**Citizen Activist Project**

In this project you will start to become an activist to improve your community and your world. When people become aware of problems in their communities, they often want the government or another agency to develop and carry out policies to deal with those problems. These may be problems for which there are existing policies or laws that do not work well, existing policies or laws that are not being enforced, or no policies or laws. As a citizen of the United States you have a right to say what you think about problems in your state, the nation, and about international problems. You also have a right to say what you think the government should do about problems in your community. Additionally, you have the right to try to influence the decisions and actions people in your government make about all of those problems. This project is intended to help you learn how best to express your opinions on social and political issues, and how best to influence the world in which you live. In other words, this project is intended to help you practice democracy.

Use the following guidelines to work on the project:

1- Identify a problem to study. You will begin by identifying a problem in your community that you think is important enough to take action on.

2- Gather information. You will need to gather and evaluate information from a variety of sources.

3- Examine solutions. You will examine policies that are currently used by the government or other agencies dealing with your problem and issue, as well as alternative suggestions made by others.

4- Develop your own public policy. You will develop a public policy that you think your government or another agency should adopt to deal with your problem and issue.

5- Develop an action plan. You will develop a plan of action to show how you will influence the appropriate government or other agency to adopt your public policy.

We will be working on this periodically throughout the rest of the six weeks. You should compile the work you do each day and save it until the next time we work on the project.

Your graded assignment for the project will be to create a computer program (PPT, Word document, etc.) that describes what you plan to do. Use the following questions to help you explain your project. Your “community” can be local, regional, national, or international in scope and size—it’s up to you.

**1-Goal**

-What is the social or political issue that you are working on?

-What is the problem that you are trying to help solve?

**2-Background information on your issue**

-How serious is the problem in your community?

-How widespread is the problem?

-How does it affect people in your community?

-Are there laws dealing with this problem in your community? What are they? Do these laws work well or not? Why?

-What level or levels of government should deal with this problem? What are they doing and why?

-Are their people and/or groups dealing with this problem already? What are they doing? Is their work good or not? Why? Would you be interested in doing similar work? Why?

**3-Public Policy Proposal and Explanation**

-What is your specific proposal to deal with this problem?

-What specifically do you think the government or others should do to deal with this problem?

-Why is your solution to the problem a good one?

-Does your solution address the different concerns of people in your community? How?

-Why is your solution better than other ideas that have been proposed?

**4-Plan of Action**

-How will you get your policy proposal to become a reality?

-How will you act so that people will accept and adopt your solution to the problem?

-Will you form a group and get others to help you? How will you do this? What will the group do? How will it be effective?

-Who will you have to meet or interact with?

-Will you have to go to the government to put your plan into action and make your solution work?

-Will you have to go to other people to put your plan into action and make your solution work?

-What will you do to have them accept your proposal? How will you convince them that your proposal is one that they should accept?