

4.11 Creating a Blueprint for Service Learning

Student Objective

Students will work collaboratively to design a community service learning project.

Overview

Many middle and high schools already require service learning hours for students in order to graduate. Service learning gives young people invaluable experience and provides an opportunity to give back to the community in which they were raised. In this activity, resources are provided to initiate student involvement in the surrounding community.

Materials/Set-Up

- Educator Resource:
 - 4.11a: Service Learning Rubric
- Research any requirements, restrictions, or district initiatives for service learning
- Chart paper (made into T-charts, with the left side being used to note community concerns and the right side being used to note solutions)
- Markers
- Computers and Internet access for research
- Some possible websites to begin with include:
 - <http://www.volunteermatch.org/>
 - <http://www.dosomething.org/>
 - <http://www.oceanconservancy.org/>
 - <http://independentsector.org/>
 - http://www.specialolympics.org/program_locator.aspx
 - <http://www.operationgratitude.com/>
 - <http://www.troopsupportusa.com/>

Instructional Steps

- Prior to the activity, survey students' interests and use the responses to group them for the project.
 - To effectively manage the design and implementation of the project, form larger groups (e.g., three groups of six to eight, four groups of five to seven).
- Using the chart paper, have student groups with similar interests brainstorm community (school and neighborhood) concerns. This should be noted on the left-hand side of the chart. Allow about five to eight minutes for brainstorming.

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- After students have come up with a list of community concerns, ask them to now brainstorm possible solutions for the concerns that they listed. This should be noted on the right-hand side. Students may need more time than above depending on the size of the group and the ensuing discussion.
 - After a list of possible solutions has been created, ask students to determine their top three most realistic and attainable solutions. Things to consider might be the amount of time that they have to complete this project (e.g., entire school year, semester, quarter), how much time would need to be dedicated, and whether any monetary expenditure would be attached.
 - Have each group present their ideas to the whole group for questions, concerns, and feedback.
 - Allow students class time to research their ideas and solutions in order to see whether there are already organizations in place working on solutions for their concerns.
 - After students have completed their service learning hours, have them create a scrapbook one-pager, which provides an overview of their efforts and may include related pictures. Individuals will present these one-pagers during their presentations to the rest of the class. Once all presentations are complete, compile all of the one-pagers into a class scrapbook to commemorate the service learning efforts.
 - Have students then complete a reflection about their endeavor. Students should include at least three ways that the project has benefitted the community and a detailed explanation of what was learned from participating in the project.
 - The Service Learning Rubric can be used to assess students' level of project participation.

Extension

- To increase rigor, have students create a service learning committee at school that will allow for students to continue their work or encourage other grade levels to get involved or follow up with their work.
- To increase scaffolding, create smaller groups and allow students the option of choosing from a list of service learning projects already compiled.
- To integrate technology, have students create a visual representation of their work and the outcome. This can be done through a school website, blog, social media, Prezi, PowerPoint® presentation, etc.

Service Learning Rubric

	4	3	2	1
Effort	Student participated in all of the activities and contributed to each step of the process: brainstorming, organizing, and implementing.	Student participated in most of the activities and was active throughout most of the steps in the process.	Student participated in at least half of the activities and contributed to at least two steps of the process.	Student participated in less than half of the activities and contributed to at least one step of the process.
Cooperation	Student worked with the class and teammates effectively. Student had no behavioral problems with peers and was encouraging to classmates.	Student worked with the class and teammates effectively. Student had no more than 3 behavioral problems and was not discouraging to classmates.	Student worked with the class and teammates, but with some difficulty. Student had no more than 5 behavioral problems and was not encouraging to classmates.	Student ineffectively worked with the class and teammates. Student had more than 5 behavioral problems and was discouraging to others.
Scrapbook One-Pager and Presentation	Caption and reflection are appropriate and accurate, with correct conventions. Page is aesthetically pleasing.	Caption is appropriate and accurate, with no more than 2 mistakes to conventions. Page is aesthetically pleasing.	Caption is accurate. Reflection is present. No more than 5 mistakes to conventions. Page is decorated.	Caption is present. Page has some decoration.
Reflection	Student has written, in detail, at least three ways that the project benefits the community. Student has also addressed what he/she learned from the project about working together and doing things for others.	Student has written, in detail, at least two ways that the project benefits the community. Student has also addressed what he/she learned from the project.	Student has completed the reflection and has mentioned one way that the project benefits the community and if he/she learned anything.	Student has completed the reflection and has mentioned if he/she learned anything.