

## Community Needs Assessment Lesson and Entrepreneurship Unit

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**Lesson Purpose:** To have students study their local community and develop ideas for community growth and development by conducting a Needs Assessment. This is an introductory lesson intended to lay the foundation for further study of community development and or entrepreneurship.

**Introduction:** Write the word COMMUNITY on the board or on chart paper. Ask students “What do you think of when you hear this word?” Create a word web or list of student ideas.

\*\*Teachers in the Calera Community can use the following presentation to introduce the concept if desired.

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vSumEppLLQBDTuPUO2h655ZDC8wtRXpP\\_WOZlZ8BabCbaMk5tkpw-ZIivOEKgAH6GZ8Nv0V9pPm98/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vSumEppLLQBDTuPUO2h655ZDC8wtRXpP_WOZlZ8BabCbaMk5tkpw-ZIivOEKgAH6GZ8Nv0V9pPm98/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000)

Explain to students that communities are alive and they grow. They are Ecosystems, different from natural ecosystems but they have necessary pieces in the same way that natural ecosystems do. (This concept can be elaborated on at different levels depending on student population.) People and groups invested in communities often complete a NEEDS ASSESSMENT to see what areas in the community are in need of growth or development. This also helps people who want to start businesses in a community.

Questions for discussion:

How is a community like a natural ecosystem?

How could a NEEDS ASSESSMENT help people who want open businesses?

Why would a community want more businesses? How is that connected to growth?

Do you think children should be a part of a NEEDS ASSESSMENT? Why or why not?

Explain to students that we will be working on a NEEDS ASSESSMENT for our community by thinking about what we DO in the community. Students can generate a list or you can have pre-created posters around the room with topics such as the ones below. Ask students to write on the posters examples of where we do the following activities in our communities. Break students into small groups of 3-4 at each poster and rotate every 5 min. *This list needs to be community specific and will list actual names of businesses, parks and places in that community. This can also include the entire community, or just the downtown historic districts, depending on the goal of the lesson.*

<b>Eat:</b>	<b>Chic-Fil-A, Bertolones</b>
<b>Play:</b>	<b>CHS Disc Golf Course, George Roy Park,</b>
<b>Learn:</b>	<b>Schools, Library,</b>
<b>Create:</b>	

**Buy Stuff:** Walmart, Podos Boutique, Calera Nutrition  
**Gather/Celebrate:** Football Field  
**Practice Faith:** First Baptist Church Calera  
**Stay Healthy:** Calera Family Health, Central AL Wellness

After the initial brainstorming session, have students share and then ask: **What is missing? Create a separate chart with student answers to this question. Once you finish taking the student's answers, re-label the chart NEEDS ASSESSMENT.**

**Pose these Questions and discuss:**

- How does looking at what is missing create a needs assessment?
- Does everyone in the community have the same need? Are some groups' needs more important than others?
- What do we do now? What are your ideas for what is next?

**Assessment/Product Options:**

Have students write a response to the question prompts above.  
 Have students decide the 1 thing they think the community needs most and write a persuasive paragraph or create a digital poster detailing their reasoning using Adobe Spark.

**Extensions:**

- Take a field trip to the downtown historic district of your community. Arrange to meet with small business owners. Take pictures of spaces with potential, empty stores, or derelict areas and share them with students in a folder on Google Drive. Ask students to pick a picture and re-imagine/re-design the area.
- Arrange to meet with your Main Street representative:
  - [Montevallo, Courtney Bennett](#)
  - [Calera, Jackie Batson](#)
  - [Columbiana, Brittany Davis](#)
- Montevallo Community: Take students on a tour of the [Pendleton Hydrant](#) Trail. Brochures can be found for students to use at City Hall. Discuss Art and beautification projects and their importance.
- Columbiana Community: tour the traveling art exhibit and/or take a class at the SAC building.
- ARTS Focus: Create a student mural project for a downtown space. Have students create a proposal and present it to the Mayor and City Council.
- Have students deeply develop their own small business ideas to fit the needs assessment. See this link for tons of [Entrepreneurship Education Materials](#).

SS.AAS.4.16	Identify reasons for population growth and identify challenges of population growth.
ELA.AAS.4.22	Compose opinion pieces by stating an opinion, providing reasons related to the

	opinion, and providing an appropriate conclusion related to the stated opinion.
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