Assessment “learning about urban futures” (prototype 2, after lesson 6)

Student Instruction:

* Answer question 1 and question 8
* Answer three questions to choose from question 2-7
* Make sure you answer five questions in total

Suppose someone says: “studying futures can’t be done by studying books only”.

1a. Name two key supporting arguments for this statement.

1b. A different person says: “however, studying futures will require books or other reliable

resources”. Name the most important supporting argument for this statement.

1c. Explain why ‘the city’ is a logical theme for thinking about futures.

1d. Explain why ‘the city’ is a logical scale level for thinking about futures.

|  |
| --- |
| Credits: 4 X 2,5 PT  Answers:  1a.   * Knowledge and imagination needed, in which personal creative thought and values play a role too, both during the process of study and in the outcomes; * A book becomes outdated relatively easy; * Interaction and feedback are needed.   1b. Knowledge is a key element of learning about futures.  1c.   * There is a lot going on in societies that is often best seen in cities. Space is claimed in cities from multiple dimensions/perspectives (nature, economics, politics, culture). A high density of artifacts, actors and activities ‘express’ functions from different dimensions. * Innovations are often first seen in cities. Cities could therefore indicate what futures could be like;   1d.   * The city is a comprehensible and familiar scale level, which allows us to think about physical environments in futures in specific terms; * About this level of scale, resources are avaialble. |

We have considered differences between optimistic and pessimistic perspectives on futures.

2a. Explain why this distinction is important to understand when studying futures. Use the term ‘context specific’ in your answer.

2b. We studied four trends. Choose one of those four trends and describe – with the trend in mind - a realistic, **optimistic** scenario for food in urban futures in 2032.

2c. Describe with the same trend in mind, a realistic **pessimistic** scenario for food in urban futures in 2032.

2d. Name an actor that could benefit from the realistic **pessimistic** scenario for food in urban futures in 2032, as described in your answer to 2c.

|  |
| --- |
| Credits: 4 X 2,5 PT  Answers:  2a. While interpreting futures images (of futures that do not physically exist) it is important to know who, from where and when (context) came up with a perspective on futures. Optimism and pessimism are extremes that can illuminate how perspectives ‘come from somewhere”, a context. Developing eye for contexts, is necessary for interpreting futures images. Both your own and others.  2b. Multiple answers possible. For example:  Technology: improved logistics, fresher food;  Sustainability: from focus on quantity to focus on quality;  2c. Multiple answers possible. For example:  Technology: consumers disconnected to their (automated) food orders, more spoilage;  Sustainability: bio-food unaffordable to lower income groups.  2d. Multiple answers possible. For example:  Technology: consumers’ spoilage indicates more profit for sellers;  Sustainability: growth of bio-market of consumers, profit for sellers. |

Imagine: the trend deregulation has been continuing strongly in the Netherlands. It is 2032 and your child is about to go to school in Amsterdam.

3a. Name a possible positive effect that the strong continuation of the trend could have on the schooling of your child in 2032.

3b. Name a possible negative effect that the strong continuation of the trend could have on the schooling of your child in 2032.

|  |
| --- |
| Credits: 4 X 2,5 PT  Answers:  3a. More private schools that compete which stimulates the educational sector (principles, teachers, developers of educational materials) to improve quality. Students work harder, to be worth the investment of their parents.  3b. A gap between public and private schooling. Social-economical differences can be confirmed and enlarged. |

Look at the concepts below, lined up horizontally. Odd one out: choose the concept least compatible with the other two. Write down that concept and briefly motivate your choice.

4a. sustainability - population growth - urbanism

4b. spatial pressure - food production - function mix

4c. monoculture - permaculture - culture

4d. globalization - food production chain - urbanity

|  |
| --- |
| Credits: 4 X 2,5 PT  Multiple answers possible. For example:  4a. odd out sustainability: it is a value/policy aim, while the other concepts are global features (that put sustainability under pressure);  4b. odd out spatial pressure: food production and function mixing are trends in urban areas;  4c. odd out culture: the other two are related to the primary sector;  4d. odd out food production chain: most connected to the geographical dimension ‘nature’. |

We have been working on an advice to the mayor of tomorrow’s city.

5a. An advise that was repetitively given to the mayor of urban futures was: stimulate urban farming. Explain why this could never be the only solution for the issue of food supply in urban futures, even if a mayor would put all his effort into it.

5b. Nevertheless, urban farming is a good idee. Name an important reason why.

5c. If the four trends continue to develop, an advice to the mayor of tomorrow’s city may become pointless. Why?

|  |
| --- |
| Credits: 4,3,3 PT  Answers:  5a. In terms of quantity, urban farming is insufficient.  5b. Urban farming can:   * stimulates connectedness to food. A different way of seeing /respecting food; * add up to the experience of ‘green in the city’.   5c. Although deregulation is mainly seen on national scale, the influence of, for example, commercial institutions may also increase at the city level. An advise to a CEO may then possibly become more influential. |

One of the models we worked with, was about food in the city. Imagine that, instead of food in the city, “dwelling” would be the central issue. The terms in horizontally in the middle of the model would be: inflow, dwelling, outflow (instead of production, consumption, waste).

6a. Choose two trends (of the four) and explain how these would influence tomorrow’s city.

6b. Explain why, just as with food in the city, dwelling is an issue that requires study of the local scale.

6c. Explain why, just as with food in the city, dwelling is an issue that requires study on larger scales then the local scale, for example the global scale.

|  |
| --- |
| Credits: 4,3,3 PT  Answers:  6a. Multiple answers possible.  6b. Dwelling is, just as food, a theme that influences urban actors (dwellers) directly, fundamentally and every day. Considering it now, may be fruitful in futures.  6c. Dwelling is, just as food, a theme that is influenced by other, larger scales: by policies, migration, trends. |

Imagine: it is 2118 you are (about) 120 years old. Technology influences human life majorly and enabled your high age. Sketch a framework of two trends. Choose from: sustainability, individualization and deregulation. Put one trend on a horizontal axe and the other on the vertical axe. The axes represent a strong version of the trend on the one end and a weak version on the other end. This creates a four quadrant model, each quadrant representing a scenario for life in 2118.

7a. Put a suitable title in each quadrant, to summarize the scenario.

7b. Choose one scenario and briefly explain it.

7c. Name two arguments why this scenario could be considered probable. Use geographical and trend knowledge.

7d. Name two values related to this scenario and explain the relatedness briefly.

|  |
| --- |
| Credits: 2,3,2,2 PT  Multiple answers possible. |

Imagine: it is 2032 and you are living in your preferable future.

8a. Describe how you wish that the four trends have been developing, based on what you know at this moment. Briefly describe the situation per trend.

8b. Name for each trend a first step, that has to be taken in the coming years, into the preferred direction.

8c. What actor (a person or organization involved) can best make this first step?

8d. A person concludes: ‘*Actually, studying futures mostly concerns the present, instead of futures’.* Explain this statement.

|  |
| --- |
| Credits: 4 X 2,5 PT  8a-8c. Multiple answers possible.  8d. Futures are not knowable, but thinking through futures illuminates options and enlarges steering capacity in the present towards preferable futures. |

− END −