



Co-funded by
the European Union

LESSON PLAN

Urban Safety: Creating Safer and More Welcoming Urban Spaces

Age Level: 12–18

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 public safety as a multidimensional concept involving physical space, perception, communication, and community participation.
- Identify safety-related challenges in local urban spaces and everyday travel routes.
- Develop critical thinking, collaborative problem-solving, and empathy skills.
- Produce an evidence-based proposal based on observation, research, and analysis.
- Present and refine a final 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
- Access to local maps or online mapping tools
- Projector for videos/slides

Relevant YSC Knowledge Pills

1. [Public Safety: Building Secure Urban Futures](#)

Didactic objective of lessons

Lessons	Phase	Didactic objective
Lesson 1	Explore	Engage students in the topic by exploring their prior knowledge and everyday experiences related to urban safety, introducing key concepts through the Knowledge Pill on Public Safety, 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, realistic, and community-oriented proposals to improve safety and the perception of safety in a selected urban space or route.
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 urban safety

Driving Question:

What can we do to improve safety and the perception of safety in our city through community participation and smart solutions?

Scenario:

Many municipalities are working to improve public safety and the perception of safety in urban spaces. However, some areas continue to be perceived as unsafe or unwelcoming, especially at certain times of day or by specific groups of people. Poorly lit streets, isolated public transport stops, unclear travel routes, or ineffective communication in emergency situations can negatively affect how people move through and experience the city.

Students also encounter these situations in their everyday lives, for example, when travelling between home and school, when travelling to sports or cultural activities, or when using public spaces. For this reason, the municipality invites young people to observe their urban context and propose concrete and feasible ideas to make certain spaces safer and more welcoming.

Students are encouraged to focus on solutions that combine observation of the context, community involvement, clear communication, and, where appropriate, propose the use of simple digital tools. This does not involve investigative activities or simulating the work of law enforcement, but rather reflecting on how design, information, and participation can contribute to improving the quality of urban life.

Task:

Students design an evidence-based proposal that responds to the municipality's request to improve safety and the perception of safety in a specific urban context. Working in groups, they choose a place, travel route, or public space that is relevant to their everyday lives and analyse its characteristics, patterns of use, and the main perceived critical safety issues. The aim is to develop a realistic and sustainable improvement proposal that takes into account physical space, social behaviours, communication, and the possible role of digital technologies.

LESSON OUTLINE

LESSON 1: Explore (1 lesson)

Introduction to Urban Safety (1 lesson)

Objective: *Students build a shared understanding of public safety and the perception of safety in urban environments, while acquiring foundational knowledge needed for the research phase.*

Opening Discussion

Teacher Action:

- Ask: “*What makes people feel safe or unsafe in urban spaces?*”
- Record keywords emphasising different dimensions of safety (lighting, visibility, signage, information, people, trust, technology).
- Help students connect examples to different groups of users and stakeholders.

Student Action:

- Share examples from their everyday experiences (routes, public spaces, transport stops).
- Identify how different people might experience the same place differently.

Why:

- Establishes a common baseline of understanding and actively engages students with the topic before they start research.

Short Presentation on Public Safety**Teacher Action:**

- Introduce key ideas from the Knowledge Pill *Public Safety: Building Secure Urban Futures*.
- Highlight the difference between objective safety and perceived safety.
- Emphasise the role of urban design, communication, community participation, and responsible smart solutions.

Student Action:

- Observe and take notes.
- Relate presented concepts to their local context.

Why:

- Provides factual background to frame the problem and introduces possible types of interventions.

Introduce the Learning Situation & Driving Question**Teacher Action:**

- Present the driving question.

- Present the task and explain that students will prepare an evidence-based proposal responding to a municipal request.
- Emphasise that the work must follow an enquiry-based approach:
Explore → Research → Analyse → Ideate → Present → Reflect

Student Action:

- Read the Knowledge Pill on Public Safety.

Why:

- Frames the challenge and ensures students understand both the task and the process.

LESSONS 2–6: Research, Analyse, and Ideate

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

Nb: *Remind students that effective project management, including careful planning, clear role allocation, and realistic deadlines, is essential.*

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

Teacher Action:

- Guide students to identify what type of evidence is needed to design an informed proposal.
- Explain the types of evidence needed:
 - *First-hand evidence:* observations, short surveys, interviews with users
 - *Second-hand evidence:* Knowledge Pills, reports, articles, statistics, municipal information
- Emphasise that no solution ideation should begin before evidence is collected and analysed.

Student Action:

- Determine what evidence is needed.
- Collect first-hand and second-hand evidence.

Why

- Ensures proposals are grounded in facts and local context rather than assumptions.

Step 2: Analyse Evidence (Lessons 4–5)

Teacher Action:

- Guide students to make sense of collected data by identifying patterns, needs, constraints, and priorities.
- Support the organisation of findings in clear formats (tables, diagrams, summaries).

Student Action:

- Analyse evidence focusing on:
 - **Where:** current state of the space or route
 - **Who:** users and their perceptions
 - **Why:** factors influencing safety and perceived safety
 - **How:** possible areas for improvement

Why:

- Critical analysis ensures solutions are context-specific and evidence-based.

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

Teacher Action:

- Encourage solutions that are realistic, inclusive, and feasible.
- Ensure attention to sustainability and community impact.

Student Action:

- Describe the current situation and justify the need for change.
- Present a clear improvement proposal supported by evidence.
- Identify stakeholders and expected impacts.
- Propose a basic implementation or maintenance approach.

Why:

- Guarantees that design proposals are practical and socially responsible.

LESSONS 7–8: Present, Feedback, Reflect

Objective: *Students present proposals, receive feedback, and refine final solutions.*

Presentation & Feedback (Lesson 7)

Teacher Action:

- Facilitate presentations and structured peer feedback.
- Encourage feedback focused on clarity, feasibility, and impact.

Student Action:

- Present proposals using visuals and clear explanations.
- Reflect on feedback and revise where necessary.

Reflection Prompts:

- What have we learned?
- How does safety affect everyday urban life?
- What did peers or stakeholders like or question?
- What could be improved next time?

Why:

- Reflection and feedback improve solution quality and metacognitive skills.

Final Submission & Voting (Lesson 8)

Teacher Action:

- Collect refined proposals and facilitate voting.

Student Action:

- Submit final proposal.
- Vote for the strongest solution based on evidence, feasibility, and impact.
- Submit proposals to the local authority (if applicable).

Optional Extensions:

- Field observation at different times of day
- Guest speaker (municipality, urban planner, civil protection, community organisation)

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.