

TITLE: Solving Community Problems

ESTIMATED TIME: 2.75 hours

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Students will state at least two solutions to a problem in their community.
- Students will write an email to their local representative to give suggestions for possible solutions to their local problem.
- Students will use future real conditionals to express cause and effect for their recommendations.

Essential Vocabulary:	Materials Needed:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative (housing) • Deadline • Eviction notice • Recipient • Catastrophe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Santa Ana River homelessness video: https://YouTube/lkh72q6XmY8 • Santa Ana River homeless residents still await their future destiny https://action.aclu.org/secure/el-nino-shelter-oc • ifhomeless.org • Grammar practice link https://www.learnamericanenglishonline.com/Orange%20Level/O12%20Future%20Conditioanal.html • Handouts #s 1-13



WARM UP (5-10 minutes):

Show an authentic video about the Santa Ana River homeless tent city (<https://YouTube/lkh72q6XmY8>)

Project the questions on the board and ask the students questions about the video. (Open the PowerPoint Presentation)

- Have you seen these images before?
- Who are these people?
- Why do you think they live this way? (They lost their work and homes.)
- What do you do when you see a homeless person? (Give money, try to help in other ways, get intimidated and quickly pass him or her.)

Go over the PowerPoint Presentation.



INTRODUCTION (10 minutes):

Project the pictures of the homeless in the Santa Ana Civic Center and Santa Ana River homeless tent city. (See Handout #1)

Tell the students that homelessness is a major issue in this community. Many people live in the streets and along the Santa Ana River without any hope for a better future.

(Use the attached PowerPoint presentation to project questions and pictures on the board.)

- Have students discuss the questions with 2 or 3 peers near them to come up with possible suggestions to solve this problem and then share their answers with the class.



INTRODUCTION (10 minutes):

- What do you think can be done to solve this problem in the community? (Build more homeless shelters and other alternative housing options/have more programs to help people in need)

Do the city authorities work on this problem?



PRESENTATION (30 minutes):

Tell the students that homelessness is one of the significant community issues that has to be resolved. Unfortunately, Santa Ana City and Orange County authorities are not in a hurry to act. The winter season is here and the weather tends to be very cold for those who live without a permanent shelter. The deadline has passed and nothing has been done for the residents of tent city. (See this in the PowerPoint presentation for this lesson.)

What can each of us do to improve this situation?

(Email the city authorities who are able to make a decision or sign a petition to Orange County Board of Supervisors/provide food and clothing).

Note: If this community issue is not relevant now, think of a current community issue that students are aware of to discuss.

- Tell the students that you will teach them how to write a formal email to a local or county representative.
- Show the students the sample of a real blank email and ask them about the main components of the email. (See PowerPoint presentation or Handout #2)
- Point out the usage of *CC* (carbon copy), which is an email copied to one or more recipients and the *CCd* recipients can see all the recipients the message was sent to and *BCC* (blind carbon copy) where neither the main recipient nor the *cc'd* recipients can see the addresses in the *BCC* field. (The difference between “*CC*” and “*BCC*” is that carbon copy (*CC*) recipients are visible to all other recipients whereas those who are *BCCd* are not visible to anyone.)
 - *It is good “netiquette” to use *bcc* when copying a message to many people.

Project a sample of a completed formal email on the board and ask students to identify the important parts of the email (see Handout #3). Give each student a copy of it as well.

- What is the subject of the email?
- Who is the email addressed to?
- Who is the author of the email?
- Who else is receiving emails?
- What is the difference between *CC* and *BCC*?

After asking questions to check the comprehension of the essential email components, distribute another copy of the same email but with the bubbles containing explanations of the essential parts of the email for them to see if they answered the questions correctly (Handout #4).



PRESENTATION (30 minutes):

Explain the main components if necessary:

To: It is the line with an email address of the person the email is addressed to.

Subject Line: This is what the message is about.

Greeting Line: Saying hello, all words start with capitals and a comma is used at the end. Point out the space between the greeting, body, and closing.

Body: It is the main message of the email, the main purpose of it.

Closing line: This is how you finish the email in a polite way using words like: Sincerely, Respectfully, Best Regards, etc.

Tell the students that it is important to state the purpose of the email and write it clearly focusing on only one or two ideas. A well-written email is clear and polite. Point out that it is essential to let a recipient know who you are. Tell them that the main email body should be as short as possible. Tell them to use modals like “should/ought to” for making suggestions and giving advice.

Ask the students to skim and scan the sample email handouts (#3 or #4) and ask questions about the email.

- Who is the email for? (Orange County Board of Supervisors)
- Who is the author of the email? (John Smith, a resident of the community)
- What are the main facts in the email? (1000 homeless people, funds approved for the alternative shelter)
- What is the author’s recommendation or request? (To act urgently to provide emergency shelter and beds).

Tell the students that it is important to include specific information, facts, and to state what you are asking for.

Point out future conditional sentences in the email. Tell the students that a conditional sentence is a complex sentence that consists of a main clause and a subordinate clause. “If” clauses express the condition and the main clause gives result or outcome (see PowerPoint notes).

Future conditionals include strong condition and result sentences which express future plans and contingencies (Freeman & Celce-Murcia, 2015, p. 571).

If clause (simple present) + main clause (future tense). Point out that a comma is necessary only if the sentence starts with if clause).

Main clause (no comma is necessary if the sentence starts with main clause) + if clause (simple tense).



PRESENTATION (30 minutes):

Examples:

If the local authorities **recognize** the need for affordable **alternative housing**, people who are currently living outdoors **will** avoid public health and safety **catastrophes** in the future.

Sometimes the future outcome is expressed in the result clause and is not sufficiently certain to warrant the use of *will* and *be going to*, in which case a weaker modal of prediction such as **may**, **might**, or **should** is used.

Note: Point out boldfaced vocabulary words and explain the meanings.

Orange County officials **should** act immediately **if** they want to ensure safety of people living outdoors.

The city authorities should not give **eviction notices** to Santa Ana River homeless campsite residents if they don't provide **alternative housing**.

Grammar link for extra practice:

<https://www.learnamericanenglishonline.com/Orange%20Level/O12%20Future%20Conditional.html>

See Handout #5 for extra practice.



GUIDED PRACTICE (25 minutes):

Tell the students that it is time to practice. Provide students with Handout #6 and ask them to fill in missing information based on the sample email (Handout #3 or 4). Tell them they have 10 minutes to finish it. After the ten minutes, go over the answers and ask questions for understanding. Use an LCD projector to project each Handout on the board.

- What do you write in the subject line?
- Who is the recipient of this email?
- What do you put in closing line?
- Does it have all the necessary components?
- Are the conditional forms used correctly?

Provide students with Handout #7 and ask them to find 8 mistakes and correct them. Ask students to cross out incorrect forms of conditionals, incorrect spacing or missing punctuation and explain why it is incorrect. Ask the students to point out conditional forms with modals in the email.

Tell your students that homelessness is one of many significant issues in the community. Tell them that they will write another email with you. The email will express concern, offer suggestions and some constructive criticism. Tell the students that you will write an email about



GUIDED PRACTICE (25 minutes):

improving the road conditions in the City of Santa Ana. Write a short email with the students, address the issue, state your concern and come up with two suggestions to solve the problem.

See Handout #8. Project the Handout on the board or use an actual email screen to work on this practice email.



COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICE (5-10 minutes):

Put the students in groups. (Try grouping them by their favorite color and/or shades of red, blue, etc.) Students will brainstorm ideas about different community issues and possible solutions to one of their community problems. Students should share their ideas with each other.



APPLICATION (40-45 minutes):

Tell the students that it is their turn to write an email about an important issue in their local community. Have them choose one community issue they discussed earlier and write an email on the selected community problem offering at least two possible solutions to the issue. Students will use a copy of a blank email (Handout #9 and Handout #10) to create an email. Ask the students to use *modals* and *if clauses* in their emails for making suggestions and giving advice as well as cause and effect future conditional sentences. Provide the students with the handout on effective structures and phrases with instructions (see Handout # 11).



EVALUATION:

Students will email you their work. Ask them to use a self-check list before they email it or submit it you (Handout #12) for the email assessment. Use the rubric in Handout #13 to evaluate students' email once you receive it.



EXTENSION:

- Ask students to research online local representatives based on their zip code.
- Have students find their local representatives online and email them a copy and email them.
- Ask them to BCC you.

Students can also sign a petition posted at the end of the article asking the Orange County Board of Supervisors to provide an immediate emergency shelter to ensure health and safety of people living outdoors this season. (<https://action.aclu.org/secure/el-nino-shelter-oc>).

CORE LESSON COMPONENTS:
BASIC COMMUNICATION: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State a claim about a topic, introduce the topic, provide logically ordered reasons or facts that effectively support the claim, and provide a concluding statement.
COLLEGE/WORKFORCE PREP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will apply critical thinking and problem solving skills addressing an issue in the community.
DIGITAL PREP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will research an issue important to their community and produce an email to be sent to their instructor and local representative.
21ST CENTURY SKILLS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical Thinking Skills Collaboration & Leadership Agility & adaptability Initiative & entrepreneurship Oral communication Written Communication Access & analyze information Have & use curiosity & imagination Play, passion & purpose beyond the classroom
ONLINE RESOURCES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://YouTube/lkh72q6XmY8 Santa Ana River homeless residents still await their future destiny https://action.aclu.org/secure/el-nino-shelter-oc ifhomeless.org Grammar practice link https://www.learnamericanenglishonline.com/Orange%20Level/O12%20Future%20Conditional.html https://action.aclu.org/secure/el-nino-shelter-oc

ADAPTATIONS:
Application: Multi-level: This less is intentionally scaffolded to help a multi-level classroom. See Handouts #s 1-13. No tech: Provide students with the a blank template of the email for them to use. High Tech: Ask students to post their emails on Padlet provided by you and ask other students to comment on each other’s community issues and solutions.
Evaluation: Multi-level: This lesson is intentionally scaffolded to help a multi-level classroom. See Handouts #s 1-13. No tech: Students will submit their work using a template to be evaluated with the rubric. High Tech: Students will post email on Padlet for other groups to comment and give suggestions.

TEACHER TIPS:

*Teacher tip: In the high tech classroom, if time permits, *ask students to watch an authentic video about current state of this matter through the voice of the campsite resident with some facts:* (<https://action.aclu.org/secure/el-nino-shelter-oc>)

Ask students some questions about the video (Questions and the video are also on the PowerPoint Presentation included):

- *Did the authorities do anything to change things for the homeless in Santa Ana? (NO)*
- *What did the authorities promise? (They promised to provide alternative housing and new beds before the winter storms)*

*Teacher tip: Some possible community problems to write about (graffiti in the neighborhood, lack of street lights in some parts of the city, not enough pedestrian crosswalks near the school areas and etc.)

*Teacher tip: Be sure students have an email that is appropriate for academic purposes. If they don't have an email, help students create an email using a free provider like Gmail.