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LESSON PLAN

Smart Participation: Engaging Young People in Public Decisions

Age Level: 14–18

Duration: 8–10 hours of lessons

Role of teacher: Coaching, guiding, moderating

Role of student: Taking agency, acquiring knowledge and skills, collaborating, reflecting

Learning objectives

- Understand citizen participation as a key element of democratic and transparent urban governance.
- Identify challenges related to youth participation, communication, and trust in public decision-making.
- Analyse how digital tools can support participation while ensuring transparency and data protection.
- Develop critical thinking, collaboration, and active citizenship skills.
- Produce an evidence-based proposal for smart digital solutions that enhance youth participation.
- Present and refine a solution after feedback.

Skills development

- Critical thinking
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Empathy

- Active citizenship

Nb: Teachers can explore the Teacher Training on Skills [HERE](#) to select those most appropriate.

Material needed

- Large paper/poster boards, markers, and post-its
- Laptops or tablets
- Internet access
- Projector for videos/slides

Relevant YSC Knowledge Pills

1. [Data collection, analysis and use](#)
2. [Blockchain for Transparent Social Services](#)

Didactic objective of lessons

Lessons	Phase	Didactic objective
Lesson 1	Explore	Engage students in the topic by exploring their prior knowledge and experiences related to civic participation, introducing key concepts through the Knowledge Pills on citizen participation and transparency, and ensuring everyone reaches a shared foundational understanding of the subject.
Lesson 2–6	Research, Analyse, and Ideate	Guide students to identify what empirical evidence is needed, collect and analyse it, and use their findings to develop feasible, transparent, and youth-oriented digital solutions that enhance participation in public decision-making.
Lesson 7–8	Present, Feedback, Reflect	Support students as they present their proposals, gather feedback from peers, experts or stakeholders, and reflect critically to refine and improve their final products.

Nb: timeline is flexible

Problem-Oriented Learning Situation on smart participation

Driving Question:

What smart digital solutions can help increase young people's engagement in public decisions?

Scenario:

Local authorities are seeking smart digital solutions to improve communication with young residents and encourage their participation in public decisions. They aim to ensure that young people are informed about local initiatives, can contribute their views, and understand how decisions are made.

At the same time, public institutions face challenges related to transparency, data security, and trust. Young residents need to know how their data is used, who controls it, and how their participation influences outcomes.

As local students, you have been asked to develop a proposal for a digital solution — such as an app, an online platform, or a digital campaign — that responds to these challenges and supports youth participation in a transparent and responsible way.

Task:

Students explore their local community and identify an issue that affects young people. Working in groups, they develop an evidence-based proposal for **one smart digital solution** that could increase young people's participation in public decision-making. Their proposal should be realistic, meaningful, and clearly linked to local needs and experiences.

LESSON OUTLINE

LESSON 1: Explore (1 lesson)

Introduction to Smart Participation (1 lesson)

Objective: *Students build a shared understanding of citizen participation, youth engagement, and transparency in public decision-making, while acquiring foundational knowledge needed for the research phase.*

Opening Discussion

Teacher Action:

- Ask: *“How can young people take part in public decisions today?”*
- Record keywords (information, trust, participation, transparency, digital tools).
- Help students connect examples to their own experiences and local context.

Student Action:

- Share experiences of being informed or excluded from public decisions.
- Identify existing or missing participation opportunities.

Why:

- Establishes a common baseline of understanding and engages students with the topic.

Short Presentation on Citizen Participation and Transparency

Teacher Action:

- Introduce key ideas from the Knowledge Pills on citizen participation and blockchain-based transparency.
- Highlight challenges related to trust, data protection, and accountability.
- Provide examples of digital participation tools.

Student Action:

- Observe and take notes.
- Relate examples to their local context.

Why:

- Provides conceptual grounding and introduces possible solution pathways.

Introduce the Learning Situation & Driving Question

Teacher Action:

- Present the driving question.
- Present the task and explain the enquiry-based process:
Explore → Research → Analyse → Ideate → Present → Reflect

Student Action:

- Read the assigned Knowledge Pills.

Why:

- Frames the challenge and clarifies expectations.

LESSONS 2–6: Research, Analyse, and Ideate

Objective: *In smaller groups (3–4 persons), students gather evidence, analyse participation challenges, and develop digital solutions based strictly on research and analysis.*

Nb: *Remind students that effective project management, including careful planning, clear role allocation, and setting realistic deadlines, is essential for completing their work efficiently.*

Step 1: Research & Evidence Collection (Lessons 2–3)

Teacher Action:

- Guide students to identify what evidence is needed to understand youth participation challenges.
- Explain evidence types:
 - *First-hand:* surveys, interviews, observations
 - *Second-hand:* Knowledge Pills, policy documents, examples of digital tools

Student Action:

- Identify participation challenges relevant to young people.
- Collect first-hand and second-hand evidence.

Why:

- Grounds proposals in real needs and contexts.

Step 2: Analyse Evidence (Lessons 4–5)

Teacher Action:

- Support data analysis, focusing on patterns and priorities.

Student Action:

- Analyse evidence focusing on:
 - **Where:** participation contexts
 - **Who:** young people and institutions involved
 - **Why:** barriers to participation and trust
 - **How:** potential digital solutions

Why

- Ensures structured and critical analysis.

Step 3: Ideate Evidence-Based Solutions (Lesson 6)**Teacher Action:**

- Encourage feasible, transparent, and inclusive solutions.

Student Action:

- Design one digital solution.
- Explain how transparency, data protection, and trust are ensured (e.g. blockchain).
- Identify stakeholders and expected impacts.

Why:

- Ensures proposals are realistic and socially responsible.

LESSONS 7–8: Present, Feedback, Reflect**Presentation & Feedback (Lesson 7)****Teacher Action:**

- Facilitate presentations and feedback.

Student Action:

- Present solutions and reflect on feedback.

Reflection Prompts:

- What did we learn about participation and trust?
- How can digital tools strengthen democracy?
- What could be improved?

Why:

- Develops reflection and communication skills.

Final Submission & Voting (Lesson 8)**Teacher Action:**

- Collect proposals and facilitate voting.

Student Action:

- Submit final proposal.
- Vote based on evidence, feasibility, and impact.
- Share proposals with local authorities (if applicable).

Optional Extensions

- Guest speaker (municipality, youth council, civic tech organisation)
- Analysis of existing participation platforms

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