

VALUING VILLAGES

UNITS OF WORK

FARMING AND COUNTRYSIDE EDUCATION (FACE)
on behalf of the **COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY**



Valuing Villages Introduction

‘The Valuing Villages Pack is an invaluable tool for Parish steering groups to link local schools into the parish planning process. Many schools are now benefiting from the resource.’

Caroline Oakes, Community Council of Shropshire.

‘Valuing Villages’ is a practical resource produced by Farming & Countryside Education. It uses as its starting point the QCA Citizenship Schemes of Work ‘Choices’ and ‘Local democracy for young citizens.’ It has relevance for teaching pupils at Key Stages 2 and 3. The pack consists of teacher notes and a bank of photocopiable activities.

Valuing Villages is based on the Countryside Agency’s ‘Vital Villages’ project, which helped rural communities to assess local priorities and take charge of their future. ‘Valuing Villages’ embraces the same process and encourages young people to become more involved in local democracy.

The activities were trialled by teachers and pupils in Shropshire schools and the resource pack has grown out of their experiences.

‘Valuing Villages’ is endorsed by

The Rt Hon Alun Michael MP, Minister of State
(Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality):

‘As Minister for rural affairs I support this teaching resource as a way to help engage and involve children and young people in community development in the setting of rural village life. Including children and young people in the decision making that directly affects their lives is beneficial not only for their personal and social education and development but also for the wider community who gain from getting the best out of its children and young people.’

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Valuing Villages

Citizenship Key Stage 1 and 2

About the Unit

In this Unit, based on the QCA Citizenship Unit 'Choices', children discuss the decisions they make in living in a local community and explore the way they can contribute to improving their local village. They develop decision-making skills; explore the influences that affect the choices they make, learning to listen to the views of different stakeholders in a community. The Unit highlights the use of knowledge and skills to make informed and responsible choices and to consider the effect of those choices on other people and the local environment. The activities in this Unit can be adapted for use at either key stage 1 or key stage 2. Teachers may also find this unit a useful resource for key stage 3 Geography and Citizenship.

The Unit is divided into sections. Each section contains a sequence of activities with related objectives, outcomes and resource suggestions that are available in the Village Pack Resource. The Unit would be particularly useful for schools in parishes working on producing Parish Plans, and as a way of getting children and young people included in community development.

At the end of each section, part of the school village plan application form is completed. This form is based on the Vital Villages (Community Based Plans) Parish Plan Application Form. By completing this plan pupils will be able to identify the main issues affecting their community.

Sections

1. What are the features/landmarks of my village?

Focuses on identifying the components making up a community.



2. What do I think about my village?

Focuses on how to identify issues within the village that require development and how to research and explore the views of the community moving towards decision making.

3. What do others think of my village?

Focuses on investigating the viewpoints of the community, and the importance of inclusion. It also includes the costing of projects.

4. How do we change things for the better?

Focuses on completion of the village/community plan, choosing projects and evaluating how they impact on the village.

There are opportunities to link with work in English and Geography. Some links are indicated in the 'Points to note' section. The unit also links with the QCA Unit 1 'Taking part – developing skills of communication and participation', Unit 2 'Choices', Unit 6 'Developing our school grounds' and Unit 10 'Local democracy for young citizens'.

This unit could be used as an alternative to the QCA Choices Unit

Where the Unit fits in

This Unit addresses the following aspects of the non-statutory framework for PSHE and citizenship at key stages 1 and 2:

Key stage 1

- Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities
1a 1b 1c
- Preparing to play an active role as citizens
2a, 2f

- Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people
4b
- Breadth of opportunities
5c, 5d, 5g



Key stage 2

- Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities
1a, 1c
- Preparing to play an active role as citizens
2a to research, discuss and debate topical issues, problems and events
2e to reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, using imagination to understand other people's experiences
2f to resolve differences by looking at alternatives, making decisions and explaining choices
2j that resources can be allocated in different ways and that these economic choices affect individuals, communities and the sustainability of the environment
- Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people
4a
- Breadth of opportunities
5c, 5d, 5g

Vocabulary

Through the activities in this Unit, children will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- decision-making, e.g. dilemma, conflict, pressure, influence, option, alternative, consequence, choice, responsibility
- living in a community, e.g. pollution, quality of life, rural, urban, residents
- village action plan application form, e.g. parish plan, Countryside Agency, parish council, steering group, draft plan, RCC (Rural Community Council), stakeholder, service provider.

Glossary

A useful glossary of terms is provided at the back of the Valuing Villages pack.

Resources

Useful resources include:

QCA information and case studies on education for sustainable development and Citizenship schemes of work site at:

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes

The Countryside Agency site can both be found at:

www.countryside.gov.uk

'Planning for Real' is a resource originally developed by the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation to explore the ideas of participative planning around the needs of school children.

www.nifonline.org

An example of a photo snapshot of a village can be viewed online at:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/picture_gallery/04/in_pictures_village_life/html/1.stm

FACE online www.face-online.org.uk

The Unit is available in a downloadable form from FACE.

Ordnance Survey online has a 'get-a-map' service using postcode addresses. www.getamap.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

Old maps are available from www.old-maps.co.uk

Regional offices of the Countryside Agency can provide copies of Parish Plans guidance. (CA 123 and CA122.)

Locally, each local authority should have a named contact who links community based plan steering groups. Contact the RCC through your local authority



Expectations

At the end of this Unit

most children:

realise that they usually have several alternatives when making decisions. They understand that decisions about village development affect more than just themselves and take time to consider their options and begin to assess the possible consequences of their decisions. They know what they like and dislike about their community/village. They make reasoned decisions and justify their choices. They cope with an increasing number of alternatives.

some children have not made as much progress and:

make decisions after some consideration of a limited number of options. They identify some of the likes and dislikes about their village. They are aware that some people may think differently to themselves.

some children have progressed further and:

make well-informed decisions showing a desire to implement ideas that benefit many, not only a few, and show regard to social inclusion. They investigate their options through research and questioning, justify their decisions and evaluate the consequences. They understand that they have responsibilities to other people and the environment when making some choices and that the final choice will not necessarily be their choice.



1. What are the features/landmarks in my village?

Learning Objectives

Children should learn:

- to recognise the types of feature making up a village/community.
- what they like and dislike about their village or local community.
- to share their opinions on matters that are important to them.
- to take part in discussions with one other person and the whole class.
- to understand that others may have differing opinions.

Possible Teaching Activities

- Explain to the children what a landmark is. The children identify by mind mapping, ten areas/places/amenities in their village or local community e.g. main roads, tracks, woods, school, shops, playground/village green, lighting, parking areas. (The children could work in pairs or small groups.) They express their opinions of the amenity/place by selecting smiley faces and posting them on the mind map they have drawn up. Discuss some of the responses the children have made.
- 'Eyesores and Treasures.' Using the map work out a tour of the village to take in the landmarks already identified. Take a tour of the village with a camera to take pictures of the different areas and amenities good and bad and/or class assistant to organise groups to take photos for mind map of village/display. Alternatively, make sketches/drawings of these on a tour. Score places out of ten; 0=eyesore, 10=treasure. Display as local treasure or local eyesore. All the ideas, photos and sketches come together on a class display around an 'Our Village' bubble (see resource pack) which then contributes to a class display, e.g. with words or pictures of 'our likes' and 'our dislikes' about the village. Artwork could be used in a display of a treasure chest spilling out and a pair of sore eyes!

Learning Outcomes

Children:

- identify the features in and around their village - physical and human resources and services.
- recognize and make some decisions about what they like and dislike about the village.
- demonstrate simple decision-making processes.
- think about what is important to them in making choices.
- discuss their opinions with others and explain their choices.
- recognize others may differ in their opinions.

Points to Note

- Try to include human resources in the village like mother and toddler groups, senior citizens' meetings, bridge clubs, etc.
- Ordnance survey online has a 'get-a-map' service using postcode addresses and also old maps of the same location
- Circle time techniques encourage children to listen to each other and take turns when contributing to discussion about choices, influences and strategies.
- This section could be linked with Unit 8 'How do rules and laws affect me?'



1. What are the features/landmarks in my village? (continued)

Learning Objectives

Possible Teaching Activities

Learning Outcomes

Points to Note

- In a circle time, the children think about the unwritten rules of the village. Using the mind map and class display of the village, discuss appropriate behaviour at different places in the village e.g. shops are for shopping, you wouldn't skateboard there would you? Lighting bonfires, making a noise etc. Are the rules written down anywhere? If a visitor of your age came to the village where could you take them? Where wouldn't you take them and why? Where could you do and not do the following activities: skateboard, use a mobile phone, play ball games, play loud music, light fires, walk a dog, cross a busy road? Where are unsafe places (perhaps places where drugs/alcohol misuse takes place)? At night where is it safe/ less safe to go? Why?
- Input is given from parish council or parish plan steering group member/s. Someone on the steering group is invited to speak to the children about the parish plan and how the process works.
- The children are shown the Village Plan Application Form and discuss the content of the first part. They complete the opening part; 'Good news/ could do better.'

- Link with English: En1 S&L 3a, 3b in the key stage 1 programme of study and En1 S&L 3a, 3b in the key stage 2 programme of study.
- A useful extra activity would be to use a child in a wheelchair. Send one of the children round to see access from this viewpoint. The experience of being partially sighted can be simulated by smearing Vaseline on glasses.
- Link with Geography: 1c, 1d, 5b in the key stage 1 programme of study and 1d, 2g, 5a, 5b in the key stage 2 programme of study.
- Completing the Village action plan could be done in an extended writing session as report writing.
- The Village Plan Application Form is based on the Parish Plans Grant Application Form. Writing should address Housing, Services, Transport (Parish plans Grant – a brief Guide from Countryside Agency might be useful).



2. What do I think of my village?

Learning Objectives

Children should learn:

- about strategies for making informed decisions.
- to consider alternatives, make decisions and explain their choices.
- about rights and responsibilities when making decisions, including social inclusion.
- to carry out surveys and collect data.
- to treat people courteously and with respect.

Possible Teaching Activities

- The class is divided into groups. Each group takes an issue identified from the 'Eyesores and Treasures' activity in Unit 1. e.g. traffic, wasteground, playgrounds, benching, lighting, pavements and footpaths and discusses the issue.
- Possible questions to guide discussion; Who do you think uses this facility most? When is it used? What is good about it? Is it in a good state of repair? Is it adequate for its purpose?
- On a large map of the village, place dots of a particular colour to show where the eyesore and treasures landmarks are and to celebrate where features are already good, in the children's opinion. As each group places their dots, ask them to explain to the class why their dots are where they are. Then the children place dots of another colour to show where there are problems (hot spots) that could be improved, e.g. places where lighting could be placed, litter bins, new or repaired paving, etc.
- The children now make a list of other people who live in the village who could be consulted and who use the village facilities, in order to help them make better choices about their map and to ensure there is inclusion of all sectors of society including disabled, elderly, young people etc. They also consider the groups of people who can help them make decisions e.g. members of the local parish council, steering groups, local clubs, local services etc.

Learning Outcomes

Children:

- communicate the decision-making process by plotting village hot spots on a map.
- find out about other people's opinions by conducting a questionnaire
- identify rights and responsibilities when making decisions.
- describe their choices.
- produce a source of information for others about informed decision-making by completing part of the action plan.

Points to Note

- It might be possible before the session to collect flyers and information from notice boards to present to the class, to enable them to complete the table on clubs and organisations. Possible homework activity to find out about village clubs and organisations.
- Or children could do research to find the information they need or to identify village people or organisations that could provide information, advice or support.
- Information on rural communities can be obtained from the relevant rural community council.
- It is important to move the children on from what they think, to considering the views of the whole community and not to exclude anyone from the decision-making process.
- Web sites about village services and rural transport are a useful resource.



2. What do I think of my village? (continued)

Learning Objectives

Possible Teaching Activities

Learning Outcomes

Points to Note

- Children go on to find out about the groups, clubs and organisations that meet in the village and consider the services they provide. The table in the resource pack can be used to list these clubs and organisations. Consider questions such as: Who is well catered for? Does any sector of the community have little going for them? Why is this? Why might some people not be included?
- The children devise a questionnaire in order to find out what the local children and young people think is good and not so good about the village. Discuss questionnaires with children. What are they? When are they used and how? What drawbacks could there be to using a questionnaire? (Non representative, male/female types of work, young, old.) The questionnaire should represent the full cross-section of the village and be as large a sample as possible. Carry out questionnaire.
- The children are reminded of the Village Plan, discuss the content of the first part of the plan. Explain that now they complete the second part; 'Tell us about your community/village/parish. Use the findings of the questionnaire to help complete this part after some class discussion.
- See Village Community Action plan form in resources pack.

- The large scale map needed for the village hot spots appraisal could be based on an OS or road map or downloaded from a web site. Overlays could be used for each feature for each group. (Similar to ohp overlays used with big books in literacy.)
- Alternatively the map could be presented on a large scale or 3D on the ground. See 'Living plans'.
- Children could devise their own questionnaire (in a literacy session?) to identify issues that are important to local residents (or the example given in the resources pack can be used). Questionnaires could be a homework activity or as a village walk around. Main thing is to stress inclusion – must question a good cross-section of community.
- Questionnaire results present opportunities for maths data handling, 1f, 1a, 2a-c, 2f.
- Link with English: En1 S&L 3e in the key stage 1 programme of study and En1 S&L 3c, En 3 1a, 1d, 2a-e in the key stage 2 programme of study.
- Link with Geography: 2g, 5a in the key stage 2 programme of study.



3. What do others think of my village?

Learning Objectives

Children should learn:

- about how different people's opinions can influence our choices.
- to discuss their views and communicate with others.
- that decision-making processes involve listening to a range of people's opinions.
- that our resources are limited and we need to make choices.
- that there may be conflicting opinions and in making choices and decisions, compromises often need to be made.

Possible Teaching Activities

- The children make decisions about what are the most to least important things for a good quality of life in the village. Put statements about quality of life in order of importance e.g. The village has a good school. The village is small and you feel you know most people. People in the village have good jobs. People in the village buy local food. There are good shops in the village. The village is an unpolluted environment. There are plenty of places for young people to play/go in the village. There isn't much traffic in the village. People keep their gardens neat. How would the order change for different people who live in the village? (Teenager, old-age pensioner, new commuter resident, etc.) How do different people value their quality of life?
- Housing Development 'Model'. In small groups, the children imagine that a new housing estate is proposed to be built in the village. The old farm is closing and a development of housing will be built. Discuss what effect this will have on the village, e.g. on shops, roads, schools, local jobs, lighting, affordable housing for young people.
- Children take on the role of some of the characters (some character briefing cards are available in the resource pack) and imagine they visited the class in a 'hot seating' session. Ask them questions about the proposed development. Alternatively, get the children to make a list of things for and against such a development. What are the benefits and drawbacks of the development?

Learning Outcomes

Children:

- know that there are different influences on our choices.
- discuss and communicate what they have learnt verbally or through visual presentation.
- understand that others may have different views that are valid.
- understand that our resources are limited and we need to make informed choices about what we purchase.

Points to Note

- It would be appropriate to provide opportunities for the children to discuss what makes for a good quality of life and put ideas in a blank worksheet as an alternative to using the ideas provided in the resource pack.
- Link with English: En2 R 2b in the key stage 1 programme of study and En2 R 3f, 3g in the key stage 2 programme of study.
- The statements could be laminated and used in small groups.
- In the housing development activity a suitable location in the village could be identified for a new housing estate, considering size, location and children's knowledge of the locality.



3. What do others think of my village? (continued)

Learning Objectives

Possible Teaching Activities

- Using the resource sheet (see resource pack) match the statements and opinions speech bubbles to the characters who live or are hoping to live in the village. Stress the importance of hearing a broad range of opinions when one is making decisions that affect many people.
- The children devise an activity/ies that would contribute to the village and for which they will take on responsibility e.g. Own activity – clay tiles for bus shelter, celebration quilt, mural in bus shelter, fundraising sale.
- Children should be led to consider the costs of resourcing their suggestions. They could research the costs of e.g. waste bins, lighting, path laying – county councils may be able to give costs.
- Complete part 3 of the Village Community Application Form (see resource pack).
- Know that there are different influences on our choices.

Learning Outcomes

Points to Note

- Organise children in groups, one character card per group to pick actor or teacher pre-picks children beforehand.
- Adverts from magazines or newspapers could be used as a resource for costs.
- Share project findings with school council and get whole school community to feed in their thoughts of what could be done to improve village as a school contribution.



4. How do we plan to change things for the better?

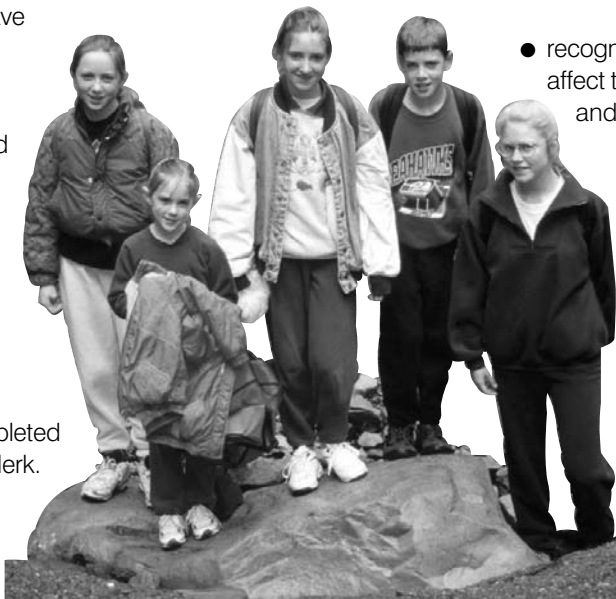
Learning Objectives

Children should learn:

- to discuss their views and communicate with others.
- that successful decisions involve communicating effectively.
- that our resources are limited and we need to make choices.
- how choices affect us, other people and the environment.
- to investigate and consider alternatives when making an informed choice.
- about the responsibility involved in making choices.

Possible Teaching Activities

- If they have not done so already, the class needs to decide upon the focus for their action plan.
- The children should use the decision-making process to select an issue about their village, based on the work carried out in the previous units on which to base their action plan.
- The children set out a draft action plan – What is proposed? Why is the action needed? Who will be responsible for taking the action? When will the action be taken forward (See teachers' notes in resource pack.)
- Help children to decide what member(s) of the local community should be invited. School governors may be able to contribute to the debate. It is worthwhile inviting one or two people who do play an official role in the village community so that they can spend a few minutes explaining what they do and how it impacts on the village if you have not already done so in Unit 1.
- The class prepares a presentation about what they have been doing and the choices that they have made and present it to invited guests.
- Any feedback from the panel is fed into the revised and amended Action Plan.
- The Action Plan part of the Village Community Application Form is completed ready to be presented to the parish clerk. This should include the fundraising/hands-on involvement and/or fundraising they will do as explored in Unit 3.



Learning Outcomes

Children:

- appreciate the responsibilities involved in making choices.
- know the choices open to them in relation to the decisions they make, e.g. relating to the school and village environment.
- make real and informed choices in relation to specific areas which have been outlined in the project plan e.g. projects such as improvement of the school grounds, village green, crossing the road, village play areas.
- recognise that their choices affect themselves, others and the environment.

Points to Note

- The work in this section could be linked with more detailed activities addressed through other aspects of the PSHE and citizenship framework or other subjects, e.g. RE, Geography, Science, PE.
- Specific members of the parish council or community should be invited to hear the presentation that the class has put together – someone concerned with transport if the focus has been on traffic.
- Possibly invite representative of a wildlife organisation – RSPB, local wildlife trust etc.
- The actual presentation could be by a handful of children – representatives from the class chosen by the class, but all can be involved in deciding the content of the presentation.
- This section could be part of a school assembly with invited guests.
- This section could be referred back to by pupils in subsequent years to monitor progress.

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Or log on to www.face-online.org.uk



The Countryside Agency

The Countryside Agency is the statutory body working:

- to conserve and enhance England's countryside
- to spread social and economic opportunity for the people who live there
- to help everyone, wherever they live and whatever their background to enjoy the countryside and share in this priceless national asset.

To find out more about our work, and for information about the countryside, visit our website:

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Defra is committed to the involvement of children and young people in those policies and services that affect their lives and influence their futures.

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