



DOLLARS AND SENSE

(20 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students allocate their “dollars” toward the improvement of the community priorities they deem most important.

MATERIALS

Kids Voting Dollars handout

GET READY

- ✓ Duplicate a page of four “dollars” for each student. Cut the dollars apart.
- ✓ Label five boxes:
 - ✓ CRIME FIGHTING
 - ✓ TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION
 - ✓ REDUCING AIR & WATER POLLUTION
 - ✓ ARTS AND RECREATION
 - ✓ SCHOOLS

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Explain to your students that local communities obtain money to provide services in several ways: they use taxes (example: sales tax); they issue bonds (investments in the city that are paid back years later); they receive money from state and national governments.
- ✓ Say, *Today each of you will decide how to distribute extra money to fund programs in our community. You have four dollars to give and five kinds of services to choose from. You may distribute your dollars any way you want, depositing as many dollars as you wish in each box.*
- ✓ Ask your students to identify the greatest needs of their town, and then to walk up to the boxes and spend their dollars.

- ✓ After the first round, count the allocations. Write the results on the board.
- ✓ Instruct your students to create graphs representing the total number of dollars that went to each area.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Why did you give out the money the way you did? Which programs seemed most important to you?*
- ★ *What have you heard in the news about those five areas? Is anything good happening? Anything bad?*
- ★ *Is it important that we know what is going on in these different areas? Why or why not?*
- ★ *What can we do to have an impact in these different areas?*

MORE!

Invite a city planner to address your class. Send this lesson to his/her office beforehand. Ask him/her to plan his/her talk around how he/she would spend the four “dollars” in your simulation. Encourage your students to bring to class any election paraphernalia they find for a bulletin board. Ask them to look in magazines, newspapers, and mailed brochures.



KIDS VOTING DOLLARS

