

Step 5:

After the Forum

GOALS

- Students will decide on ways to take their forum experiences into the community.
- Students will complete the Post-Forum Questionnaire.

Student Materials The students will need Discussion Starter 7 (page 3.59) and the Post-Forum Questionnaire from the NIF issue books.

After participating in a National Issues Forum, students may have questions like these about the next step:

- Are we ready to contact elected officials and tell them about our forum?
- How do we connect with officeholders and tell them what we think?
- Are we ready to take action on this issue in our community?
- Now that we've completed a forum, what are we really ready and able to do?

Questionnaires

One of the quickest ways to have an impact on policy is to complete the Post-Forum Questionnaires found in the back of the NIF issue books. The answers your students give will be used by NIF Research to develop policy reports. The reports, in turn, are shared with citizens and sent to policymakers all over the country. Please mail these questionnaires, along with the Pre-Forum Questionnaires completed in Step 2, to: NIF Research, 100 Commons Road, Dayton, OH 45459-2777.

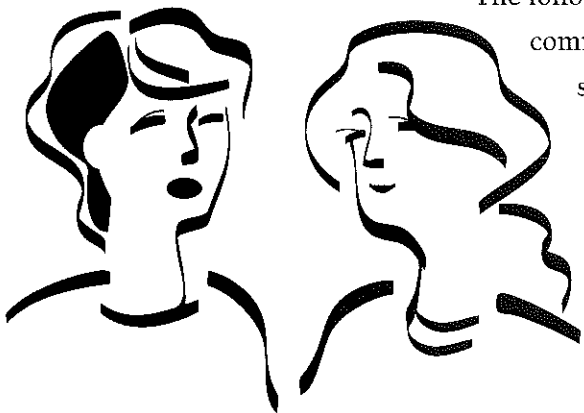
Post-Forum Projects

Remind students that the next step after completing a forum is to share with others what they have learned. Discussion Starter 7 will give students tips on taking their experiences into the community.

The following projects encourage students to connect with their communities, test their ideas, and share their points of view. Encourage students to suggest other ideas.

Speaking and Listening

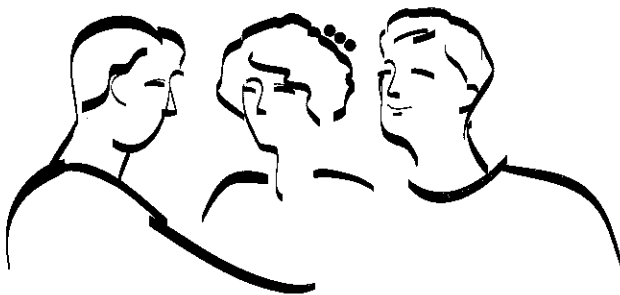
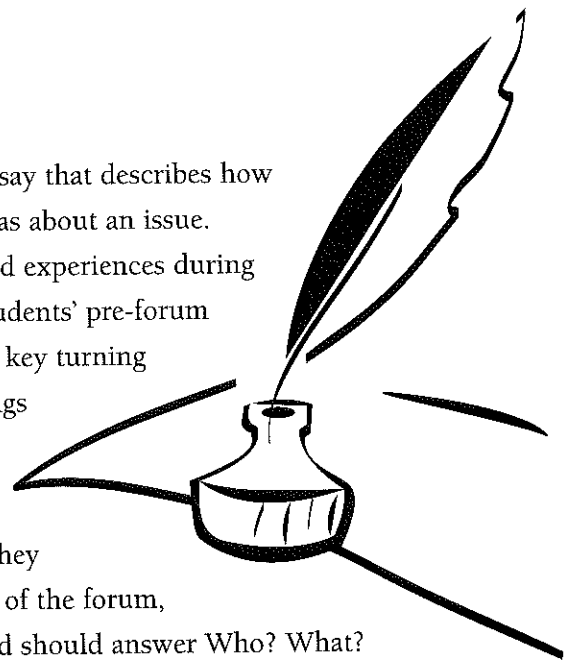
Conduct Interviews Students interview “people on the street,” asking questions about the issue that was their forum’s focus. Students should write three to five concise, unbiased questions, gather responses, and write a short paper that compares interviewees’ “off-the-cuff” responses to their forum’s results.



Writing

Reflective Essay Students write a reflective essay that describes how the forum process affected them and their ideas about an issue. Students may base the essay on their notes and experiences during the forum. The essays should clearly cover students' pre-forum thoughts and feelings and accurately describe key turning points during the forum as well as their feelings about reaching common ground.

Newspaper Article Students write a newspaper article about the forum in which they participated. Articles should cover the course of the forum, its key content, and students' experiences, and should answer Who? What? When? Where? Why? and How? For research, students may review their notes and interview other participants.



Group Work

Issue Booklet Students work in groups to create abbreviated issue booklets based on their own research. Students work cooperatively to decide on a topic, research the issue, and write at least three "choices." The format, layout, and content choices in students' issue booklets

may be modeled after the National Issues Forums issue book series. (More information on preparing issue booklets appears in Section 5, page 5.2.)

Technology

Web Page Design Students work as partners to design a Web page for their forum. The Web page should have an eye-catching design and should explain the purpose and results of the forum. It may also have an interactive component that allows Web page visitors to comment on or respond to the forum process, the issue presented, and the specific choices considered.

