

Community Inventory List

Use these to help get you started planning inventories



The following is a list of possible inventories to help us understand community concerns. Remember, an inventory is inquiry driven, collects some kind of data, and leads to a list of strengths and concerns of the defined community.

Note: Earth Force advocates for conducting at least 3 inventories: One that is **numbers-based** data, one with **descriptive** data, and at least one that is **justice-focused** (noted with a ☆). Bonus if **students design**!

Inventory	Examples
☆ Surveys	Create a school/peer/community survey or poll. Consider different formats: written, digital, or verbal. Consider asking questions like "who is the most affected by..." "do certain groups feel the consequences of X more than others?" See TIPS Card 21
☆ Audits & Assessments	Complete audits of energy use, recycling, carbon footprints, food waste and access, walkability, canopy cover, etc. Assess how well systems and processes are working within the community.
Review Policies & Practices	Identify city/county ordinances and analyze topographical maps & evaluate adherence to policy. Invite local policy makers to participate in a panel; use observational studies to determine community practices. See TIPS Card 12
☆ Interviews	There are two groups of people who are excellent to interview: Local Experts, and Knowledge Holders. Look for local experts or persons who are directly involved with a concern like city planners, school administration, and other stakeholders. Invite them into your classroom or interview them by phone. Also consider people who hold community knowledge, like faith-based leaders, grassroots organizations, social service providers, and people who have lived in your community for a long time. This group will be able to shine a light on environmental and social inequities in your community. See TIPS Cards 16-19
Online Databases	Use online databases to investigate concerns and/or help with determining project approaches. Government and other agency websites have public information that can help your students! EarthForceResources.org website is filled with links to such databases as well. See TIPS Card 15
☆ Maps	Use maps to identify local facilities (energy plants, waste treatment facilities, etc.); collect data based on particular areas; analyze topographical maps & evaluate adherence to policy; and get more information about your community. Story and GIS maps are a fun and interactive way to collect information too. See TIPS Card 14 Note, there are excellent maps that focus on justice-issues, including Redlining, Brownfield, and Ecojustice maps.
Guided Walking Tours	Take a walk! Educators and/or experts can guide students through their community and ask driving questions to stimulate thought and discovery. Identify community boundaries and look for strengths and concerns.
News & Media Search	Look at local media in the recent past and make a list of concerns they see mentioned; summarize the concerns and what the community is doing about them. Make sure sources are credible! See TIPS Card 13
Data Collection	Get out in the field and collect samples; test the health of air/water/soil; sample macroinvertebrates or biodiversity; try observational studies of community practices.
Other Ideas?	Add your own!