

LESSON 5

Investigating a Real-Life Community Issue

60 minutes

Strand 2.1: Appreciating my Community

Participating

Outcome LCW.M2.S1.COM.5

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

Students select a real community issue connected to wellbeing or fairness. They name three groups affected by it and describe concrete impacts for each before writing a short investigation note.

HANDLE WITH CARE

- If a student discloses something heavy about home or health while choosing an issue, follow the school's own pastoral procedures. Do not open personal disclosures on the board.

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Outcome	What the specification asks for
LCW.M2.S1.COM.5	investigate how different groups in a community have been impacted by a real-life issue.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Identify a real community issue linked to wellbeing, equality, care or the environment
- Investigate who is impacted and how, naming three groups with concrete effects
- Produce a half-page Community Issue Investigation note that later collaborative work can use

KEY TERMS

Term	What it means here	For example
Community issue	A real problem or gap that affects people who share a place, interest or need, and that can be linked to wellbeing, equality, care, or the environment.	No safe walking route between a housing estate and the local secondary school
Impact	The concrete effect an issue has on a person or group: what gets harder, safer, costlier, more limited, or better because the issue exists.	Parents driving 20 minutes each way because the evening bus was cut
Stakeholder	Anyone who is affected by the issue or who has a real say in what happens next, whether they gain, lose, or carry responsibility for a response.	Residents, a local sports club, the county council, shop owners on the main street

BEFORE THE BELL

- Prepare printed copies of Aoife's example investigation if students cannot access the worked example digitally.
- Compile a list of five sample community issues to support students who need prompts (rural evening transport, accessible play equipment, after-school care places, vacant main-street units, flood-prone walkways near a school).
- Decide device policy for confirming a local fact during the write.
- Decide whether students may use phones or school devices to confirm a local fact (a timetable cut, a closed service, a planning notice). If devices are limited, seed five real Irish-scale issues on the board as fallbacks: rural evening transport, accessible play equipment, after-school care places, vacant main-street units, flood-prone walkways near a school.
- On screen this lesson: worked example.

Investigating a Real-Life Community Issue

HOW THE LESSON RUNS		
5 min	introduction	Getting Started
5 min	content	Key Terms
10 min	activity	Walkthrough: Aoife's Investigation
30 min	content	Write Your Community Issue Investigation
5 min	content	Think About It
5 min	summary	What you covered

STEP BY STEP

5 min Getting Started

Open with a 60-second scan of the room: *Name one thing in your town, parish or online community that people keep complaining about but nobody seems to own.* Capture three or four on the board without debating solutions yet. Solutions belong to later lessons; today is scope and impact only.

Tell them that in a later lesson groups will have to agree on one shared issue between them, so an issue chosen vaguely today will cost them time then. That is the reason for pushing now for something they can actually point at.

5 min Key Terms

Spend under five minutes here. The trap is students treating "community issue" as any opinion they hold. Push for something observable: a missing service, a barrier, a pattern people can point at.

10 min Walkthrough: Aoife's Investigation On screen: worked example

Drive this guided worked example on the IWB. Students call out each move and explain their thinking. Spend about 8-10 minutes. Ask the class to spot the three groups and which impact is mixed before moving on.

Look-fors while you talk: issue is observable; groups are specific enough that a stranger could picture them; at least one impact is not purely negative; no invented statistics.

30 min Write Your Community Issue Investigation

SUGGESTED TIMING

- 25-28 minutes: students write their own half-page
- Last 2-3 minutes of this block: quick pair glance for a third group that is still vague

LOOK-FORS

- Issue is observable, not a mood ("nobody cares about teens")
- Groups are specific enough that a stranger could picture them
- At least one impact is not purely negative if the student can find it; honesty beats balance-for-its-own-sake
- No invented statistics; patterns and examples beat fake numbers

TEACHING TIPS

Students often pick climate change or "mental health" at planetary scale and then cannot name three local groups. Coach them down one level: the same theme, a version you can see within a bus ride of home.

If a student discloses something heavy about home or health while choosing an issue, follow the school's own pastoral procedures rather than opening it on the board.

5 min Think About It

Give them three minutes talking in pairs, then take two minutes as a whole class collecting the "groups we almost ignored" onto the board. These are often small businesses, carers, or people who benefit from the way things are now. The second prompt is the one to hold them on, because both directions of impact matter when they come to design a response later.

If time runs short in class, set the portfolio line for homework instead: one sentence on the stakeholder they nearly erased.

5 min What you covered

Spot-check five portfolio documents before dismissal: issue named, three groups, concrete impacts. Anyone still on a slogan-level issue gets a one-line rewrite task for the start of next lesson.

ANSWERS AND LOOK-FORS

- "fifth- and sixth-year students who need the town for part-time work..." - Specific stakeholder group - Not "young people" on its own. The group is narrow enough that you can picture who is in it and why the bus matters to them.
- "Two classmates dropped Saturday jobs because the last bus home is gone" - Concrete negative impact - "They are affected" would fail here. This line gives a pattern and an example a stranger can understand.
- "Friday evening footfall from the village has dropped" - Mixed impact, not all harm - The cafés and pharmacy are not only losers. Weekday lunch holds; evening trade dips. Honest investigations include mixed effects where they exist.
- "It is not a private preference; it is a shared transport gap" - Why it is a community issue - The closing line locks the link to shared access and fairness. That is what separates a community issue from a private complaint.
- "young people are affected" - Too vague to use - This weak contrast shows the trap. No specific group, no concrete effect. If a sentence in your draft sounds like this, rewrite it before you stop.

TEACHING MOVES

- Use the worked example on the board to lock the shape before anyone writes.
- Circulate during the write to prompt for concrete impacts on each group.
- Facilitate the pair discussion to surface groups that are often overlooked.
- Model rewriting a vague statement using the key terms.
- Coach planetary-scale topics down to a version students can see within a bus ride of home.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students use vague statements like "people are affected"; solution: require a specific effect such as "families spend extra time travelling".
- Choosing personal complaints rather than shared community problems; solution: check that the issue affects multiple groups.
- Forgetting to include mixed or positive impacts; solution: remind students that the picture must be honest.
- Invented statistics; solution: patterns and examples only.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Provide a structured template listing group and impact prompts.
- Extension: Ask students to identify one stakeholder who could help resolve the issue.
- Support: Pair students who struggle with identifying an issue with a peer for the first step.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEFT WITH

- Community Issue Investigation: one issue, three impacted groups and how