

## **My Two Cents Discussion Exercise**

### **Overview**

This exercise helps to make sure that all students contribute to the classroom discussion in an active and inclusive way:

#### Step 1: Prep Materials

Cut out small squares of paper (two by two inches). Using two different colors for the pieces of paper works well for tracking student participation (sticky notes can also be used). To add some flair, print an image of a penny on each square!

#### Step 2: Explain

Give each student two pieces of paper. Have them write their names on each sheet. Explain that every time a student participates in the discussion, they hand in one of their sheets. Students can participate more than twice in class discussions, but be sure to periodically reach out to students who haven't spent their all of their pennies.

#### Step 3: Discussion

Every time a student participates in the discussion, have them hand in a sheet of paper with their name on it. If a student has no sheets left, they have to wait until all the other students have handed in their sheets. Once all the sheets have been handed in, you can distribute new sheets.

#### Step 4: Evaluation

Review the papers to make sure that all students have contributed to the discussion. You may want to assign a point system to the sheets to help grade class participation.

### **Popcorn Share:**

- After you pose a question, give the class time to think about their responses.
- When you call "Popcorn" the students should quickly and voluntarily pop up from their chairs one at a time to share a response.
- Have seated students record the responses and prepare feedback.
- Follow with a brief discussion.



**PUBLIC MONEY**  
**Student Handout A: What's the Big Idea? (Page 2)**

**Instructions:** Collaborate with your group to describe and evaluate your project by responding to the following questions.

1. Project Title and description of your project:
  
2. What problem(s) does this project solve or what needs does it fulfill?
  
3. How does this project benefit the school?
  
4. Is this project focused on a majority group or minority group of students? How does the entire school community benefit by supporting this group?
  
5. Is this project a “quick fix” or will it be sustainable for future students? Will it have recurring costs in the future? Explain.
  
6. What resources do you already have for this project? List as many as you can think of. (For example: human resources, materials, training, teachers, outside partners, services, etc.)
  
7. What resources do you need? List as many as you can think of.
  
8. Imagine you are presenting this project to raise money. What would be your three sentence “pitch”? (Note: a “pitch” is an inspiring presentation of a project idea to potential investors.)

**Instructions:** Use the following process to present your Team's project to the group for feedback. This process should move quickly. Use a stopwatch (or app) to manage the time for each step.

### **Rapid Feedback Process**

1. Presenting Design Team:  
Team members will present the project description and notes from *Student Handout A: What's the Big Idea, Page 2* (1 minute) Note: Group members will give feedback as described below. The Presenting Team should take notes but hold all of their responses and explanations until the feedback process is complete.
2. Group: Warm Feedback  
Share specific aspects of the project, goals, and outcomes that you like. (1 minute)
3. Group: Cool Feedback  
Share constructive feedback about aspect of the project that are problematic or unfeasible. This feedback should *NOT* include suggestions. (1 minute)
4. Group: Clarifying Questions  
Ask questions that will help you better understand the project. This feedback should *NOT* include suggestions. (1 minute)
5. Presenting Design Team:  
Respond to the group's feedback and questions (2 minutes)
6. Group: Recommendations and Suggestions  
Members will briefly offer constructive suggestions, recommendations, and final thoughts (1 minute)

**PUBLIC MONEY**  
**Student Handout C: Public Money Discussion Questions**

**Instructions:** Review the film with your group by answering the following discussion questions:

1. What is Participatory Budgeting (PB)? Why are cities around the world investing in the PB process?
  
2. What did the organizers mean when they said, “Budgets are the essence of what government does...”?
  
3. What did the residents hope to accomplish by participating in PB? What did they have in common?
  
4. Sunset Park is a diverse neighborhood, but not entirely integrated. How was that reflected in the PB process? What strategies might help participants collaborate across language and cultural differences?
  
5. What aspects of the PB process were most successful? How would you improve, refine or change the process if you were a participant?
  
6. How could Participatory Budgeting improve your community’s relationship with your own local government? What role should youth play in Participatory Budgeting?
  
7. What questions do you have about the PB process?

**Instructions:** Use the questions below to help you and your team evaluate and narrow-down your project ideas.

1. These projects address real needs in our school:
2. These projects can be completed within our budget, including long-term costs.
3. These projects will benefit a huge group of students without being harmful to smaller groups of students:
4. These projects will benefit a smaller group of students, but those students have critical needs or don't usually get a lot of resources:
5. These projects will have long-term benefits for our school community:
6. These projects will have important short-term benefits for our school community:

*Select the project your team will work on and write the title and description below:*

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6. When can we work on this project? (In class, free periods, after school, weekends, etc.)
  
7. What will be the easiest project activities/phases to complete?
  
8. What will be the most difficult project activities/phases to complete?
  
9. What resources will we need for this project:
  - a. Human resources:  
(For example: students/adults with specific skills, student volunteers, teachers, school administrators, etc.)
  
  - b. Equipment and supplies:
  
  - c. Service Providers:
  
  - d. Other:
  
10. What resources do we already have?
  - a. Human resources:
  
  - b. Equipment and supplies:
  
  - c. Service Providers:
  
  - d. Other:

11. What resources will we need to rent/buy/hire?

a. Human resources:

b. Equipment and supplies:

c. Service Providers:

d. Other:

12. How much will our resources cost? (See the project budget below):

## Project Budget

From: "Worksheet 5: Project Revisions", *A Guide to Participatory Budgeting in Schools*, Participatory Budgeting Project, 2018. <https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/>

List out all the physical stuff you'll need for the project. Use the back of this paper if you have more than three items. *Don't fill out the cost and subtotal yet!*

Item 1	How many?	Cost	Subtotal
Item 2	How many?	Cost	Subtotal
Item 3	How many?	Cost	Subtotal

List out anything you'll need to pay for that isn't a physical thing (any repeating fees, etc.). Installation and maintenance will be covered by the school, so don't worry about that. Use the back of this paper if you have more than three items. *Don't fill out the cost and subtotal yet!*

Item 4	How many?	Cost	Subtotal
Item 5	How many?	Cost	Subtotal
Item 6	How many?	Cost	Subtotal

Now, go online and research how much each item costs. For example, if you need to install new lights, you can do a search for how much light bulbs costs and how much a light fixture costs. Fill out the cost for each item on your list. Now, do the math to calculate your subtotal for each item.

**How many? x Cost = Subtotal**

**How often? x Cost = Subtotal**

To get an estimate of your proposal cost, add up all the subtotals and fill it in below:

**Total proposal cost =**

## THE ELEVATOR PITCH

An “elevator pitch” is a brief, engaging introduction that can be communicated in the time it takes to ride an elevator to your floor. An elevator pitch is a dynamic way to introduce who you are, what you do, or why your projects and ideas are a great investment in 60 seconds or less.

Follow the instructions below and work with your team to create a lively and persuasive Elevator Pitch that will showcase the value and strength of your project.

### 1. Introduce yourself and your team:

- Be relaxed and up-beat, and share your pitch like you’re chatting with the audience not talking at the audience.

### 2. Identify the problem:

- Explain the problem in a conversational tone – ask a question and tell a story.
- Sentence starters can include:
  - “Have you ever felt frustrated...?”
  - “Can you imagine what the school day would be like if...?”
  - “Don’t you wish we...?”

### 3. Announce your solution:

- Summarize how the project can solve the problem and improve your school. Be clear on the results and why the outcomes of this project are worth the financial investment.
- Example sentence:
  - “We understand how important ... is, so we researched the most successful strategies to improve...Our project provides the solution we need at the lowest possible cost. Improvements will include...”

### 4. Summarize your plan:

- Condense your project plan into one or two sharp sentences that demonstrate that your team understands the investment of time, resources, support that your project will require.
  - “Starting in October, our team of \_\_\_ people with skills in \_\_\_, \_\_\_, and \_\_\_ will invest \_\_\_ hours each week to accomplishing \_\_\_. In partnership with \_\_\_ and with an investment from the school of \_\_\_ for supplies and services, we will complete our project by mid-December.”

### 5. Paint a picture with words:

- In one sentence, describe how the experience at school will be better for the community once your project has been implemented.
  - “Students and staff will no longer have to \_\_\_\_\_, instead we will all be able to \_\_\_\_\_ when we come to school each day.”