Challenge 1: What's in My Community?

Get Prepared

Challenge Goal: Understand how the buildings and other structures in a community help the people who live there

Time Needed: One 45-minute session

Before You Begin:

- Print out and make copies of the Engineer's Notebook template, which can be found at **www.scholastic.com/ STEMsparks**. Collate and staple the sheets so that each participant has his or her own Engineer's Notebook. Be sure to identify a place to keep these notebooks as participants will use them through all three units of the **Building Blocks** program.

- Go through magazines and tear out pages that show trees, buildings, streetlights, and other items that may be in a community. Have these sheets ready for this challenge's collaging activity.

- If time permits, make your own community collage to show students as an example.

- Before the participants come, set up the tablets so that their browsers are at **www.scholastic.com/sparks**.

Connect With the Home:

As soon as you know that you will be starting the **Building Blocks** program, download and print out the **Council-to-Home Communication: Program Overview for K–2**. Send the Program Overview home with the kids who will participate to let their family members know about the program.

When you actually start the program, download and print out the **Council-to-Home Communication: Unit 1 Overview for K–2** and ask kids to take the communication sheets home to let their family members know what's involved in Unit 1 of the **Building Blocks** program.

What You Will Need:

Printouts	Tablet Flip Book	Materials
• Engineer's Notebook • "Community Needs" sheet (2 or 3 copies per student)	 • Community Engineering Flip Book	• Samsung tablets • scrap paper • 11x17 paper • magazine pages featuring community landscapes (optional) • construction paper • pencils • crayons, markers, or color pencils

What's in My Community?

Pass out 11x17 sheets of paper, copies of the "Community Needs" sheet (last page of Engineer's Notebook), pages from magazines, and scrap paper. Ask kids to make a collage of all the important things in their community. Explain that they can use the drawings on the "Things in a Community" sheet, the pictures from the magazines, or they can draw their own community items on the scrap paper. If you have made your own collage, show it now to provide an example of the activity.

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What's Its Use?

1. When kids have completed their collages, have a few volunteers describe what they included in their collages. Direct kids to click on the Community Engineering Flip Book tab on **www.scholastic.com/sparks.** Ask them what they notice about the community they see on the screen.

2. Explain that everything in a community has a use. Ask for a volunteer to identify one important thing in the community illustration. Challenge kids to explain:

How do people use this important thing? How does it help people in the community? Ask how many kids included that item on their own collages. Continue discussing the items in both the illustration on the tablet and the kids' collages to explore why each item exists and how it helps a community. As kids discuss each item, encourage them to share stories of how they have used that item.

Reflection Time

Distribute the Engineer's Notebooks and have kids write their names on the covers. Ask kids to open their notebooks to the first page and to think about everything they discussed today. Explain that they will choose the two or three items they think are the most important to their community. Have them draw their three favorite community items also known as *structures* on the first page of their Engineer's Notebooks. Encourage kids to share why they chose these structures with the group. Ask: *Why did you select these? What makes them important to your community? To you or your family?* When they're finished have them color in their structures.