

Advocacy and making change



LESSON OBJECTIVE

Students will learn about the concept of advocacy by identifying an issue that affects their community and brainstorming two changes that they want to see in the future concerning that problem.



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| ▶ ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ What is a community? ▶ How can you identify and address issues in your community that are important to you? | |
| ▶ AGE | ▶ 10-18 | |
| ▶ MATERIALS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Poster paper ▶ Projector | |
| ▶ PREPARATION | ▶ Identify a website used for advocacy your students will be familiar with | |
| ▶ ISTE DIGCITCOMMIT COMPETENCY | ▶ ENGAGED: I use technology and digital channels for civic engagement, to solve problems and be a force for good in both physical and virtual communities. | |



SUPPORT MATERIALS

Visit facebook.com/fbgetdigital to access resources for parents and young people that can complement the lesson students took on Empowerment today.

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What is advocacy?

Part 1

TELL YOUR STUDENTS

There are many aspects of our communities and surroundings that we appreciate. Maybe we are grateful for our friends. It could be that we enjoy getting to play on a particular sports team. Perhaps we love having the opportunity to listen to new music from artists we like.

However, sometimes there are aspects about our community that don't sit well with us. Maybe the school just put a new dress code in place, requiring expensive clothes that we cannot afford. Perhaps an elected politician is trying to create laws that don't consider our needs. It's possible that the transportation options where we live are not designed to take us to the places that we need to go.

Let's say you noticed that the bus stations forced all of you to take three buses and a long walk to reach the nearest supermarket.

ASK YOUR STUDENTS

- ▶ How might you try to change that?
- ▶ Are there individuals you might reach out to who can help you?
- ▶ Maybe you have friends who experience some of the same problems as you. How might you all stand up for yourselves?

Part 2

TELL YOUR STUDENTS

In these kinds of situations, we often feel like things might be better if we were able to change what bothers us. This desire to stick up for what you believe in and create change is called "advocacy."

CLASS INTERACTION

On a projection screen at the front of the room, review a website used for advocacy. Highlight how the form of advocacy depicted in it began by people, often youth, who realized there was a problem affecting their community and wanted to do something to try to change it. Examples from the United States context include Fight For \$15 and the Women's March. Examples that have more of a global scope include Global Voices, Greenpeace and World Wildlife.

TELL YOUR STUDENTS

Now we are going to identify one issue in your community that you're passionate about and some next steps you and the community might take to solve a problem.

Assignment

Split students into groups of 3. Give each group time in the current session and at least two full days, to 1) research a problem impacting their community, identifying at least two ways the issue is affecting their community and two ways to potentially solve the problem and 2) develop a poster that provides information on the identified issue and potential solutions that they will present to the larger group as part of a "gallery walk."

TELL YOUR STUDENTS

In your groups,

1. Research and identify an aspect of your community (a "community" could be your school, neighborhood or a local group you belong to) that you would like to change. You can talk to your friends, teachers and/or family about things they would like to change or about the problems affecting them.
2. Create a poster. The posters created by each group will be hung on the wall and we will do a "gallery walk" together where each group will discuss the problem they identified and how to solve it.

Each group must identify at least two ways the issue is affecting their community and two potential ways to solve it.

Be creative: take photos and paste them onto the poster (ideally, make sure students have access to a printer) to illustrate the problem and/or the solutions or use flowcharts, graphs and charts to communicate the extent of the problem and/or the solutions.

Each poster should "stand alone"—in other words, the poster should have enough information on it so that someone can view/read it and understand the issue and potential solutions without a group member's explanation.

ASSIGNMENT

Give each group enough time to engage in research and develop their posters. Make sure that you are available for questions and technical support. When the larger group reconvenes, have students hang the posters on the wall, give the larger group 20 minutes to walk around and look at others' posters, then allow about 30 minutes to have each smaller group present their poster to the larger group.

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