

## **We Care about Fire Safety A Lincoln Service-Learning Project**

**Grade Level:** K - 3

**Service Areas:** Public Works and Safety, Human Services and Social Needs

**Academic Area:** English-Language Arts, Mathematics, Safety Education

**Duration of Service:** Long Term (all quarter/semester/year)

**Degree of complexity:** High

### **Contact Information**

Submitted by: Veray Wickham, [vwickham@sicoe.net](mailto:vwickham@sicoe.net)

San Joaquin County Office of Education

Author: Fred Cochran, [jcochran@lusd.net](mailto:jcochran@lusd.net)

Lincoln Unified School District

Tully C. Knoles Elementary School

6511 Clarksburg Place

Stockton, CA 95207

Telephone (209) 953-8776

Fax (209) 474-2107

### **Introduction and Description of the Lesson**

Tully C. Knoles Elementary School is located in the central valley city of Stockton. The school's 630 enrolled students closely mirrors the city's rich ethnic diversity.

A class of second graders learned about fire safety and prevention through a language arts class that focused on safety in the community. A representative from the local fire station gave a presentation to the class on fire safety, how fires impact the community, and how to prevent fire-related accidents in the home. The students were impressed by the ideas to help others.

The teacher led a review discussion of the "in home" fire prevention strategies presented by the firefighters, and conducted an informal class survey on the use of smoke alarms and fire extinguishers in the home. This review and survey prompted the second graders to discuss what they could do to reduce accidental fires in the home. The students developed a sense of social responsibility and showed concern for their fellow students and the families who live in their community. The survey expanded to include more students and to create a fire safety flyer, which led to the creation of "We Care" bags containing a copy of the flyer and a smoke detector.

The students addressed the content standards of Language Arts, Mathematics, and Social Studies through reading and listening about fire safety, letter and journal writing, and conducting a school survey on smoke alarms in homes.

## **Instructional Process**

### **Preparation**

The teacher led the students in reviews and brainstorming sessions on what were important items for home fire safety. The class highlighted smoke detectors and the importance of protecting friends and family from a possible fire-related emergency. The students focused on how they could share this information with their friends and families in the school and decided to print a flyer focused on fire safety. The students and teacher discussed what prior knowledge the students already had about fire safety and fire prevention. The students charted what they already knew, what they wanted to know, and what they learned (a KWL Chart).

The teacher held mini-lessons on letter writing, conducting surveys, paragraph construction, and creating flyer formats. The students then wrote a letter to a manufacturer of smoke detectors, explained their idea for the “We Care” bag, and requested a donation of smoke detectors to place inside the bag.

### **California State Academic Content Standards**

Second Grade Language Arts: Writing Strategies 1.1, Writing Applications 2.2, Reading Comprehension 2.7, 2.8

Second Grade Mathematics: Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability 1.0

### **Action**

The students worked in two groups. One group focused on conducting the school survey to find out how many families had smoke detectors in their homes and to request the smoke detectors from the manufacturer. The other group worked on the layout, writing, printing, and distribution of the fire safety flyer. To ensure proper use of grammar, clarity, and style, the teacher oversaw the writing and production of the survey and the letters requesting donations of smoke alarms and plastic bags. The students then filled the donated plastic bags with a smoke detector and a fire safety flyer. The students distributed the flyers to all the classrooms and the “We Care” bags to the students who expressed a need as determined by the survey.

### **Reflection**

The students reflected on the service-learning activity before, during, and after the project. In the beginning, the students wrote in their journals about the dangers of fire, especially fires at home. They continued to make journal entries throughout the project, reflecting on the role that fire department officials play in the community. Their efforts to educate the young on fire safety were highly appreciated. After the service activity, the students wrote in their journals about fire safety tips, how to write a survey, how to write a letter, and how their actions helped the community.

The students maintained a record of the project’s evolution with photographs. The pictures were used as prompts for discussion and reflection as well as for a library display on fire safety.

### **Student Assessment**

Students were assessed on the academic standards through traditional methods of assessment on individual journal writings and the completed surveys, letters, and flyers. Performance-based assessments consisted of informal observations during class time and mini-lessons.

### **Project Evaluation and Expansion**

The teacher evaluated the quality of the activity with feedback from the families they served and the assessment of the students' learning. A possible extension would be to develop an electronic Safety Prevention slide show.

[Editor's Note: Another expansion is to produce the fire safety brochure in other languages that are prominent in the community].

### **Celebration and Public Recognition**

The local newspaper wrote an informative article on the "We Care" service-learning activity with the recommendations on fire prevention in the home. The students and school librarian set up a fire safety display in the library that contained copies of their prevention fire safety flyer and a display of the project's photographic history. The display also included a signed list of the donations made to the project.

### **Materials and Staff Development Needs**

Recommended Language Arts publications:

- Houghton Mifflin, Theme 3: *Around Town: Neighborhood and Community*  
<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/hmr/2/3/index.html>
- McGraw Hill: *People Together Adventures in Time and Place*

### **Funding and Resource Support and Sustainability**

This project was made possible with private donations from a smoke detector company and a local grocery store. Our regular school resources provided the computer, paper, and copier for the flyers.