



Zones and Interconnectivity Activity

Objective:

This activity helps students learn how to make basic urban plans for an imaginary city.

Time:

1 - 3 Hours

Materials:

- Opening Worksheet (included below)
- Planning Survey Worksheet (included below)
- Design Worksheet (included below)
- Assessment Worksheet (included below)
- Teacher's pre-drawn urban plan (see assessment activity in step #8 of the instructions below)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Initial brainstorming:** Lead a class discussion about communities, using the following questions:

Would the following locations be logical?

- A grocery store on the outskirts of town.
- An elementary school next to a jail.
- A library near a school.
- Four grocery stores next to each other.
- A coffee shop near a busy road.
- A school on the opposite side of town from residential areas.
- A shopping mall in a sparsely populated area.

Questions about planning and development:

- What factors would help determine the type and number of buildings needed?
- Where will people be employed? In what industries?
- Are there options that can be combined?



INSTRUCTIONS (Continued):

2. Distribute the **Opening Worksheet**. This worksheet defines the problem, and provides a planning chart for student groups to use to determine how they will work together to complete the entire project by the assigned due date. Be sure to go over the worksheet as a class, answer questions, and have the students complete the plan, before moving forward.

The problem is defined on the worksheet via a letter to the students:

Dear students,

The council members of Weebuilding town have recently acquired a large plot of land. The members of the council would like your team's assistance in creating a new town on this land. The council will provide funding for 20 buildings in the first year, but it is important that you make wise choices about which buildings should be constructed. Once you have settled on specific types of buildings, you will need to draw up plans in the form of a large-scale map. Your team will present your map and supporting documents to the council.

3. Survey the students to determine which sorts of buildings (commercial, residential, industrial, and municipal) they want to include in their new towns. Organize this information into a chart listing types and numbers of buildings.
4. Discuss with the class why certain buildings are necessary—a school, perhaps, and a fire station, a gas station, a grocery store, a residential building (such as an apartment complex), an office building, and so on. Introduce the concept of growth. Should some buildings go up before others? Which should be built in the first year? [These should offer employment for a few people who move to the town, as well as for others who commute.] What services should support these people?



INSTRUCTIONS (Continued):

5. Distribute the **Planning Survey Worksheet**. Have students form small groups representing construction companies. The companies should determine which buildings they are going to build the first year and provide valid reasons for their choices. Have the students list which businesses they would like to build the second year and into the future. When would something such as a nail salon go up? How quickly would the town expand? What factors would influence growth? Would there be any reason not to grow year after year? What would happen if a major employer were to leave town or go bankrupt?
6. Distribute the **Design Worksheet**. Have the student construction teams draw plans on graph paper for their new towns. How would they lay out the community? Would everything in the first-year plan be on a main street or widely dispersed? Once the plans are drawn, they should be presented to the town inspector (you, the teacher) for approval.
7. After inspection, have the class vote on its favorite plan from among those submitted. Transfer that plan, grid square by grid square, to a large display in your classroom.
8. **Assessment Activity:** Create a map similar to the one the students made. Remove some important features from the map, place the fire department at the far outskirts of town, and place two grocery stores both in the same neighborhood. Pass the map out, and have students analyze it and answer questions on the **Assessment Worksheet**. Or make your own design “mistakes” and develop custom assessment questions to determine students’ understanding.

Students should recognize important needs such as a fire department, a hospital, a school, a post office, residences, and grocery stores. They should also understand that, in general, these types of structures take priority over businesses that serve a smaller segment of a town’s population. Can they suggest communities that might be exceptions to such guidelines?



Zones and Interconnectivity Activity: Opening Worksheet

Dear students,

The council members of Weebuilding town have recently acquired a large plot of land. The members of the council would like your team's assistance in creating a new town on this land. The council will provide funding for 20 buildings in the first year, but it is important that you make wise choices about which buildings should be constructed. Once you have settled on specific types of buildings, you will need to draw up plans in the form of a large-scale map. Your team will present your map and supporting documents to the council.

Objective: _____

Funding Source: _____

Action Item	Timeline	Persons Responsible	Due Date



Zones and Interconnectivity: Planning Survey Worksheet (Continued)

Complete the chart for the second year! Be sure to refer to the previous page listing buildings built during the first year.

YEAR 2			
Building	Building Type	How Many?	Why?



Zones and Interconnectivity Activity: Design Worksheet

Use this graph paper to draw out your team's plans for its new town. Consider: How will you lay out the community? Will everything in the first-year plan be on a main street or widely dispersed? Once the plans are drawn, present your plans to the town inspector (the teacher) for approval.



