-2222, maryberry@cape.org.

8.1: Your Press Release Worksheet

COMPLETE this template to assist in the creation of a good press release.

Your lead sentence answers the who/what/where/when of your newsworthy event.

_____

_____

_____

The rest of the first paragraph explains why this project was developed.

_____

_____

_____

The second paragraph includes more detail about the project, the problem you are solving, and your project partner. Try inserting a quote here to bring the story to life.

_____

_____

_____

The third paragraph can include more detail about your project and future goals, as well as details about your 4-H club. Inserting another quote might help you tell the story.

_____

_____

_____

Finally, add a short paragraph about 4-H to make sure that the press agency knows what 4-H is all about! (Check out www.4-H.org and your county Extension office for ideas for wording.)

_____

_____

_____

⚙️ Activity 8.2

Prepare a Presentation

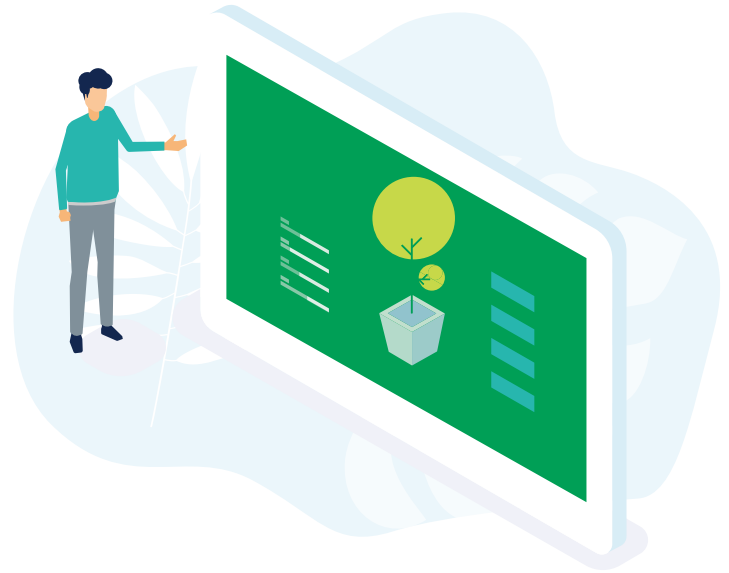**Description:** Youth create a presentation about their project to share with family, friends, and community leaders.

Objectives: Youth will be able to prepare and give an effective presentation.

Time: 45 minutes.

Materials: Project documents, photos from CAPE project, **Prepare a Presentation Worksheet**

Public presentations are a great way to share the story of your CAPE project with family members, friends, and the broader community. They also help youth gain communication skills. This activity will help you plan for, prepare, and give a presentation about your CAPE project. To save time, we recommend assigning half of the youth to work on the presentation while the other half is working on the press release. The results can be shared and critiqued after the two groups have had time to deliberate and create drafts respectively for the press release and presentation.

1 Help the club decide on the story they want to tell and create an outline. An effective presentation will have three parts—an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Within each section, try to use action verbs and imagery to make the story come alive.

■ **Introduction:** The introduction should hook people and introduce the issue that the CAPE project addresses. After introducing the members of the group, start with a story about the issue and talk about why your group thought it was an important issue to address in your community. You might even start with a question to keep the audience engaged and guessing.

■ **Body:** The body of the presentation can include details on who, what, where, when, why, and how. What did you do? Where did you do it? When did you do it? And, most importantly, why did you do it? Guide the audience through the CAPE process in a fun and engaging way.

■ **Conclusion**: In the conclusion, summarize the first two parts of the presentation in a few sentences. Think about what you want the audience to remember about the presentation and about your project. Consider emphasizing the impact you made at the community level to create a sustainable solution.

2 Remember that a picture is worth a thousand words! Pictures, videos, and examples of the activities help demonstrates your project process. Such visuals help you explain and share the club's experience with others. Help the club put together a visual presentation using images or a presentation software. Each slide or photo should have a point and should help move the story along. Avoid putting too many words on slides because they can distract the audience from listening to what you are saying. The following questions might help the group decide what to include:

- What issue did you choose to work on as a group?
- How did you work as a group to decide on this issue?
- What was the policy you decided to change for your issue?
- To whom was the policy change request directed (individual or organization)?
- Was the policy change enacted? Do they plan to? What are the effects of this change in terms of your issue? How will it affect the community?
- How did your project go? How would you describe your feelings about the project? What skills did you gain?

3 Encourage youth to practice their presentation in front of others. Ask for constructive feedback. Is there anything that could be improved? Are they missing any important details? If there are enough members of your club, youth might split up the presentation so that everyone has a chance to present. And if there are too many members, they might present in pairs.

4 Schedule a time for the presentation and invite family, friends, and community members to attend. Remember to invite your partner organization and anyone who helped you with the project. Decision makers and members of the press may also want to attend. Make sure everyone's contribution is noted!

PRESENTATION TIPS

- Remember to speak slowly and clearly.
- Be enthusiastic—the audience will be more excited if you are excited!
- Dress up so that you feel and look professional.
- Think about the audience when deciding what to include or exclude—what do they need to know to understand your project?
- Practice, practice, practice! Good presenters often rehearse many times before getting up on stage.

8.2: Prepare a Presentation Worksheet

COMPLETE this template to develop the content of the presentation. Once finished, use the answers to develop the presentation with visuals such as pictures and videos and graphics from your project!

Introduction: Start by introducing the members of your group.

_____

_____

Tell a story about how you chose your issue and why your group thought the issue was important. You might include a question to get the audience thinking about your issue.

_____

_____

_____

Body: What did your group do to address the issue? What was the policy your group decided to change and who did you ask?

_____

_____

_____

When did you do it? Where did you do it?

_____

_____

Why did you do it?

_____

_____

How did your project go? How would you describe your feelings about the project? What skills did you gain from completing your project?

_____

_____

_____

Conclusion: Write a few sentences to summarize the introduction and body of your presentation. What do you want the audience to remember about the presentation and about your project? Consider emphasizing the impact you made at the community level to create a sustainable solution.

_____

_____

_____

Activity 8.3

Awards Ceremony and Celebration!

Description: Create a meaningful event to enable the group to reflect on their CAPE project, feel good about their success, and bask in the limelight.

Objectives: Youth will be able to state how they changed as a result of CAPE.

Time: 20 minutes.

Materials: Certificates or ribbons, food.

The group has done a lot of hard work to get to this moment and everyone should feel good about all they've accomplished. Consider asking them to stand in a circle and ask each youth to mention one favorite memory of their experience.

Hand out the personalized awards that they have created for each other and enjoy some snacks together.

Don't forget to ask everyone to complete the post-assessment survey (find it in the CAPE Google Drive at https://bit.ly/CAPEPilot) and collect the club members' reflections for the CAPE Evaluation.

The Last Wrap Up

AS YOU CONCLUDE your CAPE project, remind youth of how far they've come, what they've learned, and what they've accomplished. Don't forget to use the CAPE experience to apply for an award or to nominate the club for recognition. Send your press release to the state 4-H office for publicity! Congratulate your partner and your leadership team! Well done!

Reflection 8

CONGRATULATIONS on finishing your CAPE Project! Please go to your Project Book to write one final reflection. Think about what you've done and learned along the way and answer these two questions:

First, describe two skills you have improved that will make you a better Environmental Citizen. Second, if you could make a wish for your community that would make it more sustainable, what would you wish for?

Appendices

Appendix 1:
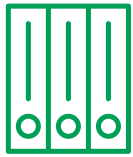
Project Learning Tree, Project WET, and Project WILD

A VARIETY OF HIGH-QUALITY instructional resources are available to help youth learn more about the environment. The three programs listed below are available throughout the nation and provide interesting, engaging activities for youth to explore various aspects of the environment. They make learning fun and build important skills to help youth think critically and solve problems. Furthermore, they are each designed to encourage learners to take responsible actions that help sustain and conserve natural resources. Each program has a state coordinator or partner who can help you find training programs as well as local resources to assist your CAPE experience. Although these activities were initially developed for classroom teachers, they are easy to adapt for youth clubs. You have access to one activity from each program through the links in the CAPE Google Drive (https://bit.ly/CAPEPilot), but you may wish to attend a local professional development workshop and get your own activity book!

Project Learning Tree (PLT) uses trees and forests as windows on the world to increase students' understanding of the environment and the actions they can take to conserve it. The materials help students develop awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of the environment; build their skills and ability to make informed decisions; and encourage them to take personal responsibility for sustaining the environment and our quality of life. You can learn more about PLT here: www.plt.org/about-us and find your state coordinator here: Find Project Learning Tree in Your State - Project Learning Tree (plt.org) [www.plt.org/your-state-project-learning-tree-program]. The Pre-K-8 guide, Exploring Your Environment, includes 50 activities for leaders that use field investigations, poetry, games, and group discussions to understand forest ecosystems and forest management. Other PLT resources include nature activities for families Activities for Families - Project Learning Tree (plt.org), a module on climate change (Southeastern Forests and Climate Change) for middle school and high school ages, and a guide to calculating the dollar value of the benefits provided by trees, Teaching with i-Tree - Project Learning Tree (plt.org). The activity, Environmental Justice for All, could be useful in Meeting 3 or 4 to help youth consider the variety of stakeholders that might be impacted by your environmental issue. PLT is a program of the Sustainable Forestry Initiative®.
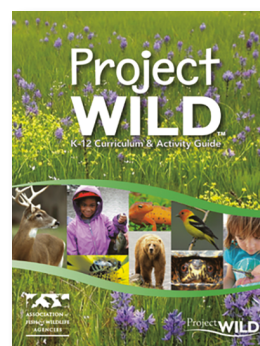
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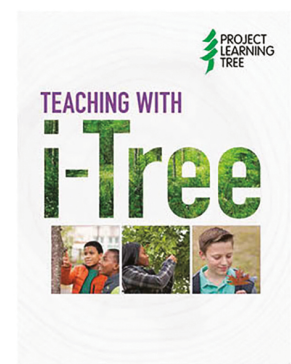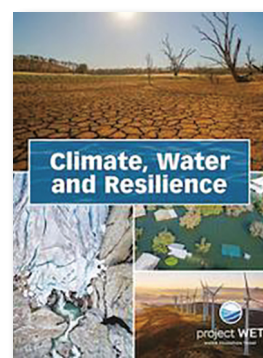
Project WILD is an interdisciplinary conservation and environmental education program that focuses on wildlife and habitat. The goal of the program is to develop awareness, knowledge, skills, and commitment that help youth make informed decisions and take constructive actions concerning wildlife and the environment. The K-12 curriculum and Activity Guide includes 81 activities in over 600 pages of educational ideas and resources. More information is here: https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild/project-wild. You can find your state coordinator here: https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild/project-wild/project-wild-coordinator-contact. Activities use running games to teach youth about habitat needs and competition, moral dilemmas to practice considering the ethical consequences of actions, and field investigations to explore wildlife habitat. The activity, Wildlife and the Environment: Community Survey, could be useful in Meeting 4 if club members wish to collect data from community residents about the environmental issue. Project WILD is a program of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies.
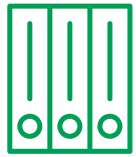
Project WET (Water Education Today) advances water education to promote the understanding of global challenges and inspire local solutions. A variety of publications and training workshops are available to help educators make water science and water issues more understandable and accessible to learners. The 600-page curriculum and activity guide (2.0) has 65 activities that engage youth in a variety of lessons such as solving the mysterious deaths from a London water pump in 1854, identifying insects and other organisms that live in freshwater creeks and ponds, and designing a sewage plant to accommodate the Super Bowl halftime surge. You can learn more about Project WET here: https://www.projectwet.org/about-us and find a training near you, offered by one of their many partners at https://www.projectwet.org/find-training. One activity, Sum of the Parts, could be useful in Meeting 3 as youth consider the perspectives of stakeholders who share a common resource but have different visions for its future. Project WET is program of the Project WET Foundation.
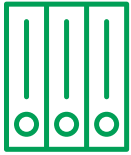
Appendix 2:

List of Potential Community Partners and Guest Speakers

A COMMUNITY PARTNER is an important component of a CAPE project. These partners can be individuals or groups. They can help your group understand the issue, connect with other individuals or groups, and come up with project ideas. They also can help you navigate the decision-making process, select a decision maker to receive a request, and identify potential interests that could be used to make the pitch persuasive. A good community partner might also suggest guest speakers, provide feedback on your project, and help your group find other resources. The following is a list of potential partners that you could contact in your area. Keep in mind that each county or region is also likely to have unique community organizations and groups who might be able to help you.

- County Extension agents
- State, county, or city park staff
- City or county staff or committee members
- County or state agency for environmental protection
- Count or state agency for natural resources
- Water Management District Office
- Environmental organizations, such as local chapters of the Audubon Society, Nature Conservancy, Native Plants Society, Sierra Club, etc.
- Garden club
- Local zoo
- Local land trust
- Community organizations such as League of Women Voters, United Way, Kiwanis Club, Junior Welfare League, etc.
- League of Conservation Voters
- Friends of parks, forests, or refuge groups

You can also scan local media including newspapers and websites for letters to the editor and articles about the issue to identify organizations and people who have been interviewed and who care about the topic. A call to a local journalist might reveal additional contacts that might be helpful, and alert the journalist to your group's project, which they might want to cover in the future.

> **A community partner can help your group understand the issue, connect with other individuals or groups, and come up with project ideas.**

Appendix 3:

Rats and Raptors Article (short version)

PAUL RANDALL and his eight-year-old son Gabe were walking their dog when they discovered the corpse of a Cooper's Hawk, which had hatched just two months earlier. The Randalls flagged down their neighbor, Lisa Owens Viani, a volunteer with the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory who keeps tabs on nesting Cooper's Hawks in the East Bay. Owens Viani and the Randall family had expected to see the young Cooper's Hawks fledge and go on their way. They hadn't expected to find one of the juveniles sprawled dead on the concrete, the victim of a massive hemorrhage.

The culprit behind the gruesome death was a rat poison called brodifacoum. One of a group of killing agents known as second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides, brodifacoum is one of the most widely used rat poisons in America.

Poison baits containing second-generation anticoagulants sound like the perfect solution to those hair-raising scratching noises in the walls at night. "You have a rat problem. You want to kill the rat, but you don't want it to die in your house. So it was brilliant logic for these companies to develop a poison that causes the rats to get really thirsty and follow their instinct to go outside to get water," says Allen Fish, director of the Golden Gate Raptor Observatory in California. "The problem is, there's an owl out there. It's hungry. It's looking around, scanning for prey, and it sees this rat staggering around. Of course it's going to eat it."

The Environmental Protection Agency first moved to limit the use of 10 rodenticide ingredients—including brodifacoum— in 2008, but the regulatory process has crept along slowly due to resistance and litigation from manufacturers. The EPA finally reached an agreement that cut off delivery of products with the regulated rodenticide ingredients to retail outlets as of March 31, 2015. But as part of the legal settlement, stores were allowed to sell out their existing stock. As of May 2015, brightly colored boxes containing these poisons remained on the shelves of many grocery stores, hardware stores, and variety stores.

In 2007, the EPA proposed restricting the agricultural use of second-generation anticoagulants. But the agency's 2008 Risk Mitigation Decision states that their proposal was met by an outcry from "poultry and livestock producer groups indicating that the proposed requirement would [constitute] a significant burden." Based on those comments, the EPA concluded that "the benefits of the use of second-generation anticoagulants by poultry and livestock producers outweigh the risks."

Continued...

Raptors and Rat Poison, adapted from an article by the same name by Cathy Bell and published in The Living Bird, Summer 2015. www.allaboutbirds. org/news/raptors-and-rat-poison/
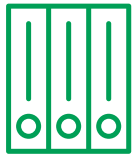
Appendix 3:
Raptors and Rat Poison Article (short version)

The second-generation anticoagulants can bioaccumulate in an ecosystem in various ways, according to Maureen Murray, clinical assistant professor of wildlife medicine at Tufts University's Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine. "There's a bait placed somewhere, and some invertebrates eat it. Then songbirds come along and eat the insects. Then a Cooper's Hawk comes along and eats the songbird. These are compounds that can move through different steps in the food chain."

But pinning down a rodenticide as the cause of death for hawks, eagles, falcons, and owls is challenging. "It's tough to say for sure [how many birds are affected]," said Fish. "Diagnosis is expensive, $100 to $200 per bird. A lot of wildlife rehabilitation organizations can't afford that kind of expense."

A knowledge gap, said Fish, is precisely the trouble. "There's no clear public record of where we're putting pesticides, who's using them, how much is being used. Until we demand that information, we're flying blind."

After finding several raptor carcasses in her Berkeley neighborhood, Lisa Owens Viani turned activist. In 2011 she co-founded a coalition called Raptors Are The Solution (RATS) that seeks to educate the public about the ecological dangers of rat poisons. The organization's message was that birds of prey are a fantastic, all-natural form of rodent control.

At about the same time, the city of San Francisco was working on the rodenticide issue in response to wildlife poisonings in Golden Gate Park. While waiting for the implementation of the EPA's 2008 ruling, the city sent out letters to businesses requesting that they stop selling second-generation anticoagulants. Although this was simply a voluntary measure, "they've had some really good compliance," said Owens Viani. In short order, "about thirty businesses...responded saying they've taken the stuff off their shelves."

Following San Francisco's lead, RATS soon succeeded in getting the city councils of nearby Berkeley, Albany, and Richmond to pass resolutions along the same lines. By spring 2015, 22 cities in California had taken similar steps.

To commend businesses that stop selling and organizations that stop using rat poisons, RATS started the Owl Wise Leaders award program. Recipients of the 35 OWL awards so far include stores, restaurants, Marin County, the San Francisco Recreation and Parks' Natural Areas Program, and Pepperdine University.

> **"There's no clear public record of where we're putting pesticides, who's using them, how much is being used. Until we demand that information, we're flying blind."**
> **—ALLEN FISH**
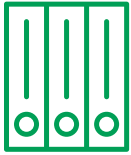
Appendix 4:

Skill Bank Activity 1: Media Literacy

Description: Youth learn about media bias and misinformation and gain skills in lateral reading.

Objectives: Youth will be able to define bias and online misinformation. Youth will know three questions they can ask when assessing online information.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Internet access and a way to share videos with group.

What is Media Literacy?

We live in a world where huge amounts of information are readily available. With so much information out there, it can be difficult to know if a source is reliable or not. A credible source is a source that presents unbiased information that is backed up by evidence. Credible sources could include peer-reviewed journals, government agencies, professional organizations, or an individual with established expertise in the field (e.g., a scientist with a record of significant contribution to that particular field). It can be difficult to find credible sources when exploring a conflict because different stakeholders might believe they have the truth but may have a biased perspective. The best we might be able to do is to ask ourselves if there is evidence that the source is credible. This activity will focus on information found on the Internet.

1 Introduce the topic of media literacy by leading a discussion about the reasons organizations may intentionally mislead people and how to sort fact from fiction. Begin by providing these two statements:
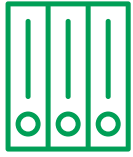
a. We are running out of room in landfills to bury our garbage – we need to reduce, reuse and recycle and only use recyclable packaging.

b. We have plenty of room to bury our garbage – there is no need to avoid packaging that cannot be recycled – like plastic and Styrofoam containers that protect food.

Ask youth:

- What organizations might have made these claims?
- Why would they do so?
- Could both statements be true?

Something very much like these statements were made by environmentalists (a) and the plastics packaging industry (b). And they both believe they are correct and the other group is not! That's because of the missing information in each statement. Here is the rest of the story:

Continued...

Appendix 4:

Skill Bank Activity 1: Media Literacy

a. Here in New Jersey, we are running out of landfill space. We are running out of room in landfills to bury our garbage – we need to reduce, reuse and recycle and only use recyclable packaging.

b. There is plenty of room to bury garbage in Nevada. We have plenty of room to bury our garbage – there is no need to avoid packaging that cannot be recycled – like plastic and Styrofoam containers that protect food.

While it would be best if organizations provided complete and unambiguous information, it is often to their advantage to shorten their message and convey their bias. Sometimes, they might not even realize they are doing it! An important skill in media literacy is searching for and uncovering this type of bias.

Of course, other organizations and individuals might intentionally create fictitious information to support their ideas. It is important to be able to know which information we can trust. That's why youth should become media literate.

2 Watch either or both videos about online information together as a group. We highly recommend the resources created by the Civics Online Reasoning Project at Stanford University (https://cor.stanford.edu).

🎬 **Video 1:** Sort Fact from Fiction Online with Lateral Reading: https://cor.stanford.edu/videos/lateral-reading-video (3 minutes and 47 seconds)

🎬 **Video 2:** Crash Course: Introduction to Navigating Digital Information: https://cor.stanford.edu/videos/introduction-to-crash-course-navigating-digital-information (13 minutes 34 seconds)

3 **Optional:** If you want students to practice lateral reading skills, we recommend the Intro to Lateral Reading Lesson: https://cor.stanford.edu/curriculum/lessons/intro-to-lateral-reading. You will need to create a free account on the website to access this lesson plan. The lesson plan is available in "Teacher Materials" and the sample articles are available in "Student Materials."

4 Discuss what you've learned as a group. What are three questions youth can ask when looking for information online related to the issue they have chosen for their CAPE project?

Question 1: Who's providing the information, and what is their motivation or interest? What is the source of their funding?

Question 2: What's the evidence that supports the claims?

Question 3: What do other sources say, and what is their motivation or interest and source of funding?

Source: Stanford History Education Group

5 As youth search their community for information about their topic and project, they might find the following worksheet helpful as they build their media literacy skills.

Appendix 4: Media Literacy Worksheet

Name: _____

USING THE QUESTIONS below, check off whether or not your source meets the following criteria of a credible source. The more checks you give, the more likely you have found a credible source!

Authority

❏ Is there an author listed?

❏ Is this person qualified to speak on this topic?

❏ Can you find more information about the author through other searches?

   Where is the article published? _____

❏ Is the source credible (e.g., a government agency or a newspaper or an individual with established expertise in the topic or field)?

❏ Can you find more information about the organization through other searches?

Accuracy

❏ Does the article cite any credible sources?

❏ Do those links work?

Objectivity and Bias

❏ Is the information designed to sway your opinion? (e.g., an article written by a pesticide company about the benefits of pesticides)

❏ Does the article provide a competing viewpoint or a balanced assessment of the issue?
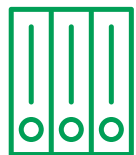
Appendix 4:

Skill Bank Activity 2: Teamwork Skills

There are two activities in this section.

Survival!

Description: Youth play a game in small groups and then reflect on how they worked together as a team.

Objectives: Youth will learn effective strategies for teamwork.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Random household items for game.

In this game, youth work as a team to come up with a plan for surviving a fictional scenario. They then reflect on their group dynamic and teamwork skills.

1 Divide the group into smaller groups of three or three to four. Provide each group with four random household objects (e.g., a paperclip, a plastic bag, a bucket, and a pencil).

**2** Read the following scenario to the group:

You were sailing across the Pacific Ocean in a small boat when you ran into a floating pier that came loose in the last hurricane. It knocked a hole in your boat. Luckily, there was a small island just a few hundred yards away. Your group managed to swim ashore, but all you have are the four objects in front of you and an emergency beacon. You sent up the emergency beacon and received a text message in response – you know that you are going to be rescued in seven days. Now, you need to find a way to survive until the rescue. How can you use the four objects in front of you to survive? Work together to come up with a plan!

3 Give the groups 10 minutes to come up with a plan.

4 Come back together as a larger group. Ask each small group to present their survival plan. After they have presented, ask them to reflect on their teamwork skills. The following guiding questions might help:

- What part of your plan are you most excited about?
- Did a leader emerge in the group?
- Did everyone contribute equally?
- How did you encourage quiet people to talk?
- Did you stay on task or get distracted? How was this managed?
- How do you think you did working with this group compared with groups you've worked with in the past?

Now encourage the groups to think about teamwork skills by asking a few of these questions:
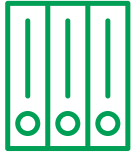
- If you were to work with this same group again, what is one change that could make working together more effective?
- What is a change you could make in the way you listen to others that could improve your group's effectiveness?
- Do you think that different group members contributed equally? If not, how could you encourage more equal participation?
- If you could pick one group member to give a specific compliment about their work in the group, who would it be and what would you say?
- If you need to say something critical, or challenge someone's ideas, how can you word this without hurting their feelings?

5 Reflect on the importance of team work and group skills in the CAPE process. Remind the group that it is important to pause and think about whether everyone's voice is being heard during the process and that everyone has the ability to contribute to a solution.

6 **Optional:** If your group could use more practice, here is a set of suggested activities:

- https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/wi4hpublications/files/2015/10/ManagConflictcc009.pdf
- https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2070/2016/08/The-big-book-of-Conflict-Resolution-Games.pdf

Knots

Description: Youth untie a knot of their own doing.

**Objectives:** Youth will practice effective strategies for teamwork and communication.

Time: 10 minutes.

Materials: None.

This could be a good icebreaker whenever the group needs a short activity. It may be easier to start with a small group, but once the group has succeeded, challenge them to involve everyone! You may choose to skip this suggestion if COVID transmissions are high in your community.

1 Divide the group into smaller groups of five to eight youth. Ask them to stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder, and stretch their arms out in front of them. Explain that they will make a knot with their arms and then undo it!

2 Ask everyone to hold hands with two different people across the circle. It helps if each left hand holds another left hand. Then ask them to untangle themselves to form a circle again, without letting go of any hands! It may be necessary to readjust the grip slightly, but try to keep all hands connected. This will involve some bending, twisting, stepping over and sliding under!

3 It could be helpful to inspect the knot before moving. There may be two interlocking circles. Is there an easy place to start untangling?
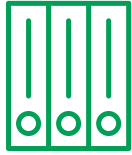
Appendix 4:

Skill Bank Activity 3: Communication Skills

Description: Youth are divided into pairs where one member describes an image to the other member who must draw it based on the instructions given.

Objectives: Youth will be able to give unambiguous directions and ask clarifying questions.

Time: 30 minutes.

**Materials:** Sets of shapes, copied and cut the **Shapes Worksheet**; pens or pencils; paper.

In this activity, youth practice communication and questioning skills by using their words to describe an image to a partner who must draw it out. They discuss the importance of clear communication and good questioning.

1. Divide the group into pairs (A and B) and ask each pair to sit back-to-back. Give each person an envelope of shapes and ask person A to create an image. They can use all the shapes but must select at least three. When they have completed the design, their task is to describe the design to their partner, person B. In this first round, B is not allowed to ask any questions. They will simply use their envelope of shapes to create the image that is described. Give them three minutes, and then ask them to stand up and review both the original and the new design. Ask what was difficult about the activity. Did any of the pairs end up with the same image? What questions were the B's wishing to ask?

2. For the second round, the roles switch, and person B creates and describes a new image. This time, person A is allowed to ask just TWO questions for clarification as they attempt to duplicate the image. After three minutes, have them stand to review their designs. How many of the A drawings are identical to what B intended? Did asking questions help? What did the limit of two questions accomplish? Were the directions more specific and clearer during the second round?

3. Conclude with a discussion about the importance of clear communication and the skill of asking specific questions. These skills are important to practice and can be applied to many aspects of the CAPE process.

Appendix 4: Shapes Worksheet
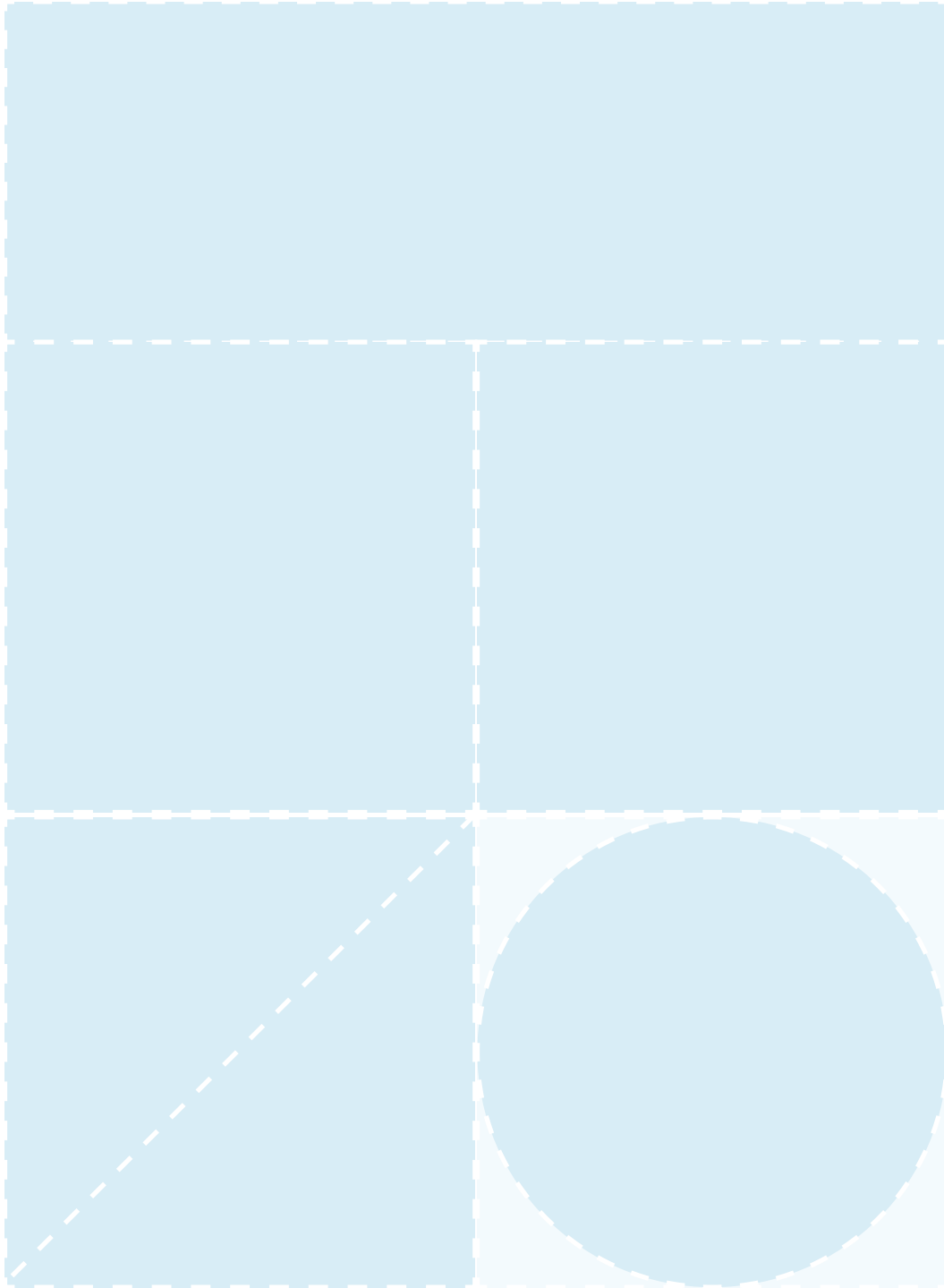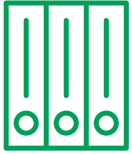
Appendix 4:

Skill Bank 4: Writing a Proposal

FOR SOME PROJECTS, you may need to obtain permission or raise money to help you conduct the project. You may need to create a proposal that describes your project and the type of support you are seeking. This worksheet can assist the group in preparing a proposal.

✐ **WORKSHEET**

Appendix 4: Plan a Proposal Worksheet

Section 1 — The Issue: Explain the issue that you prioritized and why this is important to stakeholders. You may find it helpful to describe the community site and place where your work will take place.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Section 2 — The Partner(s): Describe the partner organization(s) you are working with and how you are working together.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Section 3 — The Project: Describe the project you wish to complete (recall this is a combination of your strategy and the request) and how it will help address the problem. Specify the decision makers that influence this issue and describe what you will do to convince them to adopt or change a policy. This information comes from Meeting 6 and your Task Planning Worksheets.

_____

_____

_____

_____

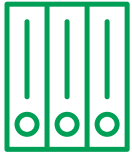*Continued...*

Appendix 4: Plan a Proposal Worksheet

Section 4 — The Task Timeline: List the tasks and how long it will take you to complete the project, who is responsible and what you will need to do this work.

TASK OR ACTIVITY	START AND END DATES	PEOPLE RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES NEEDED

Section 5 — The Budget Justification: For each resource you need, describe how much money you need and specifically how you will spend it. Explain how you estimated these costs. For example, you can reference a website that describes the price of the equipment you need. For your travel, include the current amount that is reimbursed for gasoline.

BUDGET				
ITEM	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL COST	BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
Additional Budget explanation:				

Appendix 4:

Skill Bank 5: Community Interviews

FOR SOME PROJECTS, you may want to find out more about which environmental issues concern members of your community. The following worksheet can help you introduce your project to community members and find out more about what environmental issues are important to them. As a group, decide how you want to explain your project and revise these questions. Remember that you are interviewing community members to gather information on the specific site your group has chosen.

✎ WORKSHEET

Appendix 4: Community Interview Script

Hello! My name is _____ and I wonder if you could answer four short questions for us? We are with the _____4-H club and are identifying possible community projects here in _____. If you could help us, it should only take about ____ minutes. [If they agree, thank them and begin.]

1 What do you like about this community's natural environment?

2 What concerns do you have about the environment this community?

3 How concerned are you about _____?

4 If you could fix one environmental issue in this community, what would it be?

5 Finally, who else should we talk to or work with to learn more about this issue?

Take notes here:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix 4: Community Interview Summary

Use the following grid to summarize the results of your group's interviews. Which issues were mentioned by community members? Did more than one community member mention the same issue? Did they provide any details about the issue that might be helpful to your group?

Issue	Number of community members who mentioned this issue	Notes about the issue
Example: Community is not bike friendly	2 people	One person said they would ride their bikes more often if there were more bike racks at community sites