

<b>MODULE TWO:</b>	<b>CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES</b>
<b>Chapter 4:</b>	<b>Assets and Liabilities</b>
<b>Essential Question:</b>	<b>What kind of future will we invent?</b>
<b>Guiding Questions:</b>	<b>What is an asset? What is a liability? What are the assets and liabilities of my community?</b>
<b>Duration:</b>	<b>5 days</b>

### Objectives

- Students will be able to explain and describe what assets and liabilities are.
- Students will map their community’s assets and liabilities.

### Methods Used

- Discussion, Group Work, Mapping

### New Vocabulary

- asset, challenge, liability, mapping

### Description

- Students reveal their current conception of assets and liabilities in a diagnostic assessment. Teacher and students explore the concepts of assets and liabilities and illustrate how a person, resource, etc., could be categorized as both. Students then use their new knowledge of assets and liabilities to map their school and/or home communities.

### Assessment

- Discussions
- Mapping Contributions
- [Cooperative Learning Rubric](#) on p. 141 (you can use the Cooperative Learning Rubrics to assess this and all other cooperative learning moments)
- [Journal Entry](#) on p. 142 (you can use the Journal Entry Rubric to assess this and all other journal entries)

## Materials/Resources

- [“What are Assets and Liabilities?”](#) (p. 133) — Student Handout/Diagnostic.
- [“What are Community Assets?”](#) (p. 134) — Teacher Resource.
- [“What are Community Liabilities?”](#) (p. 135) — Teacher Resource.
- [“What are Examples of Places, Resources and People that Can Serve as BOTH a Community Asset and Liability”](#) (p. 136) — Teacher Resource.
- [“Mini-Lesson Outline on Mapping Assets and Liabilities in Communities”](#) (p. 137) — Teacher Resource.
- [“What Does My Community Have To Work With?”](#) (p. 139) — Student Packet.
- [“Cooperative Learning Rubric”](#) (p. 141) — Student Handout.
- [“Journal Entry”](#) (p. 142) — Student Handout.
- Driskell, David. *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth: A Manual for Participation*. UNESCO Publishing, Earthscan Publications, 2002. 103-114, 168-169.

## Additional Resources

- Make A Better Place curriculum materials, project partner (See Introduction for details).
- Green Map curriculum materials, project partner (See Introduction for details).

## Learning Opportunities

- Students use [“What are Assets and Liabilities?”](#) Student Handout (p. 133) as a diagnostic assessment of what they currently understand about assets and liabilities.
- Using the Teacher Resources, [“What are Community Assets?”](#) (p. 134), [“What are Community Liabilities?”](#) (p. 135), and [“What are Examples of Places, Resources and People that Can Act as BOTH Community Assets and Liabilities?”](#) (p. 136), teacher and class should explore examples of community assets and liabilities.
- Teacher then uses [“Mini-Lesson Outline on Mapping Assets and Liabilities in Communities”](#) (p. 137) to guide students through the process of community mapping of assets and liabilities.
- Students will use [“What Does My Community Have to Work With?”](#) Student Packet (p. 139) to chart their perceptions of what their community assets and liabilities are, focusing on the community that is at the center of the class vision.
- In a journal entry [“Journal Activity — Assets and Liabilities”](#) Student Handout (p. 142), students reflect on how their original concepts of assets and liabilities changed with their community asset and liability mapping.
- Teacher may choose whether this is an appropriate time for assessment of cooperative learning. See [“Cooperative Learning Rubric”](#) (p. 141).

## Teacher Resource/Overhead

### What Are Community Assets?

**Assets are Favorable Conditions that Improve the Quality of Life in a Community.**

#### *Qualities of Assets:*

- make communities safer, healthier, friendlier;
- provide economic and social opportunities for community citizens;
- provide access to resources and nature;
- meet basic human needs;
- make positive contributions to maintaining community history, knowledge and culture;
- give voice to citizens;
- provides recreational and social opportunities;
- ensure a balanced and healthy ecosystem, and
- encourage social and cultural diversity.

#### **What are some specific examples of community assets?**

- gardens;
- scenery;
- safe community;
- good neighbors;
- clean air and water;
- access to ocean;
- adequate schools and libraries;
- population diversity;
- privacy;
- senior citizens;
- pedestrian safe zones;
- involved citizens;
- clean streets, etc.; and
- produce that is fresh; reasonably priced; regional and seasonal.

#### **What are other examples of assets that you would add to this list?**

## Teacher Resource/Overhead

### What Are Community Liabilities?

**Liabilities are Challenges in a Community that Decrease or Take Away from its Quality of Life.**

#### **Qualities of Liabilities:**

- make communities dangerous, polluted, unfriendly;
- little or no economic and social opportunities for community citizens;
- does not provide for diversity;
- prevents ecosystem from being balanced and healthy;
- does not contribute to meeting basic human needs;
- community residents don't have a voice in community, government and/or in society; and
- provides for very little intergenerational exchange and communication.

#### **What are some specific examples of community liabilities?**

- high unemployment rates;
- congested downtown areas;
- violence at school or in neighborhoods;
- lack of pride;
- lack of clean air and water;
- large number of cars or expressways;
- run-down buildings;
- pollution;
- lack of privacy;
- no social or civic meeting places for community members;
- abandoned properties;
- lack of diversity in population;
- trash and unclean streets, parks, etc.;
- no recreational opportunities (playgrounds, sports teams, bike paths, tracks), etc.; and
- no produce that is fresh, regional or seasonal.

#### **What are other examples of liabilities that you would add to this list?**

## Teacher Resource/Overhead

### **What Are Examples of Places, Resources and People that can Serve as BOTH a Community Asset and Liability?**

- *A community park can be a community asset because it adds green space, plants and trees to an area, and provides a public space where people can gather and have recreational opportunities. It could also be a community liability if it is known as a dangerous or unsafe place to enter or socialize.*
- *A government official can be a community asset by enforcing companies and businesses to abide by certain regulations. They can also act as community liabilities if they accept bribes or only try to improve community conditions for their own gain.*
- *A new business can act as a community asset by supplying jobs and services for a community, and it can also act as a community liability if the business pollutes the air or water, or if it doesn't contribute to tax income or get involved with the civic and social needs of the community.*

**What are some other examples of places, resources and people that are BOTH Community Assets and Liabilities?**