

SPEAK UP! SPEAK OUT!



Student Project Packet

Speak Up! Speak Out! is a project-based civic engagement program for middle and high school students.

Participants form teams, identify a community issue that matters to them, research that problem, and propose a workable solution to address it.

Students then present their research and proposed solutions to community leaders at the Civics Fair competition set for Tuesday May 19th at UT Dallas. The top three teams will receive funds to use toward the implementation of their solutions.

Learn More:

www.speakupspeakout.org
www.facebook.com/SpeakUpSpeakOutTX
@susotX on twitter

Questions? Contact Courtney Arnold

Courtney.arnold@austin.utexas.edu
512-471-7142



What other students like about SUSO:



"I loved the process of the entire experience. I liked getting in groups and brainstorming about problems. I loved investigating and collecting research, and then putting it all together was a blast."

"We got to actually be part of a community-changing project."



"It was fascinating to listen to others' projects, arguments and solutions; also, I liked meeting new people and sharing ideas."



"Completing the project and presenting it gave us hope that we can make a change by letting our voices be heard and helping others to do so."



The 5 Steps of a *Speak Up! Speak Out!* Project

Step 1: Identify a Problem

- Brainstorm community needs or issues that matter to you
- Write criteria to evaluate the proposed topics and choose one

Step 2: Explore the Problem

- Brainstorm possible root causes of the problem
- Survey the community to better understand the root causes
- Identify key players: decision makers, allies, and opponents
- With this in mind, choose one specific aspect of the issue to address

Step 3: Collect Data

- Interview experts and key players (primary research)
- Conduct research in the library and online (secondary research)

Step 4: Identify a Solution

- Brainstorm a range of solutions that may involve influencing decision makers, raising community awareness, and doing work.
- Rank your solutions and come to consensus on one solution
- Create a plan for implementation

Step 5: Prepare and Present

- Oral Presentations
 - Informative Speech (explains the problem)
 - Persuasive Speech (proposes the solution)
- Solution Station (table-top poster for teams participating in person, or PowerPoint presentation for teams participating via video conference)
- Present to one or more key decision makers
- Present to judges, experts and peers at the Civics Fair!

Project Process Checklist

Step 1: Identify a Problem

- Brainstorm list of specific problems of interest
- Rank suitability of topics based on chosen criteria
- Choose the problem that meets the most criteria and is of highest interest to the group

Step 2: Explore the Problem

- Write a specific problem statement
- Brainstorm all of the possible root causes of the problem
- Choose one specific, actionable root cause of your issue to focus on
- Complete a community survey
- Identify key players: decision makers, allies and possible opponents for your issue

Step 3: Collect Data

- Choose the methods you will use to collect data on your issue
 - Interviews (with key decision makers, experts, allies, opponents, members of impacted community)
 - Collect Existing Data (from non-profits, policy institutes, and researchers that work on your chosen issue in your community and in other places)
- Do your interviews and other data collection and research regarding the problem's root cause, current status and possible solutions
- Record the information you gathered. Make several lists:
 - Statistics that support why your problem is worthy of attention
 - List everything that has already been tried to address your problem (what did/didn't work)
 - List people and organizations who could help you address the problem
- Have a discussion with your team about your findings
 - How can you convince the judges that your problem needs to be solved?
 - What were some of the most impressive statistics that you found?
 - What do you think needs to be done?

Step 4: Identify a Solution

- Make a list of possible solutions
- Rank your solutions and come to consensus on one solution
- Create a plan for implementation

Step 5: Prepare & Present

- Sketch your Solution Station or Digital Presentation
- Create the Solution Station or Digital Presentation
- Write Informative Speech
- Write Persuasive Speech
- Present your ideas to one or more key decision makers in your school or community
- Present at the Civics Fair!

Summary: What We Know about the Issue

1. Describe the situation. *What do you see happening? What has happened or is happening regarding ___(your problem in specific terms)___?*

2. Identify the problem. *What needs to change? What needs to happen regarding ___ (your problem in specific terms)___?*

3. Relate the problem to your experience. *How have you (and others) been impacted?*

4. Analyze the social or cultural reasons for the problem. *Why does this happen? What are the root causes – those situations that contribute to the problem? **What is the MOST actionable root cause?***

5. Seek workable solutions. *What can be done to address the root causes?*

Writing a Community Survey

Helpful Hints for Writing a Questionnaire:

- Keep it short (generally one page is sufficient).
- Test the survey on the class first before giving it out to others. Make sure that everything makes sense.
- Don't ask questions that will embarrass anyone or invade students' privacy.
- If it is an anonymous survey, make sure it stays that way. Do not leave survey results in places where others might access them.
- Don't reward or punish students based on their responses.

Surveys can consist of:

1. *Open-ended questions* – These questions give student a blank space fill in a response. This survey question type is generally used to obtain general, rather than specific, feedback.

For example: Why do you think that people at our school smoke?

Pro	Con
Writing the questions is relatively easy	Compiling the information is more difficult than multiple choice or ranking questions

Tips: Make sure that your questions are specific and not too general. For example, if you would like to know about the online delivery of information for a class, and you asked the following questions: “What do you think about the format of this class?” The problem is that the word “format” is too ambiguous – it doesn’t refer to online vs. classroom delivery; five minutes vs. ten; the structure of the program, If you have a specific purpose for a question, make sure it’s clear.

2. *Multiple-choice questions* – These questions can help your students to collect specific information with specific answer choices.

For example, if you wanted to know which problem was most relevant, difficult, or meaningless, your students might ask:

Which of the following is the leading contributor to smoking on our campus?

- A. Convenience stores sell to anyone
- B. Tobacco industry marketing
- C. No one understands the risks
- D. College students smoke Hookah and Biddis so students think it’s harmless
- E. Staff and students smoke together at the rec. center so students think it’s cool.

3. *Rating scales* – These questions allow students to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with specific statements. Typically, a statement is presented, then their peers can respond on a scale that indicates how much or how little they agree with the statement. For example:

For the following statements, please indicate whether you agree or disagree.					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Smoking is a problem at our school	1	2	3	4	5
Advertising by the tobacco industry makes teenagers want to smoke	1	2	3	4	5

Helpful Hints for Interviewing

From: Jarvis, S. & Han, S. (2007). American Trustees Curriculum. University of Texas at Austin

Advice for novice interviewers from the literature on qualitative interview techniques:

- Qualitative interviewing requires concentrated, rapt attention
 - To follow up on interesting comments
 - To detect when interviewees are giving answers meant for public consumption rather than their true opinions
 - To monitor the progress of the interview
- Yes/no questions are inappropriate; try these approaches instead:
 - “Walk me through a typical day”
 - “Tell me a story about a particular event that illustrates what they've been talking about”
- Trace a story back to its very beginning
 - “Can you describe how _____ started”
 - “Please say more about the difference between _____ and _____”
- Give clues as to how detailed you would like their answers to be
- Let them know what you will cover
- Provide careful feedback in the beginning of the interview
- Be prepared to follow up whenever you're not sure about what the person is saying
 - “What does that look like?” “How does that work?” “What is an example of that?”
 - Ask for clarification, details, and examples
- Avoid leading questions
 - Bad: “Don't you think you should earn more money?”
 - Better: “Tell me about the pay scale at your company”
- Don't interrupt
 - Can always ask for clarification later
 - Become comfortable with silence
 - Learn probes: “I see,” “Yes,” “Uh-huh,” “Please continue”
- Strike a balance between being formal versus casual
 - If too formal, participants may not open up
 - If too casually, participants may not take the interview seriously, may stray off topic
- Leave the interview on a positive note
 - Get the interviewee to agree to be contacted again (if necessary)
 - May need to clarify something they said, or ask new questions raised by subsequent interviews
 - “Is there anything that I missed?” “Is there something else that you would like to talk about?”
 - “Is there something that we've discussed today that is more important than the other topics?”

Planning an Interview

From: Jarvis, S. & Han, S. (2007). American Trustees Curriculum. University of Texas at Austin

Each team will create a guide to use for the upcoming interview with your designated community leader or expert. The interview guide should include a list of questions that are organized by several themes. Complete the following worksheet:

1. Write 3-5 background questions. Questions may include:

- How serious is this problem?
- How widespread is the problem?
- What are causes of the problem?

2. Write 3-5 questions that help to explore possible solutions and/or alternatives. Questions may include:

- What are the possible solutions?
- Which solution makes the most sense to you? Which solution do you prefer and why?
- Why are there so many different approaches?
- If your team decides to go with a particular solution, ask the expert what he/she thinks about the solution? Does this solution address the “root causes” of the problem?

3. Write 3-5 questions that help you to acquire information about the challenges, obstacles and/or struggles with your community problem. Depending on the interviewee’s level of expertise, you may also want to ask them how they got interested in their subject area. Questions may include:

- What are the biggest challenges or obstacles in this community need or problem area?
- What lessons have you learned working in this problem area?
- If you have implemented a solution, what might you have done differently?

4. Write 3-5 questions about where additional information can be found. Your main goal should be to respect your interviewee while gathering the information that you need to plot your next steps.

Questions may include:

- Where can we look for additional information on the subject?
- Who is involved in solving this problem (if anyone)? Who else is working on this matter?
- Who else should we talk to?
- Who can help us?

Solution Planning Guide

Step One: Vision Statement

Create a statement that conveys the ideal, long-range goal of your project. For example if a team is working on cleaning up litter in their neighborhood the statement might be:
“Our neighborhood works together to maintain a litter-free community.”

Step Two: Setting Goals

Goals should be general statements that identify the endpoints of your project. Begin by brainstorming possible goals towards reaching the ideal outcome. Once the team reaches consensus, record and post the goals. Goals should be stated in a pro-active way:
“To increase the numbers of youth volunteers.”

Step Three: Objectives

Objectives are small measurable goals that help you move towards the larger goals you have set. They should be specific steps that teams will take in order to reach the larger goals listed. For example if the goal is raise money for a beautification project in October, the objective would be: “Plan a fundraising dinner for the month of September.”

Step Four: Solution Title

A project title helps to restate your vision and facilitates spreading the word about your project in the community.

Step Five: Resources

Brainstorm and list any resources that might be available to the group. They could include: funds, materials, other organizations, peers, parents, meeting place, etc.

Step Six: Identify Critical Factors for Success

Brainstorm possible factors that will contribute to the success of your project. After brainstorming, narrow the list to five factors that would be most valuable. For example: “Volunteers willing and available to help with the initial litter clean-up.”

Step Seven: Potential Obstacles

It is important to approach your project in a pro-active way. This list should be a simple, concrete list of 3-5 obstacles that need to be addressed. An example might be lack of financial resources to buy supplies.

Step Eight: Tasks

Tasks and goals for completion should be assigned to group members. The group should reach agreement for task assignments. Remember that it is helpful to assign tasks based upon individual strengths whenever possible.



Guidelines for Civics Fair Participants:

Date: Tuesday, May 19th, 2015

Location: UT Dallas

The *Speak Up! Speak Out!* (SUSO) Civics Fair is a three part event consisting of **Oral Presentations, Solution Stations, and Reflection Sessions**. The oral presentations will happen in an auditorium as well as via teleconference for remote participants. Judges and community members will visit the students' Solution Stations if participating in-person. Remote participants will create a digital presentation (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) for judges to view during the oral presentation. In addition to listening to some peer speeches and visiting other Solutions Stations, Fair participants will go into discussion groups to reflect on their experiences. The judges' final scoring is announced in the closing session.

Guidelines for Solution Station*

Much like a typical science fair poster, Solution Stations are a visual table top poster representation of the problem and solution. Each judge spends approximately eight minutes at each of the Solution Stations he or she is assigned, going over materials and asking questions. . Each team will:

- Develop a visual presentation about your problem and solution in the form of a tri-fold presentation board
- Provide visitors a firm grasp of points in just a few minutes
- Use charts and graphs on poster board, illustrations, collages, models, audio segments, video pieces, PowerPoint presentations, student led explanations of materials, etc. to meet the team's goals**
- Staff the stations with students willing and able to answer questions posed by the judges

*Digital presentations for remote participation should follow the basic content requirements of the Solution Stations.

**SUSO will provide a table for each team to set up their Solution Station. Any technology needs such as laptops, TVs and DVD players or projectors must be supplied by the team.

Guidelines for Oral Presentations

Each team is responsible for two speeches, one informative and one persuasive. The ideal presentation will be logical, easy to follow, organized, and well-researched. The solution will be original and innovative. The participants will engage the audience, maintain their attention, and be able to answer questions from the judges.

- **Informative Speech (4 minutes)**
 - Define the problem, state its importance, and detail the problem's impact on the community
- **Persuasive Speech (4 minutes)**
 - Explain the proposed solution, detail the benefits of the proposed solution, and examine the consequences of failing to adopt the proposed solution.

Remote Participants should create a digital visual presentation that coincides with their oral presentation. Both should adhere to the guidelines stated above.

Civics Fair Preparation List

The Solution Station should include:

- A Title
- A summary of research and findings including root causes and current status of the problem
- A summary of the specifics of your problem (who, what, when, where, how much, how often.) Consider whether you can use other senses to express the problem – sight, sound, texture?
- A summary of the specifics of your solution

Objectives of the Solution Station:

- Develop a visual presentation about your problem and solution
- Give Station visitors a clear understanding of the problem, how it is impacting the community, and how the team proposes solving it
- Provide visitors a firm grasp of points in just a few minutes
- Use charts and graphs on poster board, illustrations, collages, models, audio segments, video pieces, PowerPoint presentations, student led explanations of materials, etc. to meet the team's goals
- Staff the stations with students willing and able to answer questions posed by the judges

The speeches should include:

- Informative Speech (4 minutes). Define the problem, state its importance, and detail the problem's impact on the community
- Persuasive Speech (4 minutes). Explain the proposed solution, detail the benefits of the proposed solution, and examine the consequences of failing to adopt the proposed solution.

To Do:

- Create a sketch outline of your Solution Station
- Using your draft sketch as a guide, type the sections of your poster, draw the illustrations, etc. Glue them to the board and add creative details to make it interesting to view. If you are participating remotely, prepare your PowerPoint.
- Write a draft of each speech. Present the speeches to the team or sponsor
- Edit the speeches to create a final version
- Practice taking questions from judges through a role play. Have teacher or a team member to present to be a judge. Present the Solution Station and speeches and respond to their questions.

Speak Up! Speak Out! Civics Fair Project Evaluation

Assessment Area	Exceeds	-	Meets	-	Nears	-	Needs Work	-	Points Awarded
The Identified Issue: Did presenters identify a specific issue that the school or local community faces? Can they explain why this issue is deserving of attention? Do they have reasons or evidence to indicate that their issue is significant and relevant to the community?	10		8		6		4		
Research: Did presenters use a variety of secondary sources for their research (outside sources, internet, news, books, etc.)? Did presenters <i>exceed</i> expectations by also consulting primary sources through interviews or surveys? Can presenters identify the key players involved in their issue, such as relevant decision makers, allies or opponents? Did presenters <i>exceed</i> expectations by interviewing or presenting to key decision makers and/or experts?	10		8		6		4		
Proposed Solution & Strategy: Did presenters propose a specific solution? Have presenters made a thoughtful action plan with concrete steps? Can presenters explain the intended impact of their solution? How actionable and realistic is this solution?	10		8		6		4		
Quality of Presentation: Is the presentation engaging, easy to understand, and relatively free of errors? How knowledgeable are presenters about their issue and proposed solution?	10		8		6		4		
Total Points: _____/40 possible									

Fall 2012; Adapted from Mikva Challenge, courtesy of Jill Bass

Note to students:

Remote participants will be evaluated on this rubric only. The scores from all of the judges will be averaged for each team to reach a final overall score.

In-person participants will also be evaluated on the rubric on the following page for the quality of their solution station presentation. The scores from all of the speech judges and all of the solution station judges will be averaged separately. These two scores will then be averaged to reach a final overall score.

Speak Up! Speak Out! Civics Fair Solution Station Evaluation

Assessment Area	Exceeds	-	Meets	-	Nears	-	Needs Work	-	Points Awarded
The Identified Issue: Did the visual presentation clearly identify a specific issue that the school or local community faces? Can the presenters explain why this issue is deserving of attention? Can presenters explain reasons or evidence to indicate that their issue is significant and relevant to the community?	10		8		6		4		
Research: Does the presentation indicate a variety of secondary sources for their research (outside sources, internet, news, books, etc.) and provide an organized bibliography of them? Did presenters <i>exceed</i> expectations by also consulting primary sources through interviews or surveys? Can presenters identify the key players involved in their issue, such as relevant decision makers, allies or opponents? Did presenters create a clear, accurate, and visually appealing display of the results of their research (charts, graphs, infographics, images, etc.)?	10		8		6		4		
Proposed Solution & Strategy: Can presenters clearly explain the ideas behind their solution? Can presenters clearly explain the steps involved in their action plan? Can presenters explain the intended impact of their solution in a clear and persuasive way?	10		8		6		4		
Quality of Presentation: How knowledgeable are presenters about their issue and proposed solution? Can presenters provide others with the information in a concise and understandable way using language appropriate to their subject? Did presenters exceed expectations by demonstrating passion and dedication to change? Is the solution station visually appealing and organized? Do presenters actively refer to the solution station to help support the information they provide?	10		8		6		4		
Total Points: _____/40 possible									