

Planning your own Service Learning Project

Students will learn about service by choosing, planning and participating in service learning activities

Age Appropriateness:

- 9 and up

Key Topics:

- Service Learning
- Volunteerism
- Community Needs

Skills:

- Critical Thinking
- Active Listening
- Group Decision-Making

Materials:

- Paper
- Pens/pencils

Time Considerations:

- Based on your time-line

Web Resources:

www.servicelearning.org

www.nylc.org

www.newhorizons.org

www/ed.gov

www.service-learningpartnership.org

Objectives

- Students will apply what they have learned about service learning to choose and plan their own service-learning project.



Preparation

Discuss with the youth ways that they can work together to make a difference in their community.

Ask the youth: What is service-learning?

- A method of teaching that combines three elements: academic instruction, meaningful service, and civic responsibility.

Ask the youth: In what ways can you use your energy to create a service learning project?

- Explain that good service learning projects are designed to satisfy the needs of the community, incorporate into academic curriculum, facilitate thoughtful student reflection, help students use new skills in real world situations, and increase the quality of life of the people served.

Action

- Have the students brainstorm service-learning project ideas and write each of them down.
- When all ideas have been shared, ask students to rank on a scale from 1 to 10 how urgent and important the need is by writing down a number next to each option.
- Have some students volunteer to tally how many points each option received.
- Review the options with the highest scores and have the youth discuss the pros and cons of each option.
- Conduct a second round of scoring on the top options.
- Have the students discuss the top few options and come to a group decision on the one project (or combination of projects) they think would meet an urgent and important need in their community.

Reflection

Have the students create a flow-chart of how they worked together as a group to decide which service learning project to undertake.