

Town Hall Meeting

Today your class is going to simulate a **town hall meeting**.

Here's the situation: Just as Maria thought, hawks are indeed helpful in controlling mice and other rodents. Therefore, the fish and game warden of Cluck County made a new rule and put up the sign shown on the right.

Of course, different people in the community have different opinions about this new rule.



Meeting attendees

Description of their mindsets when entering the meeting

farmers



The farmers are confused and angry about the rule. If a hawk is on THEIR private property, they should have every right to kill it. Losing chickens to these nasty **predators** is expensive, stressful, and very harmful to their business. Poultry farmers **produce** eggs and chickens consumed by people all over the state. They realize that the new rodent problem might be due to fewer hawks, but they prefer to try other ways to control the rodents.

environmental activists



The environmental activists consider the hawk to be a beautiful bird with an especially important place in the community. They worry about hawks becoming an endangered species. They know that ecosystems are complicated and **interdependent**, and they worry that other people don't think about unintended consequences. Furthermore, they are suspicious that the farmers will use poison to control the rodents, which they think could be very harmful.

fish & game warden/ biologists



The fish and game warden and wildlife biologists want to prevent harmful **disturbances** to the environment and to protect **native** species. They are concerned about the rodent **population** becoming too large, thereby hurting natural grasslands and farm crops. They are not sure how long the ban on hawk-killing should last. They are a bit worried that the county councilors will change the rule because of complaints and not because of scientific evidence.

county councilors



The county councilors are the elected representatives of the people of Cluck County. They want to do the responsible thing, but they also want to keep everyone happy. They are worried about the rule **disturbing** the farmers' businesses. They respect the scientists and the game warden, but wonder if they overreacted by banning all killing of hawks and birds of **prey**. They are also somewhat concerned that the environmental activists will organize demonstrations against the rule, which they believe would make the county look bad.

Town Hall Meeting



Rules for the town hall meeting:

Each team gets times to

- * make an opening statement
- * comment on or question what other teams say
- * make a closing statement

There will be two town hall meeting simulations. You will participate as a character during one of them. During the other, you will observe and fill out a checklist.

To prepare to PARTICIPATE in the town hall meeting simulation:

1. Find out from your teacher which team you are on.
 - farmers
 - environmental activists
 - game warden/biologists
 - county councilors
2. Read the mindsets of each team very carefully so you can play the role well. Remember, you are representing a character, not your own opinion.
3. Get together with the other members of your team and develop good arguments that you can make during the meeting. If you are on the county councilor team, think about ground rules you would like to share at the beginning of the meeting so that people with different opinions about the issue will handle themselves appropriately.
4. Decide who on your team will present an opening statement and who on your team will present a closing statement. The remaining members of your team will handle questions from other groups or the councilors.

Get this information from your teacher.

I have been assigned to:

- participate in the first town hall meeting and observe the second.
- observe the first town hall meeting and participate in the second.

The students in my group are:

To prepare to OBSERVE the town hall meeting simulation:

1. Study the form on the next page.
2. While you observe the other group's town hall meeting simulation, write a check mark when you hear someone from a team make a good point. Jot a few words to remind yourself of any really good points. Attempt to note at least one good point from each team in the other group.
3. Also listen for the week's focus words. If you hear them used correctly by anybody participating in the simulation, circle them in the appropriate place on the form.
4. Be ready to comment on what you observed after the simulation.

Town Hall Meeting

Observation Checklists



Below are forms for you to use while you are observing the town hall meeting (when it is not your turn to participate).



I heard the farmer team make some really good points:

Good point #1:

Good point #2:

I noticed that the farmer group used some of this week's focus words:

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| native | population | prey |
| disturbance | recovery | consumer |
| producer | predator | interdependence |



I heard the environmental activist team make some really good points:

Good point #1:

Good point #2:

I noticed that the environmental activist group used some of this week's focus words:

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| native | population | prey |
| disturbance | recovery | consumer |
| producer | predator | interdependence |



I heard the fish and game warden/biologist team make some really good points:

Good point #1:

Good point #2:

I noticed that the fish and game warden/biologist group used some of this week's focus words:

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| native | population | prey |
| disturbance | recovery | consumer |
| producer | predator | interdependence |



I heard the county councilors team make some really good points:

Good point #1:

Good point #2:

I noticed that the county councilors group used some of this week's focus words:

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| native | population | prey |
| disturbance | recovery | consumer |
| producer | predator | interdependence |