

## DAY 2

# Introductory Background Information



### **ESSENTIAL QUESTION:**

How do people, environment and events cause change and influence the design of towns and cities?

### **FOCUS QUESTION:**

What is the problem in Mediana City?

### ***Objective***

Students will do a close read of the article “**Park Not A Fun Place Anymore for Nine Year Olds**”, and summarize in a presentation various citizens’ groups concerns and solutions to the problem about the park.

### ***Lesson Overview***

Students will read and discuss the newspaper article and use what the text says explicitly and implicitly to inform their decision on the future of the park in Mediana City. They will then role-play that citizen’s opinion in a presentation to the City Council of Mediana City.

# Standards

## ***History Content Standards***

**4.5:** Students understand the structures, functions, and powers of local, state, and federal governments as described in the U.S. Constitution.

## ***ELA Common Core State Standards***

**RI4.1:** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RI4.2:** Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

**RI4.8:** Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

**RF4.4a,c:** Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

**W4.8:** Gather relevant information from print sources; take notes, paraphrase and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

**SL4.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

**SL4.2:** Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud in diverse media and formats.

**SL4.3:** Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker or media source provides to support particular points.

## Teacher Background

Tell the students they will be involved in a role-playing situation. This simulation is based on the following scenario: The only park in Mediana City is old, rundown, and far removed from the elementary school. A newspaper article (**Day 2 HO#1**) reports on the many concerns the citizens of the community have about the park. The article describes that a safety inspection has found that many health and safety concerns exist. Also the park is situated close to the Mediana City Middle School, and has become a place for these students to congregate, which has created a number of problems for the younger children. The city council for Mediana City is holding a public meeting to hear the citizens' concerns about the park, and to inform the councils' decision.

## Vocabulary

Community

City Council

Mayor

# Part I

## Description of Activities

- Divide students into six groups, creating heterogeneous reading groups. Each student group will represent a citizen's concern regarding the park, and will present that concern to the city council using the presentation guide. The groups will take the views of one of these citizens: a parent, a physical education teacher, a student, an emergency room doctor, a police officer, or a taxpayer.
- Distribute a copy of the newspaper article, **"Park Not a Fun Place Anymore for Nine Year Olds" (Day 2 HO#1)** to each member of the six groups. Discuss with the whole class the different types of groups represented in the newspaper article. Some of the characteristics of the groups may need defining, such as taxpayer.
- Do a close read of the article and use what the text says explicitly and inferentially to compile their notes and make a presentation to the city council in the role of that citizen using the presentation guide.
- Pass out one **Newspaper Note Organizer (Day 2 HO#2)** to each student. Read over this note-taking sheet with the whole group. Have the groups begin their work together by re-reading and annotating the article before the students begin work on the **Newspaper Note Organizer**.
- During this time the teacher should circulate throughout the classroom to check for understanding and to answer any questions. Teacher should note what the students are annotating and provide support where needed.
- After the students have completed their reading and note taking, ask the groups to reach consensus on the three most important problems and their proposed solution.

- Once they have made a decision, they will present their views to the whole class. They will need to support their views by presenting the evidence they gathered from the newspaper article.
- Tell students they need to prepare what they will say at the city council meeting. Pass out the **City Council Presentation Guide (Day 2 HO#3)** to every student. Because each member of the group may be called on to speak at the city council meeting, each member of the group needs to fill out a **Presentation Guide**. Tell students that each group will be given two minutes to make their presentation. Remind students that they have taken on the roll of the citizen or citizen's group that they were assigned. Information on the **Presentation Guide** should come only from evidence gathered from the newspaper article.
- The teacher may choose to be the mayor and preside over the city council meeting, or a student may be chosen. The mayor calls the meeting to order, chooses the order in which the citizens present, and acts as the timekeeper for the presentations.
- The mayor calls the meeting to order. The mayor should pass out one copy of the sheet titled **How to Conduct a City Council Meeting (Day2 HO#4)** to each group. The class will read over the process so they know what to expect.
- The mayor will focus the participants by reviewing why the class City Council Meeting is being held. He or she will call the citizen or citizen groups up one-by-one to present their opinion on the park, and will use the Presentation Guide to assist in providing a rationale for their point of view.
- The teacher will provide a large classroom graphic organizer to note and summarize what was said in each presentation.

## ***Conclusion***

- After the city council meeting process, the teacher will debrief by leading a discussion about the process:

### **Teacher will ask:**

- *How did it feel to take on the role of another person?  
What did they learn from the process?*
- After the presentations, the teacher will tell the students that this process in city government is very typical. The citizens of the community elect the city council, and it is very important that the council listens to the concerns of the electorate. The city council oversees the functions of the community, makes policy, and sets the budget. So it is within their responsibilities to determine if funding for a new city park are in the best interest of the community.
- **Group Discussion**  
Allow time for small groups to discuss their responses to the newspaper article before participating in a whole class group discussion

### **Teacher will ask:**

- *What problems are the most important at Mediana City Park?  
What is causing the problems?  
What solution do you have for these problems?*
- **Journal Entry**

### **Teacher will say:**

- *Today you took on the position of a citizen from Mediana City to identify the problems and decide on a solution.*

Write a journal entry answering the following question:

*What are the problems and your best solution to the problems at Mediana City Park?*

# THE MEDIANA CITY CHRONICLE

## Park Not A Fun Place Anymore for Nine Year Olds

-Stan Chen

"The big kids wouldn't let me play basketball, again" complained nine-year-old, Frankie Gonzalez.

"I cut my knee on that old slide," sniffled nine-year-old Eva Delgado.

Elementary students in Mediana City, California have plenty of complaints about their community park. The Mediana City Park, located on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Main Street, just two blocks east of Mediana City Middle School, appears to have seen better days. The community's only park opened in 1950. At that time it was a clean, safe and fun place for Mediana City's youngest citizens to meet and play together. The park at that time had green grass, trees and no graffiti.

A safety report filed last week shows many safety violations exist at the old park. Ms. Ana Garcia, the safety inspector for the County office, reported rusty playground equipment, cracks and potholes in the asphalt, and missing handrails on the slide. The park bathrooms had clogged plumbing and there was no water.

Dr. Mendoza, an emergency room doctor at Mediana City Hospital, stated that he has personally seen an increase in injuries from students playing at the park. The most common injuries were broken bones, cuts and scrapes. One seven-year-old girl received a concussion when she tripped last week jumping rope on cracked pavement.

Mediana City Park is located two blocks from Mediana City Middle School, but seven miles away from Main Elementary School. Mr. Cho, a father of three young boys, complains that the park is too far away for his boys to walk by themselves. When he takes them there by car, the park is often filled with older children who won't let his boys play on the courts. The boys also want a grassy field to play soccer. Ms. Alvarez, a parent of a fourth-grade girl, worries that her daughter will be bullied by the older girls. There are many students from the middle school there during the day instead of being in school.

"We have been breaking up fights at the park," reported Officer Frank Jones of the Mediana City Police Department. "More graffiti is showing up on the walls and slide."

The costs to maintain a community park are rising. "The costs for watering the grass and plants alone have tripled," reported Mayor Hamilton. "Taxpayers don't want to pay more taxes to buy new playground equipment for the park."

The Mediana City Council will meet to address the park problem on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. in the City Hall. Council Member Cecilia Stewart said, "We are hoping to hear the concerns of the community and find a way to solve this problem." All Mediana City citizens are invited to attend and participate.

### Newspaper Note Organizer

Describe the person or group you are representing. Who would be included in this group? Why is this group interested in the park?	What are the problems found in Mediana City Park?
What is causing the problems?	What are some solutions for the problem?

1. Star the 3 most important problems to your group.
2. Choose the best solution that your group will present to the City Council.



## City Council Presentation Guide

We are representing the views of \_\_\_\_\_.

It is our opinion that the three most important problems at Mediana City Park are: (cite evidence)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We believe these problems are caused by:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A solution for these problems is:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

So, in conclusion, we the \_\_\_\_\_ believe that the City Council of Mediana City should vote to:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## **How to Conduct a City Council Meeting**

1. Each citizen or citizen group will have a two-minute time limit to tell the city council what the most important problems are at Mediana City Park and a solution for these problems.
2. Each group must provide evidence from the newspaper article, "Park Not A Fun Place Anymore for Nine Year Olds" to support their recommendations.
3. Every participant in this meeting must listen carefully to all the speakers.
4. No one may interrupt the citizen who is speaking.
5. Each group must respect the opinions stated by the other citizens.

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