

Community Map

Decide whether you'd like to focus on the area around your school or around your home. Draw a simple map of this area and label the landmarks, parks, stores, schools, libraries, etc. that are found in your area. Your map should be drawn from a bird's eye view.

Community Assets

Choose the activity that you're the most proud of, from page 2. Write that activity in the middle circle, below. In the wedges around the activity, write the character traits you had to exhibit to achieve that accomplishment. Examples: integrity, tenacity, dedication, etc.

Physical Assets: natural resources (lakes, streams, forests), landmarks, parks and recreation, etc.

- Describe the physical assets in your area: Are they spread out, well-maintained, easy to access by all?
- Which type of physical asset is the most represented on your map?
- Which physical asset do you interact with the most often?

Institutional Assets: schools, libraries, places of worship, banks and credit unions, community organizations, museums, etc.

- Describe the institutional assets in your area: Are they spread out, well-maintained, easy to access by all?
- Which type of institutional asset is the most represented on your map?
- Which type of institutional asset do you interact with the most often?

Cultural Assets: places where you can find art, music, theatre; events that encourage people to gather together around a shared experience, etc.

- Describe the cultural assets in your area: Are there annual events that people in your area look forward to, and where do they take place, how do people in your community enjoy music, art, and stories, etc.?
- Which type of cultural asset is the most represented on your map?
- Which type of cultural asset do you interact with the most often?

Overall Reflections:

- Which type of asset is most common in your area?
- Which of the community assets would you like to see improved or increased?
- What is a specific need that you can see?
 - Examples: More trash and recycling cans on the street

Issue Research

Research the specific need you identified at the bottom of page 2. Write the answers to the questions below. Continue in your writing journal if you need more room.

What need did you identify? Why is this issue important to you?

Find at least 3 relevant facts about this issue: How will addressing it improve your community's quality of life?

Find at least 3 concrete details about this issue: Is this a topic that's currently being discussed—or has it been discussed in the past—and the impact of this topic.

Are there any community groups currently advocating for this issue? Summarize the work they're doing below.

Who do you think you could write to about your issue? Examples: the Superintendent of your school district, your city council members, your Representative, etc.

Outline

When writing to changemakers with an issue you care about, your communications should be constructive, concise, and informed, and written in a polite tone. Read the information presented below and then use this template to draft your email on page 5

Email Subject: State the issue you're writing about (Example: "Support the Greenway Expansion!")

Greeting: Dear *Person's title + last name*. (Example: Superintendent Jones, Councilperson Murray)

Introduction Paragraph

- Share your name, your grade, and how you're affiliated with this person (Example: You're a student in the school district, or this person is your Representative)
- Repeat the the issue you're writing to this person about and what action you're urging them to take.

Body Paragraph

- State how you realized this is an issue in your community.
- Explain the impact this issue is currently having on your community by discussing the concrete details and relevant facts you researched.
- If applicable: share the work that community groups are doing

Conclusion Paragraph

- Share why this issue is important to you, personally. How does it affect you on a day-to-day basis?
- Repeat the action you'd like this person to take.
- Thank them for their consideration of the issue.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Email

Write your email using the template below—follow the outline on page 4 as a guide. If you need more space, continue in your writing journal.

Email Subject: _____

Dear _____,

Introduction Paragraph

Body Paragraph

Conclusion Paragraph

Sincerely,