**Teacher Instructions**

Facilitators: At least 1

Ideal Age Range: 10+

Length of Time: 20-40 min depending on engagement level

Supplies:
- Map of your community with names of the neighborhoods listed. The size of the map should be around 16-18” x 22-24”
- Markers
- Post-it Notes (small size)
- Large Poster Board. The size of the poster should be around 24” x 36”

**OBJECTIVE**

Students will learn about the various historic and current neighborhoods within their city or community listed on the map provided. Students will be able to see the relationship from one neighborhood to the other, which neighborhoods are adjacent to each other, and how one neighborhood could be very distinct from the other.

With this geographic knowledge of various neighborhoods and the experience they will have of knowing and living in their own neighborhood, students will be able to brainstorm the meaning of a neighborhood, those words or phrases will be added to the idea web on the poster board during the activity.

Students will be able to list several characteristics that make a great neighborhood and will be able to define what a neighborhood is.

By recognizing and describing various neighborhoods on the map and identifying which one is their favorite, the students will then be able to explain the characteristics they chose of what a great neighborhood is and justify their answers that will be written on the idea web poster board.

**PRELIMINARY SET-UP**

The large-scale color map needs to be printed or ordered around a week prior to the activity. Assume more time if using a printing service.

Immediately prior to the activity, the map needs to be mounted to the wall using tape to secure the edges or the map can be placed on the floor or table so that it is easily seen by the students.

Break apart the post-it notes ahead of time, and pre-distribute one post-it note per student.

Next to the neighborhood map, place the large blank poster board so that they are side-by-side. With the markers, print the word “Neighborhood” in the center of the poster board and draw a circle around it.

When the students are brainstorming, you can assist with some prompts about what makes a neighborhood great, such as: pride in ownership, safety, friendly streets, great schools, parks, outdoor activities, tree-lined streets, benches, sidewalks, trails, biking, walking, shopping, corner store, close to public transportation, backyards, good neighbors, kids to play with on the block, music or concert in the park, mix of housing, gathering places, plazas, sidewalks, front stoops or porches.
WHAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD?
A neighborhood is one small area within a city or town. It is a group of dwellings and other buildings on streets that run near each other. Some neighborhoods have small houses. Some neighborhoods have larger houses. Some neighborhoods have rows of duplexes or apartment buildings. Some neighborhoods have many different kinds of dwellings on the same street. Many neighborhoods also contain stores and other businesses. A neighborhood might have a grocery store, a gas station, a school or a hospital. It might have a playground or a swimming pool. A neighborhood is a place where some people live, some people work, and some people play. A neighborhood is a community.

FIND YOUR FAVORITE NEIGHBORHOOD
1. Ask the students to form a line behind the facilitator who is positioned near the map.
2. As each student reaches the facilitator, ask them to pick their favorite neighborhood on the map.
3. Then have them place the post-it note on that neighborhood location.

BRAINSTORMING IDEA WEB
1. Ask the students to brainstorm about what the term “neighborhood” means to them.
2. Record the student’s answers on the poster board in an idea web with the word neighborhood at the center and draw lines connecting the word to the student’s words, making a web.

MAKING A GREAT PLACE: WHAT’S IMPORTANT?
1. How important is it that a neighborhood have shops and services within an easy walk from home or school?
2. How important is it that a neighborhood have safe and friendly streets?
3. What are the different ways of getting into, out of and around your neighborhood? (Note bus lines, bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly streets.)
4. What types of houses do you think would blend in well in your neighborhood. Which types would not fit well?
5. How important is it that a neighborhood have places for people to meet and talk?
6. What gives your neighborhood its special character?

CONCLUSION: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Ask the students to raise their hands and only call on 1 of them: “Which neighborhood had the most post-it notes stuck to it? Why do you think that is?”
2. Ask the students to raise their hands and only call on 1 of them: “How many words appeared on the idea web poster board describing a neighborhood?”
3. Ask the students to raise their hands and call on 2-3 of them: “Why is it important to share what makes you excited to live in your neighborhood? Who else could we share this with?” (Council members, neighborhood leaders, your teacher, etc.)
4. Ask the students to raise their hands and call on 2-3 of them: Younger audience: “Can only adults make things better?” / Older audience: “What is the role of younger people in improving their neighborhood? How can you plan to make a difference?”

WHAT DO PLANNERS DO?
An urban planner is a professional who works to enhance the quality of life. A planner is a person who helps shape the design and form of a city or place, from buildings to roads, and parks and more. Planners know how important neighborhoods are to communities and work hard making sure they are a great place to live, work, and play!