

# NELF Explorer Lesson Plan: Town Meeting to Decide the Fate of a Piece of Land

BY: TARA ALCORN

## Overview

This lesson is designed to help students visualize the future of a land parcel that is familiar to them. Students play the role of different stakeholders, corresponding to the four scenarios, who come together in a mock town meeting to collectively decide what should happen to the piece of land. The lesson plan is written for Ms. Alcorn's students in Tyngsboro, MA, using a local golf course that went up for sale and whose future was of significant local debate, but it can be adapted to nearly any location that is relevant for your students.

## Student Level

The module is suitable for grade 11 and 12 students, although it can be adapted for younger students.

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Explain how environmental concepts and processes represented visually relate to broader environmental issues
- Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions
- Use data and evidence to support a potential solution
- Justify a proposed solution by explaining potential advantages

## Length

Approximately 2-3 double block periods, which can be shortened by assigning reading and presentation creation as homework.

## Standards

This lesson incorporates several AP Environmental Science standards and practices. See the [lesson plan](#) for details.

## Materials

Students will need a ChromeBook, laptop, or computer lab and a [physical](#) or [digital copy](#) of *Voices from the Land*. If teachers need additional NELF materials please email [lucylee@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:lucylee@fas.harvard.edu).

## Where to Access

Instructor [lesson plan](#) and a [student handout](#) are available on the Harvard Forest [Schoolyard Ecology website](#). Digital copies of *Voices from the Land* are available [here](#) and [here](#). For physical copies of the report, email [lucylee@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:lucylee@fas.harvard.edu) (note that supply is limited).

*Image caption:* The students' introduction to the lesson includes background on the property and a map. Students begin by discussing their own connection to the place of interest and imagining themselves living in the area in the future.

