

ESTIMATED TIME

This lesson will take two or three class periods to complete. However, students will need time to complete the **Geographic, School, and Virtual Communities - School Mapping** activity, for which they would need an entire week.

PREREQUISITES

- Students will need to have been in classes for at least a few weeks in order to complete the **School Mapping** activity.
- Available city map for this activity.
- Computers with Internet access for the **School Website** activity.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- **Geographic, School, and Virtual Communities Rubric**
- **School Mapping**
- **School Website**

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

This lesson asks students to analyze their position in their classes as well as the teacher's interactions with students. Students may be encouraged to take an objective view of their performance in a class in which they are doing poorly, which may help them understand a little bit more about their performance. This, in turn, may assist them in improving their grade in this course.

LESSON PLANNING

LESSON GOAL

Understand how various communities (i.e. school, neighborhood, and virtual) shape who you are and how you can use these communities to assist in your development.

Essential Question

In which geographic and virtual communities do I participate?

Student Expectations

1. Create a neighborhood map from memory and identify the neighborhood on a map.
2. Map a neighborhood route from one location to another and draw what exists en route.
3. Write a one-page narrative about your neighborhood.
4. Complete the **School Mapping** worksheet.
5. Complete the **School Website** worksheet.
6. Participate in class discussions about the activities.
7. Write a reflection about the lesson.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. Describe one's neighborhood and how it contributes to personal development.
2. Analyze how placement within a class contributes to or hinders progress in that class.
3. Identify how the school's website can personally benefit students.

RATIONALE

This lesson helps students understand their position within their school, neighborhood, and virtual communities. It will assist them in understanding how these various communities can be used to benefit their education or help them understand how they may not be performing to their capabilities because of these communities. This lesson will help students own their role in the communities and help them work to make their communities sources of strength.



Geographic School and Virtual Communities Rubric

PROCEDURES: WHAT TO DO

1. **WHOLE GROUP** Distribute the *Geographic, School, and Virtual Communities Rubric* to introduce the lesson and explain how students will be evaluated. Then ask students to think of all the different communities they belong to and list these on the board. Discuss the differences between a geographic neighborhood and a community, which can be in any location, even in cyberspace.
2. **INDIVIDUAL** Display a map of the school's city/region. Have students draw a mental map of their neighborhood (as detailed as they can get) on a blank sheet of paper. A mental map is a drawing of their neighborhood from memory. Their mental map should include the location of their homes, streets in the area, stores, schools, places of worship, etc., which are in the area around their houses. Have students identify their neighborhoods on the big map and mark them with sticky arrows, removable tape, or overlay.
3. **PAIRS** Pair students and follow these steps to further develop student maps.
 - a. Have students use the big map to write out directions to get to one another's neighborhoods.
 - b. With directions in hand, they should identify, along the route, any schools, churches, libraries, shopping centers, grocery stores, rivers, hills, wood lots, parks, play grounds, or other students' houses in between.
 - c. Have students share their neighborhood location and information to the class, and have the class help review maps by filling in any additional details that have not yet been mentioned.

ASSESSMENT

Mental Maps Create a neighborhood mental map and revise it based on feedback.

4. **INDIVIDUAL** Have each student write a narrative about his or her neighborhood. Narratives can be varied, but the focus is having students understand their neighborhoods and identify how living there has impacted who they are. The narrative should have these characteristics.



ASSIGNMENT 1

- a. Be at least one page in length.
- b. Accurately describe the feel of their neighborhood.
- c. Describe how the neighborhood has impacted personal growth and development.

Have students use the *Sakai* Assignments Tool to submit their narratives for evaluation.

ASSESSMENT

Neighborhood Narrative Write a narrative about the effects of the neighborhood on personal development.

School Mapping

School Website

Student Pages

5. INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT 2

When students have finished their neighborhood narratives, have them complete the *School Mapping* activity in which they analyze their role in the community of two different classes. Students may need to visit the classes to complete this activity. When complete, have students use the *Sakai* Assignments Tool to submit their analysis for evaluation.

6. SMALL GROUP After students have completed the *School Mapping* analysis, have them share their results in a small group. Students' discussion is important for helping them make connections between their classroom seating arrangement and classroom success.

ASSESSMENT

School Mapping Complete an analysis of classroom communities.

7. INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT 3

Have students review the school's website to analyze their role in a virtual community by completing the *School Website* form with the information they find on the website. When completed, have students use the *Sakai* Assignments Tool to submit their analyses for evaluation.

ASSESSMENT

School Website Complete an analysis of a virtual community.

- 8. WHOLE GROUP** Discuss the following questions.
- What communities are you a member of?
 - How does a community affect your academic success?
 - What can you do to improve your standing in a community?
 - How can you take advantage of the resources and benefits of your communities?
 - What can you do to improve your communities?

ASSESSMENT

Discussion Participate in a discussion about communities.

REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT 4

Have students reflect on the following prompt in writing. Have them use the *Sakai* Assignments Tool to submit their reflection for evaluation.

You have now mapped your school, neighborhood, and virtual communities.

- What was the most significant lesson or piece of information that you learned from these activities?
- How can you use this information to help you in your academic life?

INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY

ANNOUNCEMENT

- Use Announcements to remind students of assignments and due dates.
- Announcements should be coordinated with Assignments and Schedule.

SCHEDULE

- Add Assignments to the Schedule

EVALUATE/REVIEW

- Use Drop Box to access and evaluate student assignments
- Use Assignments to access and evaluate student assignments
- Student Portfolio
- Add a test or quiz if desired

LESSONS

- Review Lessons
- Add Resources if desired
- Change a Lesson if desired
- Schedule a Lesson
- Unschedule a Lesson

COMMUNICATE IF DESIRED

- Blogger
- Chat Room
- Drop box
- Mailtool
- Roster

Ohio Academic Content Standards

Grade 9 English Language Arts

Writing Applications

1. Write narratives that:
 - a. sustain reader interest by pacing action and developing an engaging plot (e.g., tension and suspense);
 - b. use a range of strategies and literary devices including figurative language and specific narration; and,
 - c. include an organized, well developed structure.

- In what way do these communities impact you? How can these communities better help you at your internship site or pass your classes?

ASSESSMENT

Reflection Complete a reflection about geographic, school, and virtual communities.

ASSESSMENT

Use the *Geographic, School, and Virtual Communities Rubric* to evaluate student performance. Have students complete the rubric as a self-evaluation and then discuss the results.

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with IEPs should still be able to participate in this lesson. They may need assistance, however, in order to complete all activities. Advisors should consult with the school's IEP specialist or coordinator to make specific plans for particular students.

GIFTED AND TALENTED

Gifted students should be challenged by the above activities but modifications may be necessary to challenge students to their full potential. Students may do this by performing an in-depth mapping of their neighborhood to scale, including interviewing their neighbors in order to develop an understanding of how the neighborhood has changed over time. For the *School Mapping* activity, gifted students may be asked to interview the teacher after class about their findings to see how much of the teacher's interactions were intentional/unintentional. Teachers can then help students understand why they do what they do and how the students can make better choices for themselves. Finally, for the virtual communities activity, students can look up another school's website to compare the web pages. The other school could be another high school in the city or in the conference, but students should take care to compare high schools to high schools.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WEBSITE SOURCES

Preview sites for appropriateness before recommending them to students. If links are broken, search for similar information.

- Center for Community Mapping <http://www.centerforcommunitymapping.org/default.htm> Access this site for an example of civic engagement projects related to virtual and geographic communities.

BOOK RESOURCES

- Rheingold, Howard. *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*. MIT Press, 2000. Use this book to learn more about virtual communities and the impact of the internet.