

Welcome to Stage 5 - Communicating and Acting

CIVICALLY ENGAGED DISTRICTS PROJECT

Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action

Why This Stage Matters

At the heart of youth participatory action research is the students' drive to make a change on a civic issue that matters to them. In this final stage of the cycle, students will apply their research findings, take purposeful action on issues they care deeply about, and experience the civic empowerment that comes with advocating for change in their community.

What This Stage Looks Like

In Stage 5, *Communicating Results and Taking Action*, your students will determine and share recommendations to the appropriate audience using a strategy of their choosing to create meaningful impact.

This section has lessons on different forms of communication and action and how to connect with stakeholders. The resources below are scaffolded and differentiated to support you and your students in this process!

Goals of the Stage

- Recognize how other youth projects have driven meaningful civic change
 - Refine a message, fit it to the proper audience, and identify a strategy that work together to make the most impact out of the research findings
 - Take action!
 - Learn to communicate the process and results
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How to Use This Document

- This Google Doc is organized into tabs, one per lesson.
- Use the Summary of Contents below to jump to each lesson.
- Each lesson includes:
 - At a Glance (objective, key terms, materials, time)
 - Step-by-Step Breakdown (timed activities with prompts)
 - Acknowledgements (credits and sources)
- You have read-only access. To adapt lessons for your class, make a copy and adjust as needed.

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Summary of Contents

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Acknowledgment of Sources

This curriculum is part of the Civically Engaged Districts Project, supported by Teachers College, Columbia University and Rutgers University Graduate School of Education. It draws on the expertise of YPAR researchers and practitioners, who have curated existing resources and created new ones for educators and students engaging in Youth Participatory Action Research.



Teachers College
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



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Graduate School of Education

Lesson 1: What have other students done?

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Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action

Lesson 1 - What Have Other Students Done?

At a Glance

Objectives	SWBAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore civic actions taken by other youth• Gain a deeper understanding of this phase of the project• Embrace their own civic agency
Key Terms	Civic Agency / Citizen Power / Message / Audience / Strategy
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Butcher paper/digital resource to note ideas
Other Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher-curated collection of 4-6 youth-led civic actions (optional examples in body of lesson)
Total time	1-2 Class Periods

Step-by-Step Breakdown

Step 1: Activate Prior Knowledge - Civic Agency (10 minutes)

- Begin by looking at the definition of civic agency:
Civic agency: The ability to act on decisions in order to work toward a desired communal goal through the use of social networks, government institutions, and other social structures.
- Think/Pair/Share:
 - Ask students to review the definition, and then ask them to consider the questions:
 - What might be some examples of civic agency from the history they have studied or from current events?
 - Who is an inspiring civic agent in your life? Who do you know that makes an impact in your community?
 - When they are ready, have students turn to a partner and share an example of a civic agent that they know.
 - As a class, collect a list of the civic agents students have brainstormed.
Discuss if any of them are youth? If so, who? If not, why do they think they haven't brainstormed youth as civic agents?
- Explain that one of the biggest barriers that individuals face in getting involved is that it is hard to know what actual steps to take. As legal scholar Martha Minow puts it: "Oftentimes we see something that's unjust and we wonder, 'Where do I go? What do I do?'"

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- Explain that everyone has civic agency and that civic agency is magnified when people work together on a common cause.
 - **Optional:** Spend a moment exploring the metaphor of the lever in “levers of power”. Ask students to define the meaning of the word “lever,” and then ask them to make an inference about what the phrase “levers of power” might mean. Tell students that in a literal sense, a lever is a tool that allows one to pick up or move something much heavier than could be lifted without it. In other words, a lever allows someone to use a small amount of force to have a big impact.
- Explain that in this stage (Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action), they will identify the right message, the right audience, and the right strategy to take action based on the results of their research.

Step 2: Jigsaw Part I - Working in Expert Groups (25 minutes)

- Select 4-6 examples of **youth-led** civic actions. Use teacher discretion to select the projects you think would be most relevant for your students to learn from. Some suggested resources include:
 - Previous years’ CED projects, available on the CED Website [Project Gallery](#)
 - Various projects from other YPAR initiatives:
 - [Polling for Justice](#)
 - [Pa'lante Restorative Justice](#)
 - [Youth-Led Peacebuilding](#)
 - [Girls Do What They Have to Do to Survive](#)
 - [Conflict and Aggression in School](#)
 - [Carlton-Faribault Collaboration](#)
 - [You Are Priceless](#)
 - This collection of articles from the Facing History and Ourselves Curriculum:
 - [How One Student Is Removing His School's Ties to the Eugenics Movement](#)
 - [Acknowledging the Past to Shape the Present](#)
 - [How the Parkland Students Pulled off a Massive National Protest in Only 5 Weeks](#)
 - [Why MLK Encouraged 225,000 Chicago Kids to Cut Class in 1963](#)
 - [Bullying at School](#)
- Split the class into Expert Groups, one per project. As students are reading and discussing with their “expert groups,” have them respond to these questions about the project they’re exploring:
 - What issue were these civic agents addressing? Why was it important to them?
 - What research questions did they ask to address those issues?
 - What was their message? Who was their audience? What strategies did they employ to take action?
 - How did they respond to success and failure?

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Step 3: Jigsaw Part II - Teaching Each Other (15 minutes)

- When they are ready, have students switch into mixed groups and teach one another about the youth civic agent they studied.

Step 4: Reflection (10 minutes)

- Invite students to reflect on the following prompts (as a class discussion or in their journals):
 - Did anything surprise you about the power of youth to make a difference?
 - Are there any connections to the project/s we're working on as a class?
 - Do we feel motivated to take our research into the action stage?

Acknowledgements

Adapted from:

- Facing History and Ourselves' Civic Education Curriculum
<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/civic-agency-pursuit-democracy>

Lesson 2: Formulating Our Message


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Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action Lesson 2 - Formulating Our Message

At a Glance

Objectives	SWBAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Turn their data analysis and findings into recommendations• Prioritize their top recommendations
Key Terms	Recommendations / Findings / Message
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Findings from Stage 4 (Analyzing Data)• Mission, Vision, and Goals from Stage 2 Lesson 7• Stickers or other materials for group voting activity
Total time	1 Class Period

Step-by-Step Breakdown

 **Note to teacher:** In this lesson, students will turn their findings into recommendations, that will become the “message” portion of taking action. In future lessons, they will also identify the appropriate “audience”, and the right “strategy” to get that message across, before finally working on their action plan. If you believe it would be helpful for your students to think in advance about the combination of message-audience-strategy, present that framework to them!

Step 1: What Surprised Me in the Data? (10 minutes)


- Opening Circle (Around the World): Have each youth name one of the findings from their data analysis or name something that surprised them in their research.

Step 2: What Makes for a Powerful Recommendation? (10 minutes)

- Brainstorm the meaning and purpose of a recommendation. A recommendation is a specific solution or action that outlines how change will happen.
- Share some example youth recommendations:
 - “We recommend that the administration include a youth research and leadership class as part of the school curriculum.”
 - “We recommend that the administration and Climate Committee of our school reinstate the peer mediation program.”
 - “We recommend that the city provide free bus passes to low-income students.”

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- “We recommend that the school district implement teacher training in positive discipline methods.”
- In particular, discuss the power of a recommendation that is based on data. Ask youth: What is the difference between a recommendation based on opinion and a recommendation based on data? Imagine the above statements starting with “based on our research” vs. “we believe.” What makes for a stronger argument?

 **Note to teacher:** Steps 3 and 4 may be done as a whole group, if the class is working on the same project, or modified to be discussed in small groups if students are working on group projects. The entire class can convene for steps 1, 2, and 5.

Step 3: Revisiting Vision, Mission, and Goals (10 minutes)

- Ask the group: Who remembers our vision, mission, and goals?
- Share the vision, mission, and goals from the beginning of the project - projected on the board, hung up on a poster, or printed and circulated.
- Discuss:
 - Based on the research and analysis we have done so far, what new or more specific information have we learned about our topic?
 - How has our view of our topic changed (or been confirmed)?
 - Do our findings connect to our mission, vision, and goals? How?

Step 4: Brainstorming Specific & Realistic Recommendations (30 minutes)

- In groups, have students read through their findings together, and brainstorm and write their recommendations based on those findings.
- Ask youth to consider the following:
 - Is the recommendation **specific** enough?
 - Do you think it is **realistic**?
- For each recommendation, have students clarify:
 - What is our evidence for this recommendation?
 - What could make this recommendation stronger (research ideas for future groups or perhaps more research is one of the recommendations)?
- If many recommendations arise, have students vote on the ones they’d like to pursue most. For example, give students three stickers each, and have them place them on the ones they choose (they can give more than one sticker to a single recommendation).
 - Optional: After voting, allow students to advocate for recommendations with fewer dots: Are there compelling reasons to re-examine one of the recommendations that received fewer votes?
 - As a class or group, move forward in taking action with the recommendations that most students prefer.

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Step 5: Reflection (5 minutes)

- Closing Circle Statement (Around the World): I think that the most important recommendation from our project is...

Acknowledgements

Adapted from:

- Stanford's John Gardener Center for Youth and Their Communities "Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning" (YELL) Curriculum

 **YELL Handbook**

Lesson 3: Identifying Our Audience

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Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action

Lesson 3 - Identifying Our Audience

At a Glance

Objectives	SWBAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify who has power and influence in their community and school decision making.Identify target audiences for their findings and recommendations
Key Terms	Audience / Decision-Makers / Stakeholders
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Butcher paper or shared online document with student work from Lesson 2: Formulating Our Message“Stakeholders in Our Community” Graphic organizer
Other Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Facing History and Ourselves: “Levers of Power” Note-CatcherHarvard’s Project Zero: Parts, People, Interactions Project Zero
Total time	1-2 Class Periods


Step-by-Step Breakdown

Step 1: Goal and Audience Identification (30 minutes)

- Divide youth into small groups - if they are working in small groups on different projects, have them work in groups according to their project topic.
- Give each group a piece of butcher paper (or access to a shared online document) listing the recommendations developed in the previous session.
- Explain that each group will work together to answer the following questions, and record their answers:
 - What are your goals for each recommendation? What do you want to happen or be different as a result?
 - If this recommendation is acted on, will it lead to the fulfillment of your mission and vision? How?
 - Who needs to be involved and on board for these changes to happen? These are the audiences for your recommendations and findings.
- To help identify the “who” in question #3, share the “Stakeholders in Our Community” graphic organizer (below) to prompt students to brainstorm the different potential stakeholders in their community.

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- After brainstorming all potential stakeholders, consider which of these groups or individuals are *most* appropriate as an audience for this project:
 - 1) Which stakeholders could become partners or allies in addressing this issue?
 - 2) Which stakeholders have the most influence over our project topic?
 - 3) Which stakeholders might help us get access to people who have been impacted directly by our class issue?
 - 4) Which stakeholders are going to be easiest to reach? And the hardest? Why?

 **Note to teacher:** *If you think it would be fruitful, given your knowledge of local institutions, you can offer suggestions about specific stakeholders that you are already familiar with.*

Optional extension activities:

- Spend a moment exploring the metaphor of the “lever” in “levers of power”. Ask students to define the meaning of the word “lever,” and then ask them to make an inference about what the phrase “levers of power” might mean. Tell students that in a literal sense, a lever is a tool that allows one to pick up or move something much heavier than could be lifted without it. In other words, a lever allows someone to use a small amount of force to have a big impact.
- Explain to students how each category of stakeholders - individuals, organizations, and technology platforms - can have this sort of amplifying effect at a societal level. By influencing or making use of these “levers,” individuals might have a larger impact on their community or society.
- Ask students, Do all people have equal access to all the levers? What influences who can and can’t access these levers of power?
- For more activities about power and influence, see:
 - Facing History and Ourselves: [“Levers of Power” Note-Catcher](#)
 - Harvard’s Project Zero: <https://pz.harvard.edu/resources/parts-people-interactions>

Step 2: Matching Goals to Audience (30 minutes)

- Divide youth into groups according to the number of specific audiences they have identified. Assign each group one of the audiences, and provide them with a piece of butcher paper (or digital graphic organizer). Each group will write their primary audience at the top and then identify specifically what they want that audience to:
 - Learn
 - Think about
 - Do
- After a few minutes, ask youth to rotate as a group, shifting to a different audience and adding their comments or ideas to that of the first group. When everyone has had a chance to add to each of the audiences, ask the small groups to share out the comments on the audience that they started with. Basically, you are asking youth to think about their goals from different angles

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- one being what they want in general and the other being more specific: What they want certain people or groups to really understand or take action on.
- Extension - How can we include these groups and individuals in our planning and in carrying out our action project?
 - How can we inform our helpers and collaborate with our allies?
 - How can we sway our opponents?
 - How can we stand up to our adversaries?
 - How can we persuade the decision maker(s)?
- Extension - Systems approach:
 - Explain: the different stakeholders we identified belong to systems comprised of institutions as well as individuals - for example, the school system is comprised of organizations like the School Board and the Parent-Teacher Association, as well as individuals like principals, teachers, and students. The school is also embedded in the wider community, including stakeholders like family members of students, funding and legal constraints from federal, state, and local government, and others. You can map these systems on a concept map as a class.
 - Ask and discuss as a class:
 - How do parts of the system affect people within the system differently?
 - How do people within the system influence one another? How can they exert pressure on one another?
 - Where do conflicts arise?

Step 3: Reflection (5 minutes)

- Closing Circle Statement (Around the World): Who is your greatest ally for this project?

Acknowledgements

Adapted from:

- Stanford's John Gardener Center for Youth and Their Communities "Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning" (YELL) Curriculum
 **YELL Handbook**
- Facing History and Ourselves' Civic Education Curriculum
<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/civic-agency-pursuit-democracy>

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Stakeholders in Our Community

Stakeholder Example	Who They Are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name of individual or organization Contact information (phone number, email address, social media) 	How are they connected to our Mission, Vision, and Goals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do they have a stance on our class issue? If so, what is it? If they are an elected official, do their legislative priorities relate to our issue? If they are an organization, what is their mission? If they are a business, how is their business impacted by or contributing to our issue?
Leadership in our School and District		
Government (National, State, Local)		
Nonprofit Organizations and Charities		
Business, Industry, and Commercial Organizations		
Professional Media		
Social Media or the Internet		
Universities and Think Tanks		
Influential Individuals (Authors, Lecturers, Influencers, Celebrities, Athletes, Activists, Politicians, etc.)		

Lesson 4: Choosing Our Strategy

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Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action Lesson 4 - Choosing Our Strategy

At a Glance

Objectives	SWBAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify different forms of action strategies.• Determine appropriate ways to share their findings and recommendations• Match these strategies to their identified target audiences.
Key Terms	Strategy / Action / Change
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Samples of action strategies taken by other activists• “Action Strategy Identification Chart” Worksheet
Other Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Method to come to consensus (return to Stage 2: Lesson 4)
Total time	1-2 Class Periods

Step-by-Step Breakdown

Step 1: What Kinds of Media do I Pay the Most Attention to? (10 minutes)

- Opening Circle Statement (Around the World): Ask youth to identify if they pay more attention to visual (e.g., paintings, print or TV ads, pictures, charts) or to auditory information (e.g., music, a lecture).
 - Which do they find more powerful or compelling?
 - Ask if they are surprised to see that different students in class have different responses. Explain that different audiences will respond to different strategies for getting our message across, which is why it is useful to think about various ways to communicate our message.
- Brainstorm: What are some ways we receive messages about social change, opinions, and ideas in our daily lives? How are these messages presented? Ask for examples of techniques for presenting messages and record these on the board or butcher paper.
- Distinguish different types of presentations: some presentations are formal, scheduled events (e.g., speeches, a class). Others are informal (e.g., talking to friends). Some forms of presentation are artistic statements or expressions (e.g., a song, mural, poem, graffiti), others are written more formally (e.g., pamphlets, powerpoint presentations), and others yet convey messages symbolically (e.g., enamel pins, flags, protest signs, stickers and ribbons).

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Step 2: From Recommendation to Action (10 minutes)

- Discuss the difference between a recommendation and an action. An action is a stepping stone or strategy to make a recommendation happen. This session is about thinking through action strategies.
- Brainstorm different approaches to action.
- **Optional:** Share with youth that many of these approaches can fit into the categories of advocacy, activism, and education.
 - Advocacy includes: Arguing on behalf of a particular issue, idea, or person; Standing up for something you believe in; Standing up for people; Speaking out and getting your voice heard; Meeting with people in power and asking for specific things
 - Education includes: Building understanding and knowledge; Sharing information and ideas; Sharing findings from research; Teaching; Mentoring or empowering others
 - Activism includes: Taking action or getting involved as a means of achieving a goal for change; Fighting for what you believe in; Protesting and demonstrating; Getting other people excited and involved
- Explain to students that depending on the audience and the nature of their topic, they will select different strategies – or combinations of strategies – for sharing their findings and recommendations. While their plan can fall squarely into just one of these approaches, usually all three work together in some combination. By using these approaches in tandem, they can strengthen and broaden their impact.

Step 3: Action Strategies Round Robin (40 minutes)

- Split youth into four groups. Each group will rotate through four different stations, spending 10 minutes at each station. Either assign a facilitator to each station, or print out instructions.
- Choose four stations to set up for students. Some options include:
 - Write letters to community members
 - Collect signatures on a petition
 - Create a mural
 - Distribute flyers with facts about your topic
 - Display banners asking for a specific change
 - Create and present an award
 - Testify in court
 - Picket
 - Schedule a rally
 - Hold a vigil
 - Set up an information booth at a public event
 - Produce street theater (skits, poetry, song)
 - March to City Hall
 - Host a community forum

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- Give a presentation to City Council
 - Meet with the school board to ask for a particular change
 - Leave (walk-out)
 - Stay (sit-in)
 - Organize a strike or a boycott
 - Produce a video and hold viewings
 - Produce a written report or a magazine
 - Create a website or blog
- Example of four different stations:
 - STATION 1: POWERPOINT
At this station, youth will experience a sample PowerPoint presentation.
 - STATION 2: REPORTS AND FACT SHEETS
At this station, youth will explore written tools that can be used to share their findings and recommendations.
 - STATION 3: OTHER VISUAL DISPLAYS
At this station, youth will discuss and explore different visual displays: photo essays, video, posters, murals, etc.
 - STATION 4: MUSIC
At this station, youth will listen to and identify social change messages in lyrics.
- At each station, prompt students to discuss the following questions:
 - Think of an example from their experience, current events, or history when this strategy was used effectively.
 - Consider the advantages and challenges of using this action strategy.
 - Discuss how appropriate, feasible, and effective they believe this action is for their particular project topic.
- Before youth begin their rotation, hand out an “Action Strategy Identification Chart” Worksheet (below) to each participant. They can fill this out as they go through the stations.

Step 4: Compare and Contrast Strategies (15 minutes)

As a full group, have youth share their perspectives on the following:

- Which messages were the most powerful and why?
- How did the form or method of the presentation impact the power of the message?
- What do all of these methods have in common?
- What are the strengths of the different strategies?
- What are the drawbacks? Can you see any problems with using any of these strategies?
- When do you think it would be useful to use each strategy?

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Step 5: Choosing a Strategy (or Strategies) for Our Project (15 minutes)

- Ask students to take a few moments to rank the actions and agree on some actions they think would work best for their project.
- Decide as a class (or within each topic group) which actions they think would be most effective for their project topic.
 - For example, vote by giving each youth three or four sticker dots (depending on the number of actions you think would be reasonable to plan and execute). Ask them to place their dots next to the action or actions they think would be most effective.
 - Alternatively, provide a structure for consensus-based discussion.
- [Optional] Ask the youth to write their names next to the action they would most like to be involved in planning for the remainder of the year.
- [Optional] Check to make sure the workload is evenly distributed for each action. If not, discuss how to equalize imbalances.

Acknowledgements

Adapted from:

- Stanford's John Gardener Center for Youth and Their Communities "Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning" (YELL) Curriculum

 **YELL Handbook**

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Action Strategy Identification Chart

ACTION STRATEGY	ADVANTAGES	CHALLENGES	USE AND PRIORITY FOR OUR PROJECT

Lesson 5: Taking Action

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Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action

Lesson 5 - Taking Action

At a Glance

Objectives	SWBAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a course of action.
Key Terms	Action / Assets / Issues
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Media Brainstorm” Worksheet• “Steps to an Action Plan” Worksheet
Total time	2-3 Class Periods

Step-by-Step Breakdown

Step 1: Matching Message, Audience, and Strategy (10 minutes)

- Have students review the messages, audiences, and strategies that they brainstormed in the previous lessons.
- Have students brainstorm which strategies, audiences, and messages align best with each other. Sample questions:
 - What products and presentation tools will you develop to share your findings and recommendations with your audiences?
 - Do we need different products for different audiences?
- If it is helpful, fill out the “Media Brainstorm” Worksheet (below).


Step 2: Develop a Plan of Action (30 minutes)

- Once groups have chosen the ways they want to take action, complete the “Steps to an Action Campaign” worksheet (below).

Step 3: Reflection (5 minutes)

- Closing Circle Statement (Around the World): The action that I am most interested in pursuing to share our findings and recommendations and use our civic power is...

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 **Note to teacher:** *At this point, students should be ready to go out and take action! Working in groups, they can get to work turning their messages into the strategy they've chosen, and reaching out to relevant audiences as they've planned.*

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Media Brainstorm

Strategies to share findings and recommendations	Pros? What are the benefits to using this medium?	Cons? What are the drawbacks to using this medium?	Audience? Which audience(s) would respond best to this medium?	Message? Which of our recommendations would we use this strategy to communicate?
Powerpoint				
Fact sheets or pamphlets				
Website or blog				
Music				
Video				
Photos or posters				
Detailed written reports				
Murals or other public art				
Theater (plays, spoken word)				
Dance and movement				
Other: ____				

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Steps to an Action Campaign

REVIEW	CHECK LIST
<p>1. DETERMINE YOUR MESSAGE: “WHAT” AND “WHY”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the main thing you want to happen or change?• What are your recommendations? What facts or information support your argument or make it stronger?• Is there a catchy way to say this message to get it to stick in people’s minds?• Why do you care? How does this connect to your vision or personal experience?	<p>MESSAGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Are your recommendations clear?<input type="checkbox"/> Is your message specific?<input type="checkbox"/> Will people “get it” right away?<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have a slogan or logo to promote your message?
<p>2. SELECT YOUR AUDIENCE(S): “WHO”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who needs to be convinced?• Who has the power to make change happen around this? (Can be students, other youth, school leaders, law makers/politicians).• Decide what you want your audiences to do or learn. Be specific!	<p>ARGUMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Is there evidence backing up your argument?<input type="checkbox"/> Are there personal stories or interview quotes that highlight your recommendations?
<p>3. PICK YOUR STRATEGIES: “HOW”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What types of action strategies will you use?• What forms of action are best suited to your cause and goals?	<p>AUDIENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Do you know who you are trying to reach?<input type="checkbox"/> Do you know exactly what you want them to do/learn? <p>STRATEGY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Do you know what strategies you will use to share your findings and recommendations?<input type="checkbox"/> Do the strategies match your audience/s?<input type="checkbox"/> Do you have the time and resources to make your action plan happen?

Lesson 6: Practicing Public Speaking

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Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action

Lesson 6 - Practicing Public Speaking

At a Glance

Objectives	SWBAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice the basic components of a good presentation• Improve the quality of their oral presentation skills• Learn to give and receive effective feedback
Key Terms	Public Speaking / Presentation / Body Language / Voice
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Bad Presentation Roleplay” Prompts• “Presentation Skills Check List” Handout• “Tips for Good Presentations” Handout• “Personal Coaching and Feedback Sheet” Organizer
Other Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Speaking Games and Exercises Resources (see Step 3)
Total time	2-3 Class Periods

Step-by-Step Breakdown

Step 1: Warmup - Bad Presentation Role Play (10 minutes)

- Ask for two volunteers.
- Hand each volunteer one of the “Bad Presentation Role Play” examples (below).
- Encourage the youth to improvise and have fun making their presentations as bad as possible.
- Have the first volunteer give the presentation. Have the group brainstorm a list of what was wrong or ineffective about the presentation. Record this on the board or butcher paper.
- Have the second volunteer give the presentation, brainstorm again, and then review the complete list of things that make for a “bad presentation.”

Step 2: Qualities of Effective Presentations (15 minutes)


- Brainstorm the purpose of a presentation. What are some different types of presentations and the reasons behind them? For example: Youth sit through presentations every day (teachers delivering material is one good example).
- Brainstorm the qualities of a good presentation. Have youth take a minute to think about a good presentation they have attended. Ask youth what was good about it. What are some

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characteristics of the presenter that stood out to you? Can you remember all of the content, or can you remember the details of the presenter more?

- Hand out and review the “Presentation Skills Check List” and the “Ten Tips for a Good Presentation” handouts (below).
 - Optional: As a teacher, demonstrate in an exaggerated and theatrical manner what happens when each of these skills goes poorly (eg: speak in a whisper; don’t make eye contact*; explain a complex topic with no visuals)
- Reinforce that there are three main things to focus on for any presentation:
 - Body and movement
 - Voice and expression
 - Content
- Revisit the brainstorm of effective, good presentations. Do most of the characteristics fall in line with these handouts? Does anything on the handouts surprise you?

Step 3: Games for Public Speaking Practice

 **Note to teacher:** Use these games as part of your lesson plan, or to practice with students sporadically as ice breakers. Integrate them throughout this stage as you see fit!

Using Our Voice Effectively

- **Time:** 10 minutes
- **Materials:**
 - Video:  Stephen Colbert & Emily Blunt "Stick Around We've Got a Great Show"
 - Print outs of famous quotes (you may use these, or collect your own):
 - “There are those who say fate is something beyond our command. That destiny is not our own. But I know better. Our fate lives within us. You only have to be brave enough to see it.” - Merida, Brave
 - “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.” - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
 - “You have enemies? Good. That means you’ve stood up for something, sometime in your life” - Winston Churchill
 - “It is our choices, Harry, that show us what we truly are, far more than our abilities” - Dumbledore
 - “No matter where you are from, your dreams are valid” - Lupita Nyong’o
 - “Do. Or do not. There is no try” - Yoda, Star Wars
 - “One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world.” - Malala Yousafzai
- **Description:** Work with short texts to understand the power of use of voice - varying volume, tone, pacing - to bring a point across.
- **Instructions:**

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- Demonstrate the importance of emphasizing particular words with the sentence: “**I never said she stole my money**”:
 - Write the sentence on the board, or hand out printed copies to students.
 - Ask for 7 student volunteers to read the sentence, each time emphasizing a different word in the sentence. Notice how emphasizing each different word gives the sentence 7 different meanings.
 - Discuss how, when speaking, we use changes in our voice and pace to make that emphasis.
- Explain to students the power of voice use - how changing our tone, the pace with which we speak, the emphasis we put on different words - can have an immense impact on the way our ideas come across.
- Show students the Stephen Colbert/Emily Blunt video
[▶ Stephen Colbert & Emily Blunt "Stick Around We've Got a Great Show"](#)
Notice how they speak the same line, but use their voice differently to achieve a different result!
- Ask for volunteers, or hand out a famous quote to each student. Give them some time to read the quote they were given, and instruct them to annotate it depending on where they believe they should provide more emphasis, or take a pause, or change their voice in any way. Then, have students present their quotes to the class.
- Variation: Have students work in pairs to workshop each quote and read them aloud to each other. Ask for volunteers to share with the class at the end of the activity.
- Debrief: What have they learned from this activity? How can they implement these skills when practicing their presentations?


Powerpoint Karaoke

- **Time:** 15 minutes.
- **Materials:**
 - Short (3-6 slide) powerpoints with simple imagery, and a topic on the first slide
 - Example Slide Deck: [▶ Powerpoint Karaoke](#)
- **Description:** In this activity, students will practice their improvisation and presentation skills.
- **Instructions:**
 - Ask for a student volunteer. Explain that they will be giving a presentation on a topic, but they won't know in advance the contents of each slide.
 - Click through the slides every 30 seconds to 1 minute. Have students improvise their presentation, referring to the slides.
 - Debrief:
 - Ask volunteers: What was difficult about the activity?
 - Ask the class: Were there examples when someone was able to be convincing, as if they had truly prepared the slides in advance? If so, what made that successful?

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- Ask the class: How important is matching the content of the presentation with the speech?

Helping Hands

- **Time:** 10 minutes.
- **Materials:**
 - **Video:**  Whose Line Is It Anyway-Helping Hands Part 1
- **Description:** A short, ice-breaking game, to demonstrate the importance of hand gestures that match the content of our speech.
- **Instructions:**
 - Explain to students the importance of body language, and in particular, hand gestures, in conveying our messages. Demonstrate that some hand gestures can be effective (count on your fingers as you articulate reasons a, b, and c; point to the board when emphasizing something written on it), and others distracting (comedically and theatrically make unrelated hand gestures that distract from what you are saying).
 - Explain the way the game works:
 - Ask for two pairs of student volunteers.
 - In each pair, one student will stand in front with their arms on their waist, and be the “speaker”. The other will stand behind the speaker, slide their hands to the front, and be the “gesturer”. In this way, each pair of students plays one character. (see the “Whose Line” video to demonstrate).
 - Give the group a scenario to play out, as the “speaker” and “gesturer” pairs perform.
 - Use the following scenarios, or ask students to come up with their own!
 - A shopper returning some rotten peaches to the grocery store clerk.
 - A teen asking their parent to stay out past curfew.
 - Two chefs collaborating on a new recipe.
 - A kid helping their friend learn a new basketball technique.
 - Debrief with the class: Ask the “speakers” what was difficult about not using their hands? Ask the “gesturers” what was difficult about gesturing when they were not speaking? Ask the audience what they noticed, what they wondered, and what they learned overall from the activity?

Pitch an Invention

- **Time:** 20 minutes.
- **Materials:**
 - Any objects you have in class - tape, paper clips, construction paper, stapler, etc.
- **Description:** Students practice persuasive speech by pitching an invention made of easily accessible classroom materials.

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- **Instructions:**
 - Explain the purpose of the activity
 - Each group will be given 10 minutes to craft an “invention” out of the classroom materials and create a pitch to sell it to investors (the teacher and/or rest of the class). They should make sure to note what problem their invention solves, how it works, and why it’s worth investing in.
 - Each group will present their pitch to the class (depending on the group’s comfort level with public speaking, instruct groups to prepare 30-second to 3-minute pitches).
 - Debrief with the class: What made a presentation successful? Be specific: did the group make strong arguments? What was helpful about their speaking style (use of voice? Gestures? Demonstration? Catchy wording)? What feedback would they give to their peers to strengthen their pitches?

Wacky Speech

- **Time:** 20 minutes
- **Materials:** paper and writing utensils.
- **Description:** Students will practice improvising short speeches.
- **Instructions:**
 - In a circle, have each youth write down something they expect from adults, then pass their paper or index card to the person on their left. Below what is already written on the paper they have received, have youth write their favorite animal, and again pass the paper to the left. Next, have youth write what they would wish for if they had one wish. Pass the paper one more time.
 - Now each youth should have a piece of paper with three things on it.
 - One at a time, have youth create an argument or “case” from the statements on their card or paper. The argument must meet two criteria: It must be expressed with real concern or passion, and it must ask the group to do or think about something specific that includes all three items. Encourage youth to be as creative and silly as possible. Their argument does not need to make sense!
 - *For example: I want respect for wombats who are working for world peace! Therefore I am asking all of you to sign my petition!*

Step 4: Giving and Receiving Feedback (10 minutes)

- Discuss how the purpose of feedback is to learn, be proactive, and improve skills through reflection on information shared and received. There are ways to give feedback so people hear what we are saying and can learn from it. Ask youth for some quick examples of how they like to receive feedback – or not!
- Explain the “Personal Coaching and Feedback Sheet” handout (below). Ask youth why it is important to end on a positive. What is the difference between telling people what they are doing

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wrong vs. telling them where you see opportunities for growth? (Answers will vary: have the presenter feel good about themselves, create a safe and supportive environment, have an opportunity to improve and grow, negatives without suggestions for improvement can be harmful). Relate this back to the bad presentation role plays. Have youth come up with examples of the feedback process based on the bad presentations.

Step 5: Presentation and Feedback Practice (30 minutes)

- Hand out two Personal Coaching and Feedback Sheets to each student. Have them put their name on one of the forms. They will put their partner's name on the other.
- **Think:** Have each youth take five minutes to brainstorm some ideas for a presentation on an issue they personally think is VITAL for their school or community to address. Offer an outline for the presentation (e.g., Introduction, Issue, Some Possible Solutions, Thank you and Closing Remarks.)

Remind youth to focus on the objectives of a good presentation.

- **Pair:** Pick partners, and have youth designate who will go first in giving their presentation to the partner. Have one person start while the other is taking notes on the feedback handout. After the first presenter is done, take a few minutes for youth to write notes on the feedback forms. (Make sure that the presenter self-evaluates at this time.) Switch roles and repeat the process.
- **Share:** In their pairs, have youth give each other very specific, detailed feedback. Have each youth identify and write down what they most want to work on or improve. If you have time, ask youth to take another five minutes to revisit their presentation outline and make changes. Ask if anyone would like to present for the entire group (take volunteers). Be sure to point out the constraints of the limited preparation time. For example, because this is a short practice, we can't expect the content to be fully developed.



Variation Have every member of the group present to the full class, and videotape the presentations. This can be a great evaluation and reflection tool, and a very effective way to identify strengths, improvements, and areas for growth. Be sure that the participant is ready and wants to do this step, as it can be intimidating!


Step 6: Reflection (10 minutes)

- Discuss as a class:
 - What is hard about presenting?
 - What comes naturally?
 - Were the guidelines and feedback helpful?
 - How can you continue to improve your presentation skills?
- Closing Circle Statement (Around the World): Rank your nervousness about public speaking on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being extremely nervous, and 1 being not at all nervous.

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Acknowledgements

Adapted from:

- Stanford's John Gardener Center for Youth and Their Communities "Youth Engaged in Leadership and Learning" (YELL) Curriculum
 **YELL Handbook**
- The Cohen-Idov Center for Debate and Rhetoric
<https://www.cohenidov.com/>

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Bad Presentation Roleplay

BAD PRESENTATION EXAMPLE ONE

While delivering this presentation, you should:

- Never look at the audience.
- Speak in a very quiet tone of voice so no one can hear you.
- Even if the audience tells you that they can't hear you, do not raise your voice.
- Cover your mouth once or twice while talking.
- In between sentences, say "um," "well," or "uh."

Your speech:

Hello, my name is _____. I am here today to tell you a little about a community. It is located in the middle of the country, near the prairies, and has a population of 120,000 people. There are a lot of great neighborhoods and shopping districts within it. I like the movie theater especially, and a lot of youth hang out there on the weekends. Thank you for your attention.

Do you have any questions?


BAD PRESENTATION EXAMPLE TWO

While reading this presentation you should:

- Fidget with the paper, your hair, clothes, and the chalkboard.
- Talk really fast and talk really loud.
- Do not give an introduction, thank the audience, or ask for questions.
- When you are done reading, just sit down.

Your speech:

Hi, my name is _____. I really like where I live because there are a lot of great shopping areas and different people. For example, I went to a concert last night and it was cool. Our community has a population of 75,000 people. They do a lot of different things and hang out at a bunch of different places around the city. Some of these places are the main town square, the movie theater, and restaurants. I'm out.

 **Note to teacher:** You can also create your own speeches that include fun facts about your particular town or area.

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Presentation Skills Checklist

Elements of a presentation:

- Content:
 - Ask yourself: Is my message structured in a way that my audience will best respond to and understand?
 - Some tools include:
 - Organization - think about how to structure the information in your message in a logical, chronological, or otherwise organized way
 - Listener involvement techniques
 - Humor
 - Audience interests and adaptations
- Nonverbal Communication
 - Ask yourself: How can I ensure that my body is helping me powerfully communicate my message?
 - Some tools include:
 - Appearance: is it appropriate for the venue? Do I feel confident in it?
 - Posture: are you directing your body and your voice towards the audience?
 - Gestures: do my motions and expressions help emphasize the content of what I'm saying?
 - My location in the space: Am I positioning myself in the space in the way that is best communicating my purpose? Where am I positioned in relation to the audience? Seated on a stool or standing or using a mobility aid: all are powerful options. If presenting in a group, how are we arranging ourselves?
 - Conditions of the stage: Use of a stage light, podium, or tech?
- Verbal Communication:

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- Ask yourself: Is my use of voice and expression helping me to powerfully communicate my message?
- Some tools include:
 - Language and word choice
 - Effective use of a microphone
 - Pausing for emphasis
 - Vocal versatility
 - Articulation
- Connection with Audience
 - Ask yourself: How can I gauge my audience's reception of my presentation? Are they following, or confused? Are they interested, or losing interest?
 - Some tools include:
 - note if the audience are raising their hands with questions
 - ask if the audience have questions periodically
 - scan the whole audience for nods or other kinds of nonverbal agreement or comprehension

 **Note to teacher:** The Presentation Skills Checklist (above) can serve as a guide for you and your students, but these are not a complete list. Presentation expectations and norms can be culturally specific, with variations such as eye contact/no eye contact or audience feedback/silence. Communication styles might also vary based on Dis/ability. Encourage youth to be as specific as they can be about what they individually think of as effective presentation skills and use this to form your group norms around presentation expectations so that students feel comfortable and confident presenting.

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Tips for Good Presentations

1. PLAN AND PRACTICE!
 - Have your thoughts organized beforehand in an order that makes sense.
 - Practice as if you were actually giving your presentation. Time your presentation, make changes, and get feedback from classmates, friends, or family members.
2. IN THE VERY BEGINNING OF YOUR PRESENTATION, INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT.
 - Tip: As part of your introduction, let your audience know if you would like them to ask questions during the presentation or to wait until the end.
3. TRY NOT TO READ DIRECTLY FROM THE PAPER (BUT IT IS OK TO LOOK AT IT SOMETIMES).
 - Tip: Write some ideas in the order you want to say them and try just flowing from there. (It takes practice for this to come off in an organized way.)
4. USE VISUALS TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT.
5. DON'T WORRY, AND DON'T APOLOGIZE FOR MISTAKES! EVERYONE IN THE ROOM IS THERE TO SUPPORT YOU.
 - Tip: Take a deep breath when you are stuck or use humor if that helps.
6. ASK THE AUDIENCE FOR QUESTIONS.
7. THANK THE AUDIENCE WHEN YOU ARE DONE.
8. BE YOURSELF!

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Personal Coaching and Feedback Sheet for Presenters

PRESENTATION QUALITIES	POSITIVES ("Glow")	OPPORTUNITIES ("Grow")
DIRECTING YOUR BODY AND VOICE TOWARDS THE AUDIENCE		
POSTURE AND GESTURES		
FACIAL EXPRESSIONS		
LANGUAGE		
PAUSING		
CLARITY OF IDEAS		
ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS		
APPROPRIATE TO AUDIENCE		
OVERALL COMMENTS		

The Feedback Process: Bracket with Positives!

1. Start with Strengths and Positives: What were some things that are great as is and should be repeated?
2. Share Opportunities for Growth: What are some specific things that could get better?
3. End with Strengths and Positives: End with one more positive observation.

Lesson 7: Creating Our Presentation

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Stage 5: Communicating Results and Taking Action Lesson 7 - Creating Our Presentation

At a Glance

Objectives	SWBAT: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a presentation that communicates the results of their research and their action strategies with wider audiences• Practice presenting that work.
Key Terms	Presentation / Project / Audience
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trifold and art materials and/or Powerpoint, Google Slides, Canva, or another digital presentation resource• “Inspiration from Other Students’ Work” Graphic Organizer
Other Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CED website (Project Gallery)• Student Presentations on the CED YouTube Channel
Total time	2-3 Class Periods

Step-by-Step Breakdown

Step 1: Browse Student Work (10 minutes)


- Allow students to browse the student presentations on the CED website ([Project Gallery](#)) and view student presentations ([CED YouTube](#)).
- (Optional) Encourage students to fill out the “Inspiration from Other Students’ Work” Graphic Organizer (below).

Step 2: Build Our Presentation (10 minutes)

- Discuss the audience for the presentation. This audience may be:
 - The Youth in Action Summit at Rutgers
 - A District Showcase event
 - A parents’ night
 - A presentation to stakeholders such as the school board, district leadership, or other administrative forum

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- Decide on a medium. Some options include:
 - Creating a trifold
 - Using Microsoft Powerpoint
 - Using [Google Slides](#)
 - Using [Canva](#)
- Create a presentation outlining each stage of the project, highlighting students' most important takeaways.

 **Note to teacher:** You may want to provide students with a template for their presentation.

Step 3: Practice Our Presentation (10 minutes)

- Encourage students to decide in advance who will present which slide
- Guide students in preparing to present their slide(s) using bullet points on index cards or in a digital format (eg: on their phones, if they will be available)
- Pair groups of presenting students to give each other feedback on their presentations

Acknowledgements

- CED Resource Development Team

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Inspiration from Other Students' Work

Project Title and Topic:	Why I Chose It: What drew you to this presentation?	What I Loved About It: What was effective, interesting, and powerful about the presentation?	What I am Taking for My Presentation: What about this presentation would you like to emulate in your presentation?
1.			
2.			
3.			