Activity Guide - Solving a Data Problem

The city is planning a new building for its residents, but the city council isn’t sure what it should build. Some members want a fire station, others want an animal shelter, and others want a library. Your job is to use data to make a convincing recommendation to the city council.

Define
What is the problem you are trying to solve?

What the city should build, a library, fire station, or pet shelter.

Prepare
What data do you need to solve your problem?

How many of each thing the city has

If there is a big problem with fires

How close to the spot is the nearest library, fire station or pet shelter

With your group, find your data on the Internet and record it here. You’ll need to combine your data with data from other groups to make the best possible decision, so don’t make a recommendation until you hear from all the other groups as well.

Pet Shelters: 2 (plus another one in the next city, but none are very close)

Libraries: a lot, but only one that’s not part of the college, and that one is three miles away.

Fire Stations: a lot, and one is a mile away.

Couldn’t find any news about fires in Columbia.
Try

What should be built in the new location? **Library**

List two reasons for your choice, and the data that supports that reason.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason 1</th>
<th>Data for Reason 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are plenty of fire stations, and not any fire problems in the news, so there is no need for another fire station.</td>
<td>There are at least 9 fire stations, and one is a mile and a half away.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason 2</th>
<th>Data for Reason 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You should be able to walk to a library, and the nearest library is too far to walk from this mall.</td>
<td>There is only one library. The library is three miles from the spot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflect

What other data might help you to make a better decision?

If there are a lot of stray pets and the shelters are always full.

Where could you find this data?

Call the animal shelter.