

# Today's students are urban dwellers

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I teach 102 urban high school students each day

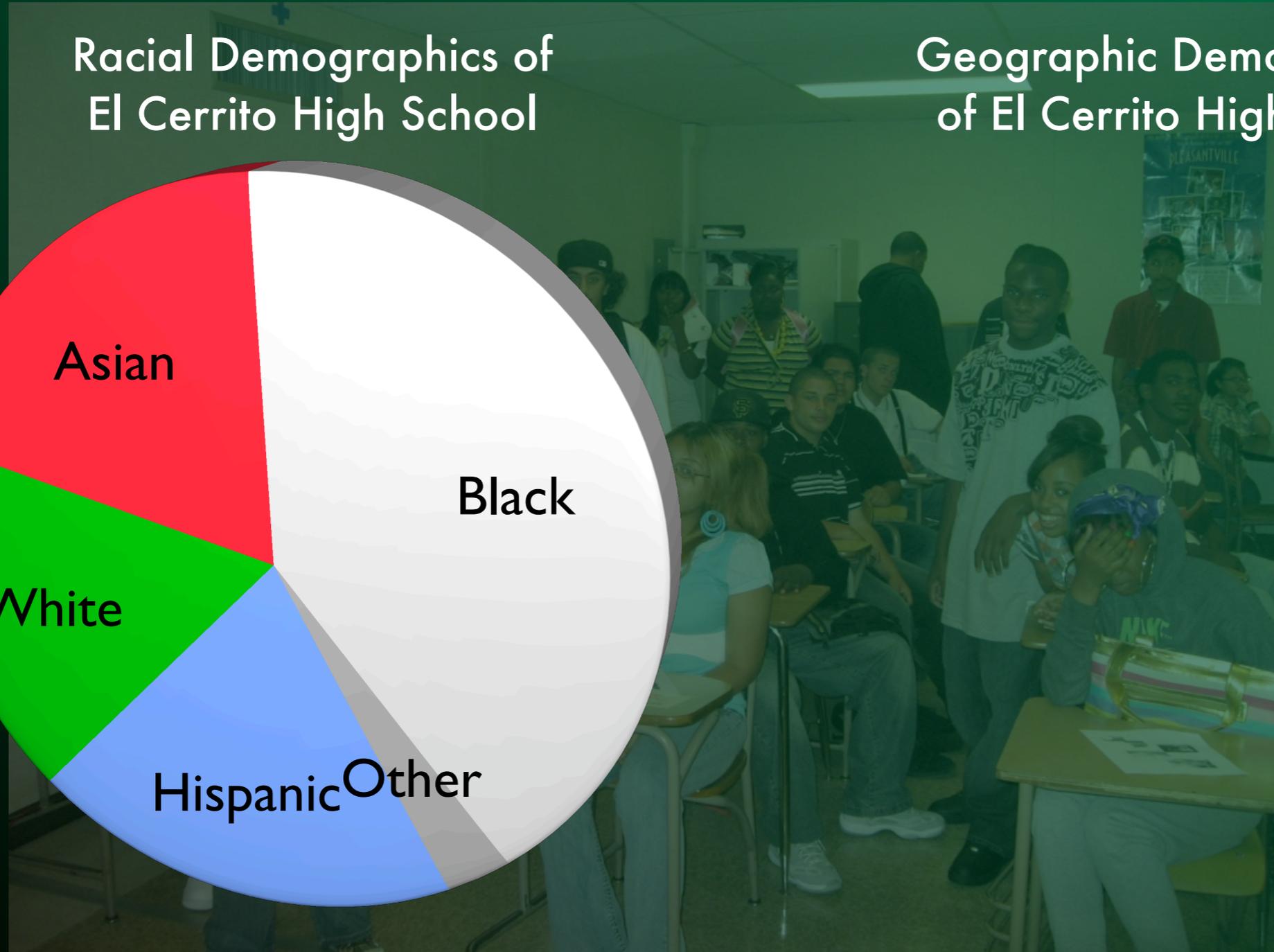
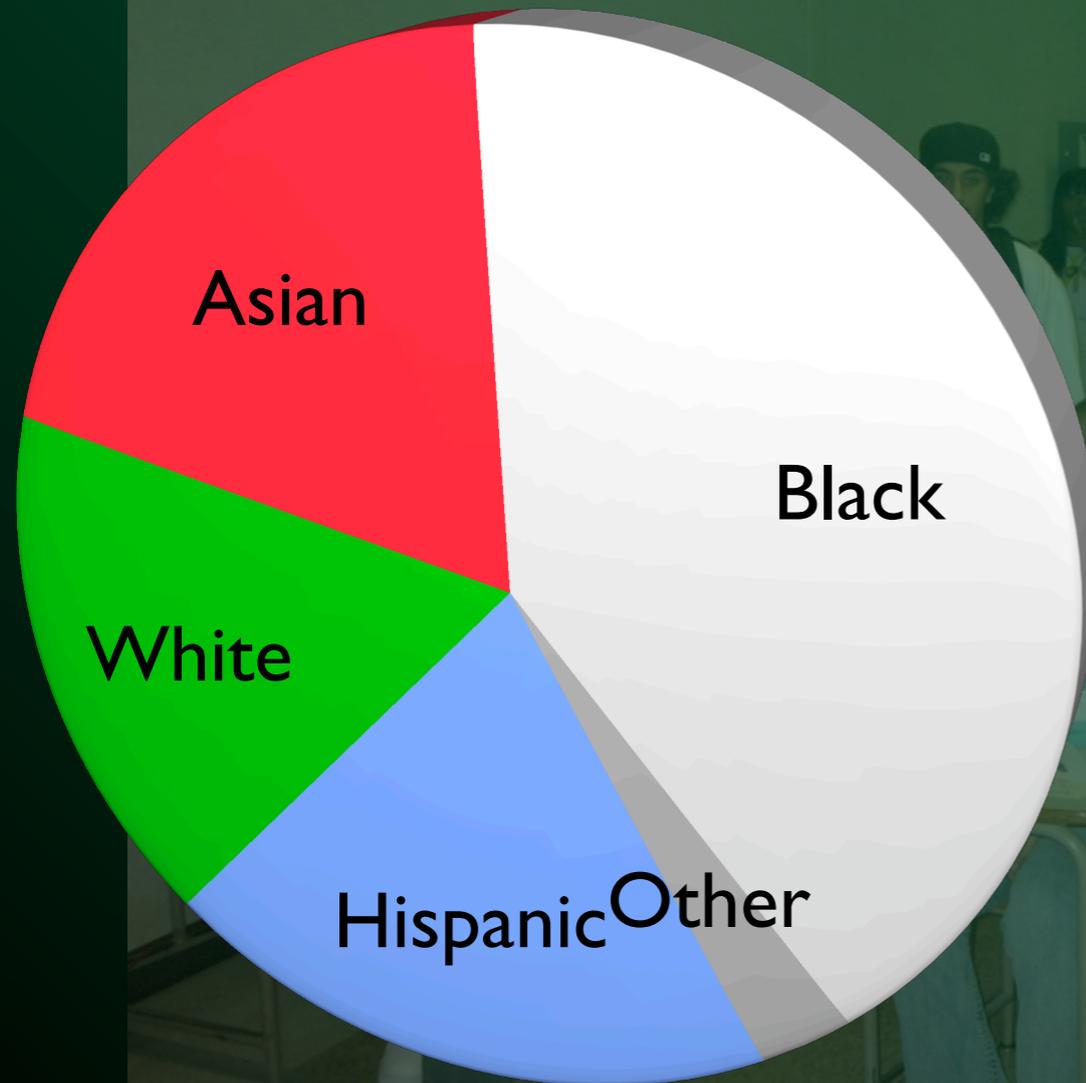


# Teachers should be aware of cultural differences

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Racial Demographics of El Cerrito High School

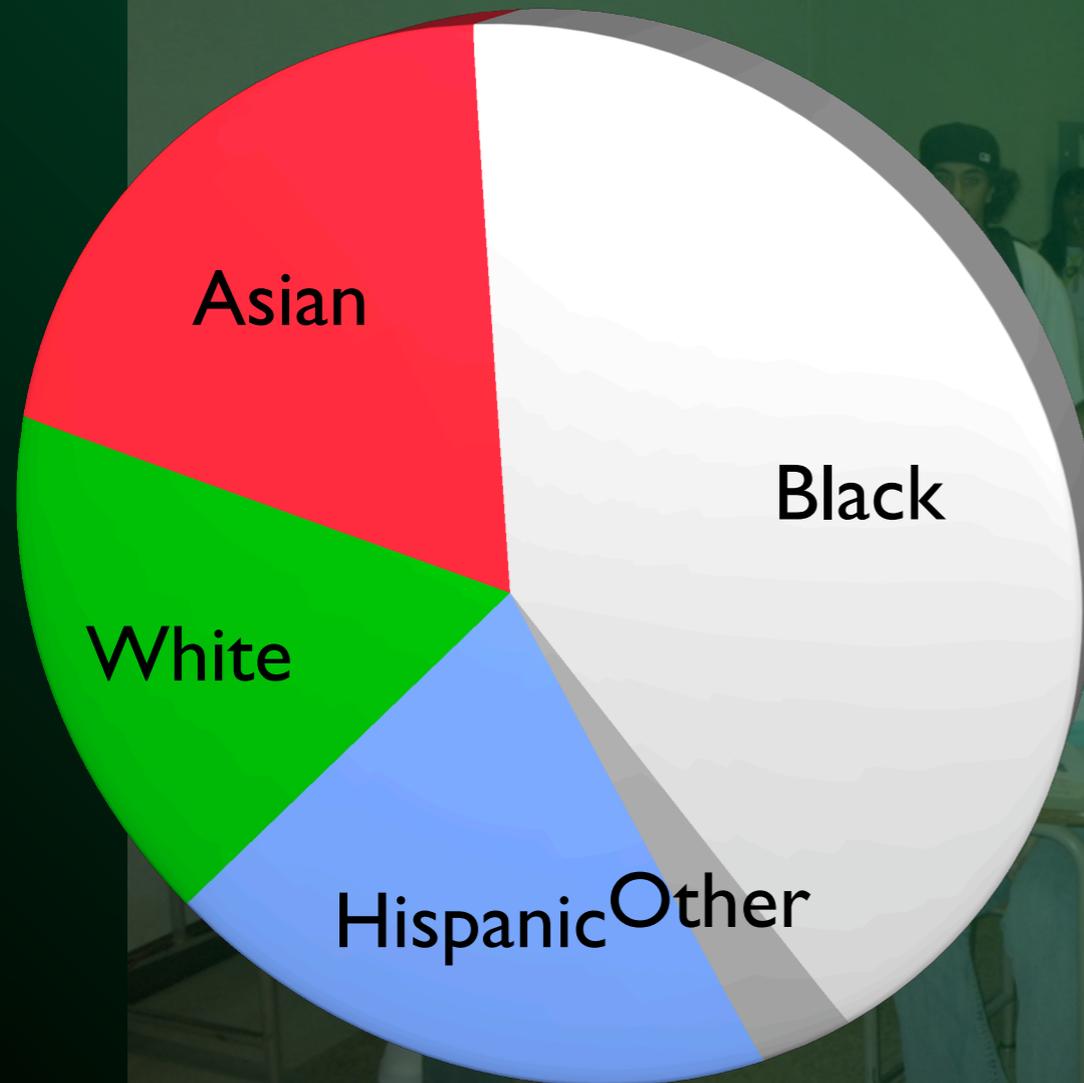
Geographic Demographics of El Cerrito High School



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Racial Demographics of El Cerrito High School



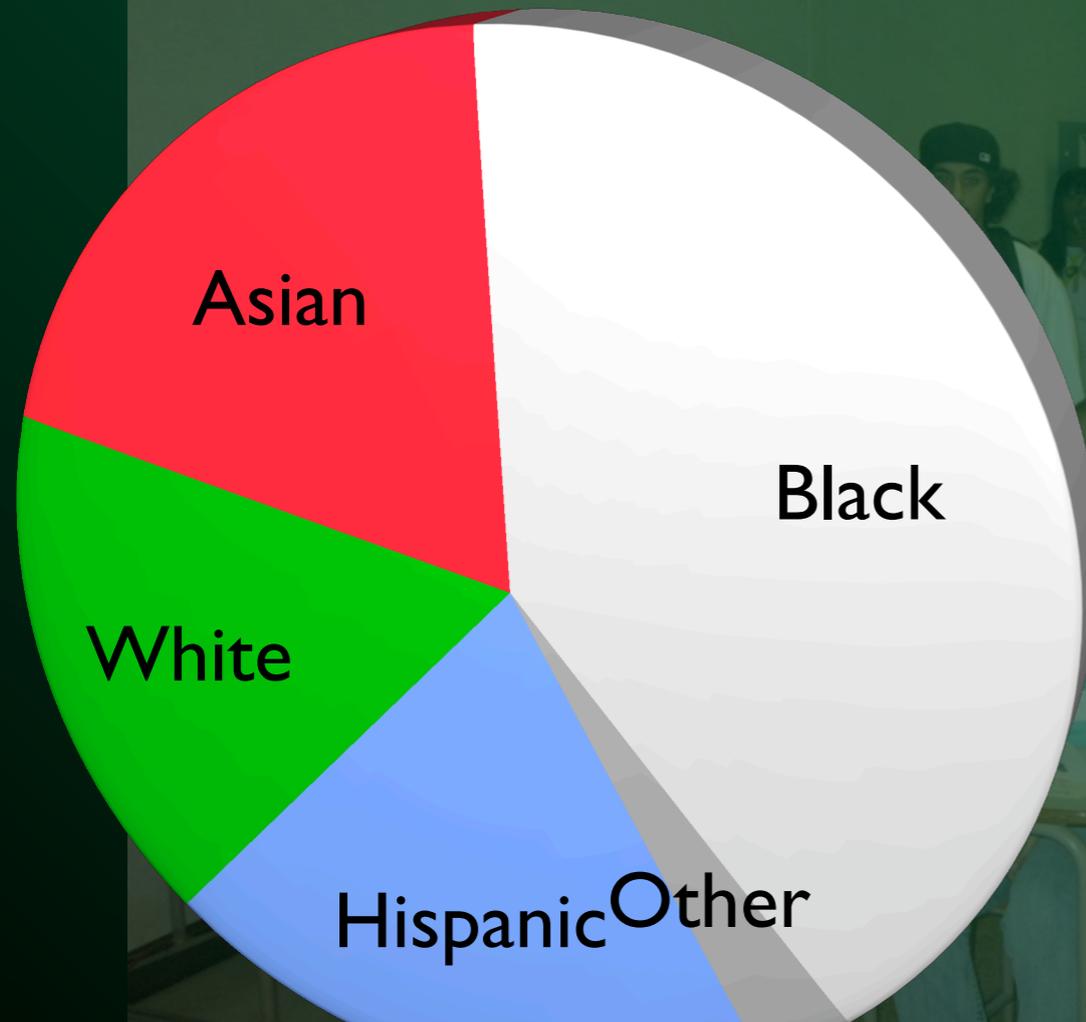
Geographic Demographics of El Cerrito High School



# Teachers should be aware of cultural differences

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Racial Demographics of El Cerrito High School



Geographic Demographics of El Cerrito High School



We aren't yet addressing this "cultural difference."

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25% have never hiked on an unpaved trail



8% have never been to the ocean  
(<15 miles away)

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# Today's students are urban dwellers

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**“WHERE IS YOUR FAVORITE PLACE TO BE  
OR SPEND TIME?”**

>50% reported “my room” / “my house”

Only 9 people reported outdoor settings

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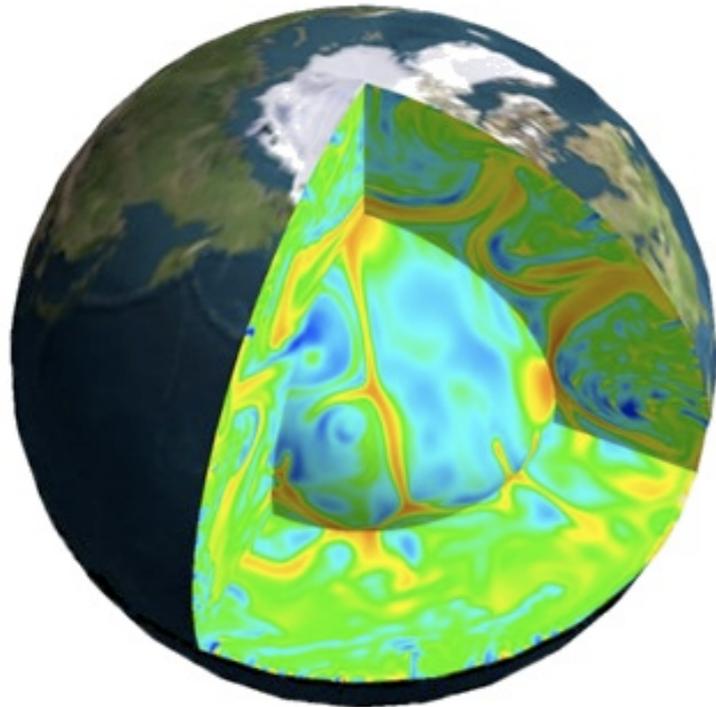
Only 9 people reported outdoor settings



Scores averaged 19 percentage points  
higher than class average

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# What do urban students find relevant?

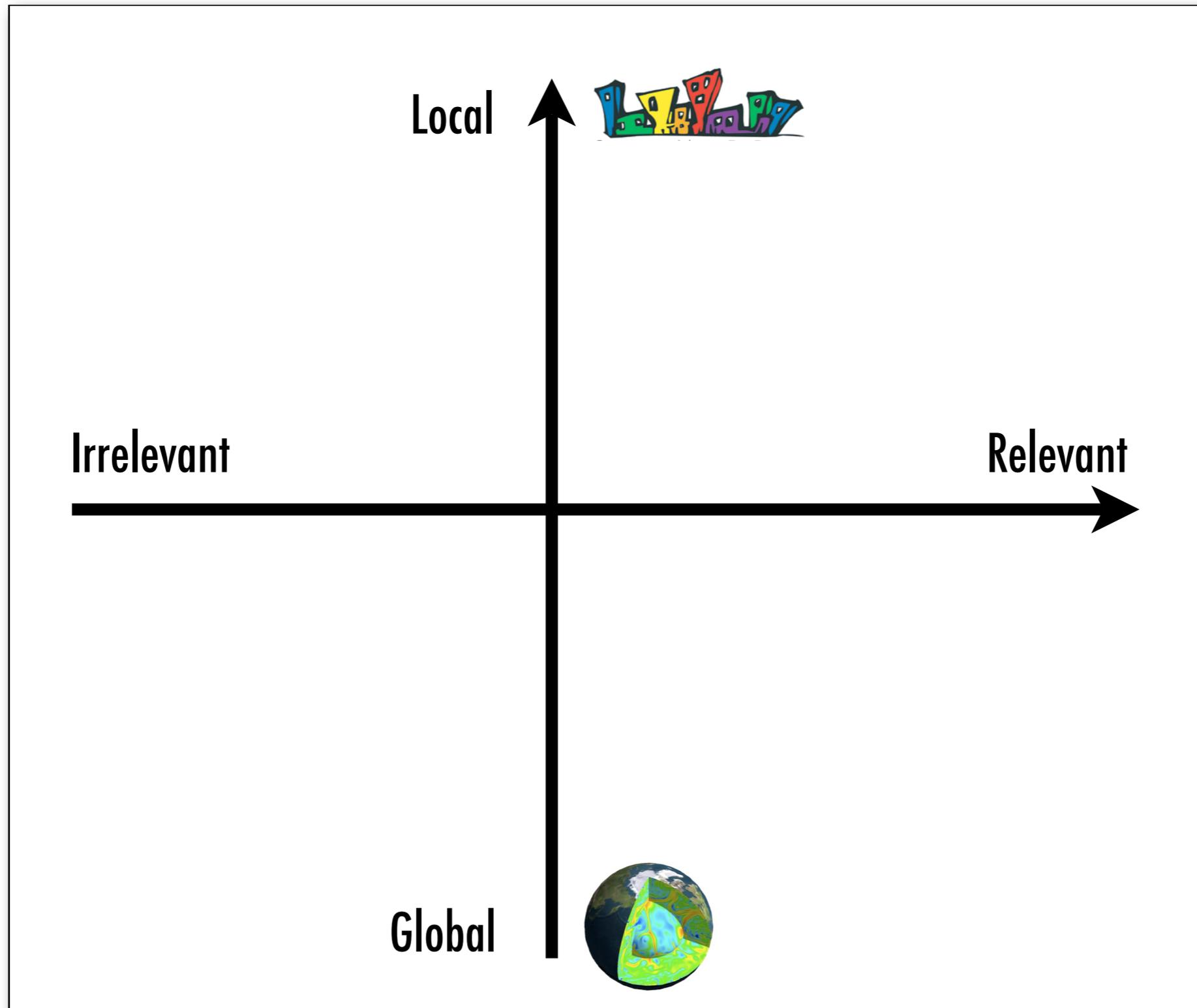


**Too BIG?**

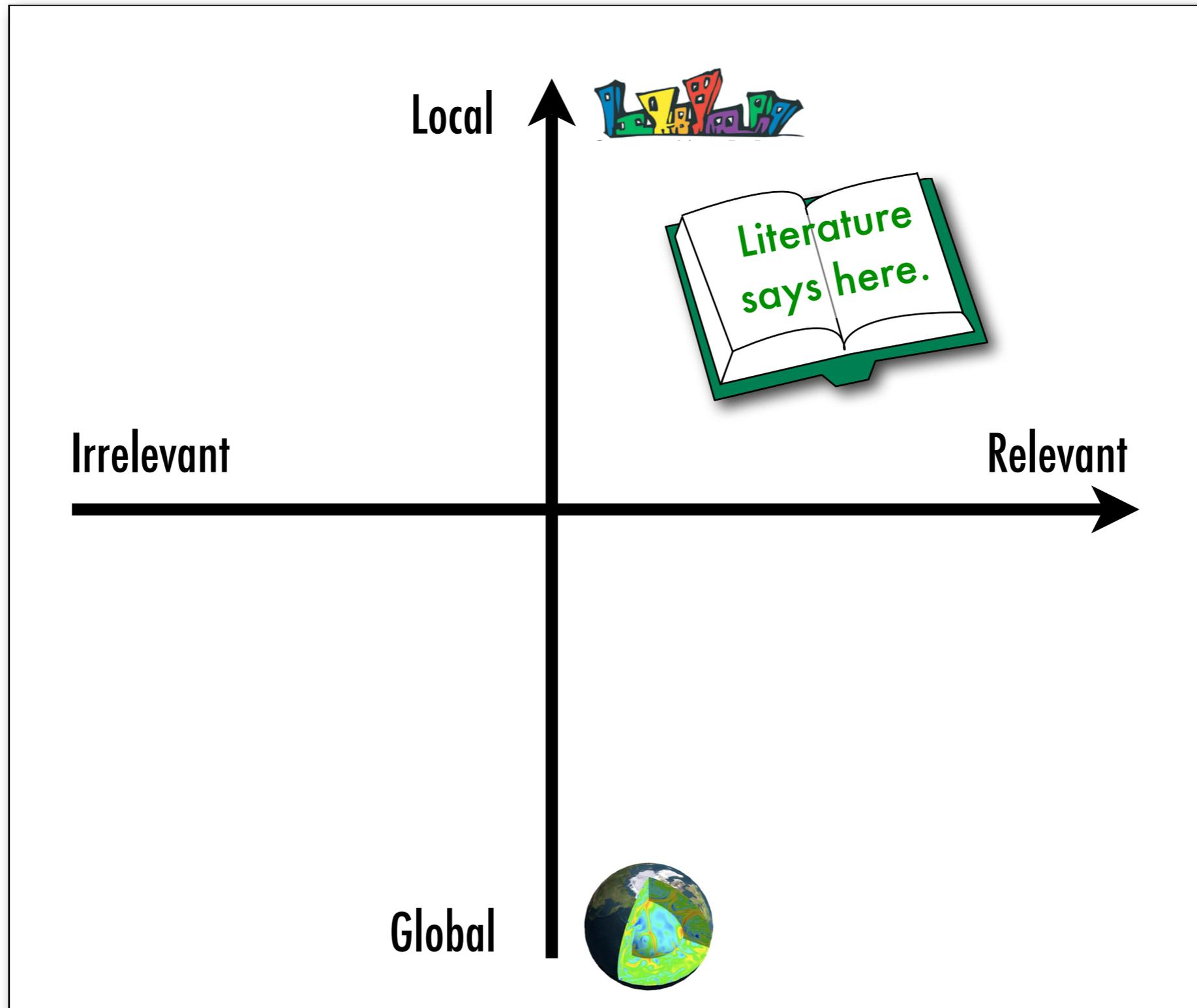
Students learn better when they see direct relationship of subject matter to their lives.

Earth science researchers are tackling tough global societal issues, but global issues don't always engage urban youth.

# Which topics interest urban students most?



# Which topics interest urban students most?





# Which sounds more exciting to study?

For each row, choose the topic that sounds most interesting.

A	What causes waves in the ocean?	1	What lives in the deepest parts of the ocean?	B
A	What causes fog?	2	What causes tornadoes?	B
A	Air pollution from oil refineries in Richmond?	3	Air pollution from growing countries like China?	B
A	Why don't we have mountain lions in the East Bay Hills?	4	Why did dinosaurs go extinct?	B
A	Where do we get electricity from?	5	What is a black hole?	B
A	How do we make our new school building earthquake safe?	6	How do we make bridges earthquake safe?	B
A	What is global warming?	7	What is a fossil?	B
A	What does an environmental engineer do?	8	What does an astronaut do?	B
A	How do diamonds form?	9	How do mountains form?	B
A	Is there life on other planets?	10	Is there life in Antarctica?	B
A	Where does the water we drink come from?	11	Why do giant waterfalls form?	B



# Which sounds more exciting to study?

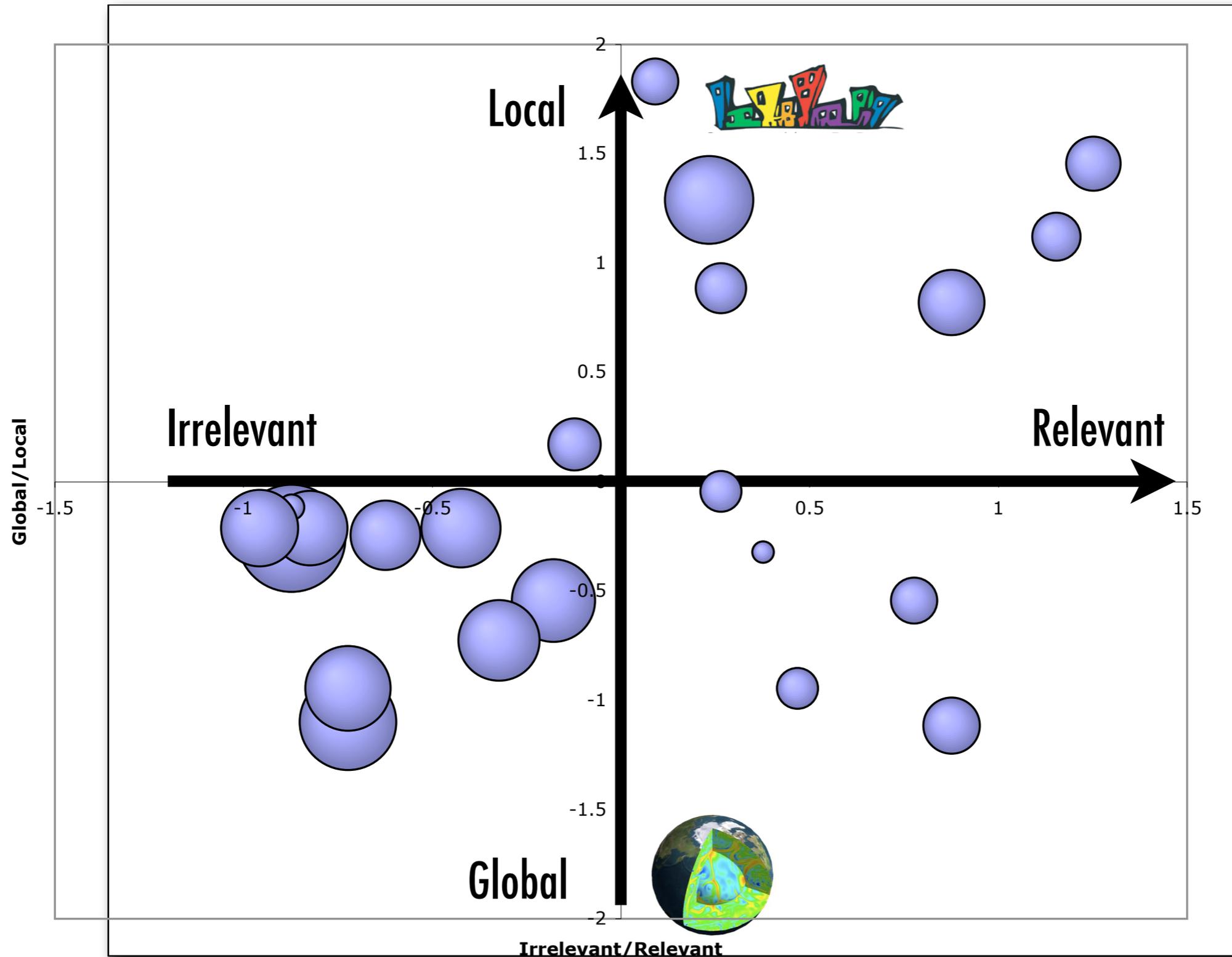
For each row, choose the topic that sounds most interesting.

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A	Air pollution from oil refineries in Richmond?	3	Air pollution from growing countries like China?	B
A	Why don't we have mountain lions in the East?	4	Why did dinosaurs go extinct?	B
A	Where do black holes form?		What is a black hole?	B
A	How do we build bridges?		How do we make bridges earthquake safe?	B
A	What is geology?		What is a fossil?	B
A	What does an astronaut do?		What does an astronaut do?	B
A	How do diamonds form?	9	How do mountains form?	B
A	Is there life on other planets?	10	Is there life in Antarctica?	B
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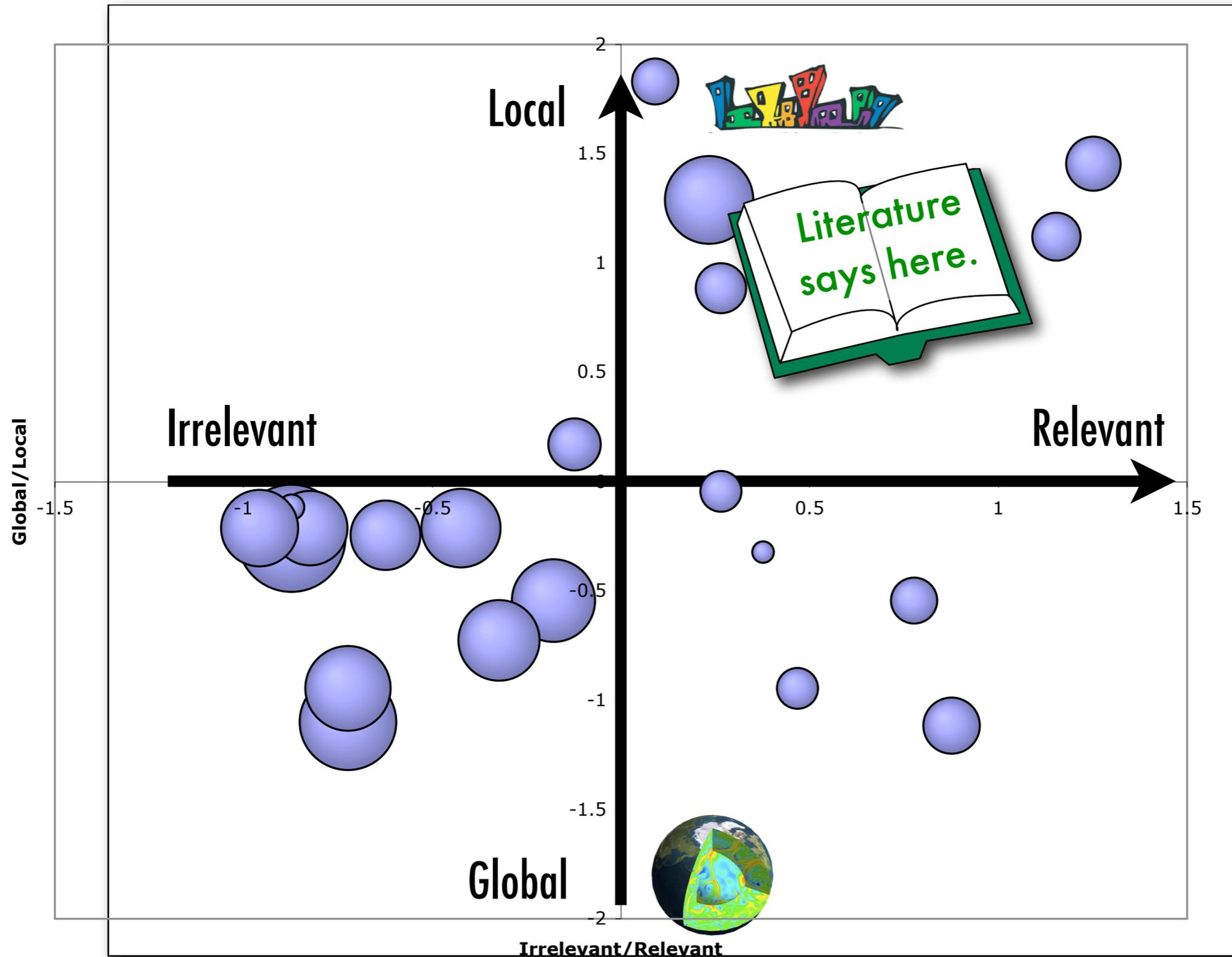
**Geology faculty at CSU Northridge rated each topic on two scales:**

- “Local” to “Global”
- “Relevant” to “Irrelevant”

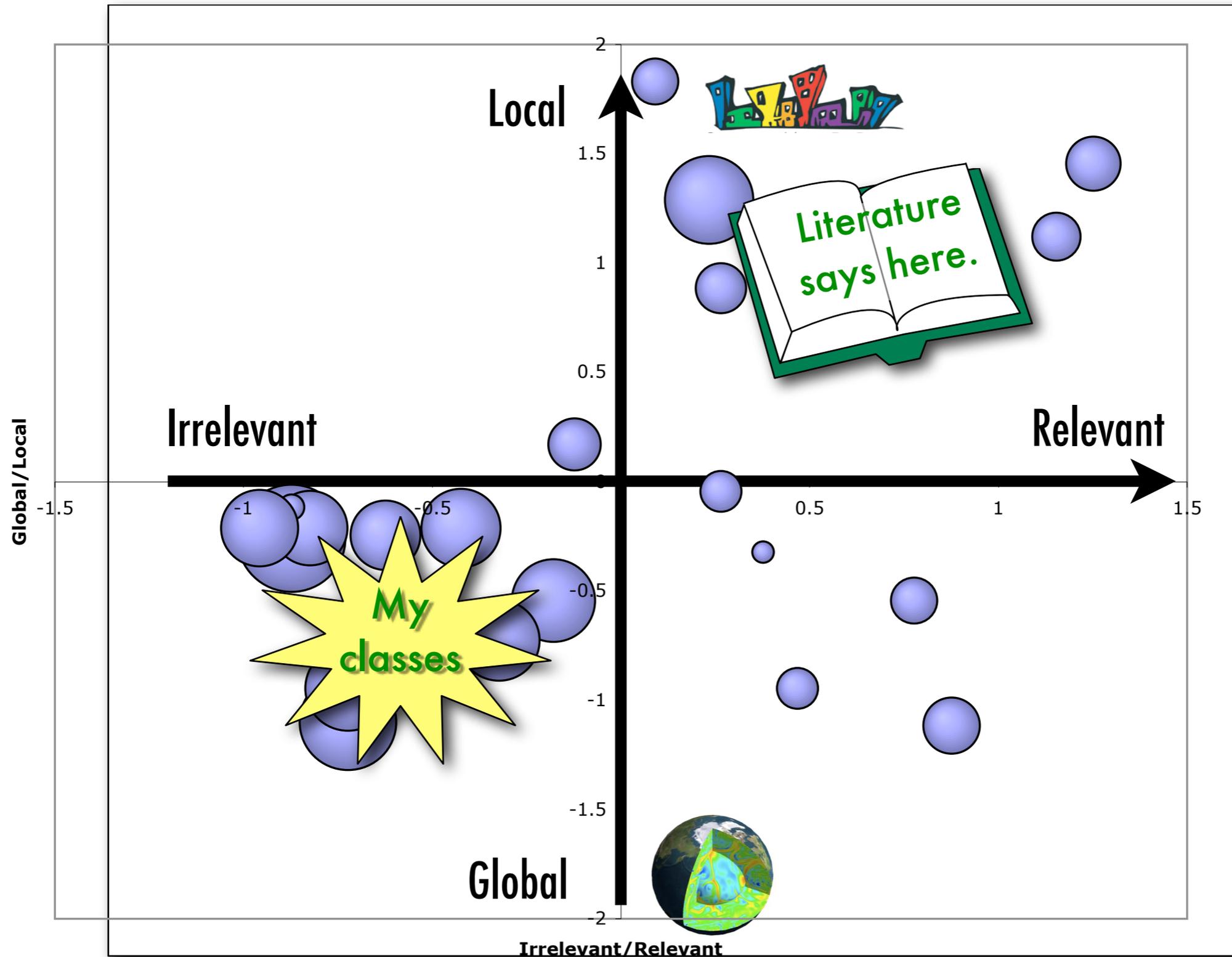
# My urban students actually seem to prefer Global/Irrelevant topics!



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