



Center for the Environment at Catawba College  
*Campaign for Clean Air*  
Clean Air in the Classroom

## Stage 2 Activity 4 | "Silver City Town Hall Meeting"

### Overview

Your group will represent all of the citizens who live and work in Silver City. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is going to lower the ozone standards from the current 75 parts per billion (ppb) of air down to around 65 ppb.

The established of these new standards means that Silver City will be in a heap of trouble, because their city currently maintains levels of ozone above the 65 ppb mark. That means the city will have to make some changes to meet the standards, or else the city will lose funding from the federal government.

Your group will divide into several groups each having their different interests, within the groups discuss your particular points of view, and then hold a town meeting to discuss the possible changes that may need to be made. The council will then vote on what should be done to help decrease the ozone levels in Silver City.

### North Carolina Standard Course of Study

This lesson meets seventh grade science competency goals 3.02, 3.03, and 3.04.

### Learning Objectives

Students will learn about the hazards of high ozone levels and the consequences of federal regulations and will practice decision making skills in a mock town meeting.

### Materials

- Classroom space set up conducive for a town hall.

### Procedures

- 1.) After reading over the activity's introduction and objectives as a group, begin preparing for the town meeting by randomly dividing your class into eight groups.
- 2.) Once the groups are formed, take about 15 minutes to
  - a.) Study the ozone facts.

- b.) Elaborate on their own special group's interests.
- c.) Discuss how each other group's interests might affect their interests.
- d.) Choose one spokesperson per group.

Providing students with writing materials and paper is a good way of evaluating their work as well as providing a place where they can gather their thoughts. Students are encouraged to read from their papers or speak without prompts, whichever may be more comfortable. An extension to this would be to provide costumes and dress up materials to allow students to feel more "in character."

- 3.) When each group is ready, the elected town council should call the town meeting to order, and follow the agenda (see below). Each small group should then be allowed time to comment on the issue.
- 4.) The council will summarize the issues it believes to be important, support or refute each issues and the vote on the overall issue of what should be done.

## Special Group Interests

**THE TOWN COUNCIL-** You must conduct the meeting, listen to all arguments, and decide what is best for the citizens. Based on the facts you gather, the most logical arguments made by any of the groups and your best judgment, you will put a suggestion up for a vote that expresses what action you feel is best for the town.

**MAYOR NOSEBEARD-** You think that the council should vote to make stiffer regulations on vehicles. However, an election is coming up and you want to make every citizen happy, so your statements are ones that are hard to argue against.

**CITY PLANNER-** You know of a lot of things that could be done that would help reduce the pollution, and think that the truck rest stop is the major contributor to the ozone problem.

**ASMALITA AND HER FRIENDS-** Asmalita's illness is caused by exposure to air pollution. You want lots of changes to be made so that you and others like you can feel better.

**POWER PLANT MANAGER-** You agree that the city should have energy with the lowest cost and the lowest impact on the environment.

**MACK THE TRUCK DRIVER-** You think that the new changes should not affect you, because it would affect you, because it would affect your costs and might put you out of business.

**METROPOLITAN DISTRICT DIRECTOR-** You want to both improve the roads and increase the budget to improve the quality of the public transportation.

**DOCTOR BREATHER-** You know that a lot of respiratory problems are caused by ozone pollution, and are able to give evidence of this. You also remind people that fixing the ozone problems would also make for healthier citizens.

## Assessment

- 5.) During the meeting, assessments could be made on the comments from each group representative.
- 6.) After the discussion write a one page essay about what they learned in the mock town meeting.

# TO ALL CONCERNED PARTIES

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An open meeting will be held for the community to review and input on the issue of that measures should be taken to reduce the ozone pollution to meet new federal EPA standards. All interested groups are to have selected spokespersons who will each be given four minutes to present their views. A few things to consider before the meeting include:

1. Economic Value
2. Political Value
3. Environmental Value
4. Health Value
5. Educational Value
6. Social Value
7. Independence Value

For the remainder of the meeting the council will vote on the suggestions made at the meeting.

**Location: Silver City Hall**

**Time: Tuesday Evening**