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**Please cite this publication as:**

THINKER project (2025). Unit 3, lesson 5.3 - Scenario A – Let’s build a city.

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**Scenario A – “Let’s build a city”**

In a Grade 7 Informatics class (students aged 13), Mr. Smith introduced a project titled **“Let’s build a city”**. His aim was to make learning more interactive by using an **online city simulation tool** — specifically, **SimCity EDU** — as a way to teach students about urban planning, logical thinking, and the use of informatics in solving real-life problems.

**Project setup:**

Mr. Smith gave a short demonstration of how to open and navigate SimCity EDU. He explained that students would work in groups of 4–5 to build a digital city over three lessons. The only instructions provided were:

***“Try to make your city sustainable and efficient. Submit a screenshot of your finished city and a short paragraph explaining what you did.”***

Group formation was random, and roles were not defined. Students were not guided on how to collaborate or reflect on their choices. There was no discussion of **real-world urban issues**, no local context, and no connection to curriculum goals.

**The learning environment:**

Once students got into the simulation, the classroom quickly split into two dynamics:

* A few confident students **took control** of the building tasks, making rapid decisions.
* In some groups boys wanted to do the building tasks and asked girls to deal with making the city pretty
* Others — especially quieter students, those with lower digital fluency students — were passive observers.

The tool became a competitive game, rather than a learning experience. Groups began comparing who could build the largest city population or the most roads.

Mr. Smith rarely checked in with groups. There were no formative checkpoints, no guiding questions, and no scaffolding for those who needed it.

**Assessment & outcome:**

At the end of the project, each group submitted:

* A **screenshot** of their digital city
* A **short paragraph** describing what they built

There was no rubric, no peer or self-reflection, and no opportunity to present or discuss their choices.  
Mr. Smith provided minimal written feedback — mostly checkmarks.

When a student was asked what they learned from the activity, they replied:

*“We just did whatever. It was fun, but I don’t really remember what it was about.”*

**Results & impact:**

* **Engagement was uneven**. Some students were very active, while others sat silently or disengaged entirely.
* **Girls in two groups** reported that their ideas were ignored.
* **Students didn’t connect the task to learning goals**. Few mentioned sustainability, planning, or data-driven decisions.
* **No reflective thinking** occurred. Students saw it as a game, not a learning task.
* **No skill development** in problem-solving, collaboration, or reflection was observed.

Mr. Smith noted that the class was “busy and on task,” and stated:

*“I was hoping it would just be more engaging than a worksheet.”*

**#1 Reflective activity: Analyze the scenario and fill the table**

**Challenges:** Identify at least 4 missed opportunities or challenges that limited student learning, inclusion, or authentic engagement.

**Why it matters:** Explain why this challenge/missed opportunity matters.

**THINKER principle:** Connect each issue to a principle of authentic learning or gender-inclusive teaching from the THINKER Framework.

**Suggestions:**

* What could the teacher have done differently to make this project more effective and inclusive?
* Propose at least 3 strategies that would strengthen this lesson using the THINKER framework (e.g., real-world connection, student voice, scaffolding, feedback tools).

| **Challenge** | **Why it matters** | **THINKER principle** | **Suggestion** |
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**#2 Reflective activity:**

If you were Mr. Smith, how could you have measured whether students were engaged during this task?

* What would you look for or listen for during the activity?
* What simple tool or strategy could you use to gather feedback and evidence?