

Cookbook for Community

Contact Information

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Introduction and Description

In early September, 7th-8th Grade Home Economics students at Monte Vista Middle School focus on families in transition. Particularly “Responding to Family Challenges” and “Recognizing the Importance of Family”, as topics. Students reacted with concern about the number of low-income and homeless families in our community and the need for food in the face of coming holidays. The original idea: to write and sell a cookbook to raise money for a local shelter, can quickly branch into something bigger! They created a cookbook of favorite recipes from home and classroom. They wrote, edited, designed covers, printed and bound the cookbook. The book was marketed in the district office and the school office. We also advertised it in the local and school papers and announced it on the school marquee. The local mall allowed us to sell them at a courtesy gift wrap/canned food drive fundraiser we held before Christmas break. All proceeds from these endeavors went directly to the shelter.

California State Academic Content Standards

7th Grade English-Language Arts

Reading- 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6

Writing- 1.4, 1.6, 1.7

Listening and Speaking- 2.2

Written and Oral English Language Conventions- 1.0 All

8th Grade English-Language Arts

Reading- 2.5, 2.6,

Research and Technology- 1.4

Written and Oral English Language Conventions- 1.0 All

7th Grade Mathematics

Number Sense- 1.2

Mathematical Reasoning- 1.0

Preparation

Part 1. As part of the Home Economics curriculum, students consulted with their families to select favorite recipes to share with the class. Each student had to provide a minimum of four recipes for the project. All recipes had to pass student designed criteria to be considered for inclusion in the cookbook. Simply making and sampling all recipes was not feasible.

Criteria included

Category – beverage, main dish, healthy snack, etc.

Ease of preparation – easily understood directions, relatively few steps involved.

Healthfulness – this quickly became a gray area due to middle-school sweet-tooths. Students were then challenged to provide accurate estimates of nutritional values for each recipe and stay within reasonable limits according the Food Pyramid. Information was usually compiled from nutrition labeling provided on ingredients and manufacturer web sites.

Availability of ingredients – easily obtained at local grocery stores.

Action

Part 2. After recipe selection the book making began. The class chose to make a book that was spiral bound. Recipes were typed two to each 8 1/2” x 11” sheet and then cut in half. This produced a book that was 8 1/2 ‘x 5 1/2 ‘, which was very cost effective. All students participated fully in the typing, editing, and proofing process. Covers (front and back) were designed. The class decided that each student would design and draw four covers to . The covers could be of any mixed media as long as it could be laminated. The consistency between covers was the title of the cookbook.

Part 3. (Concurrent to part 2) To ensure high quality service, a student committee contacted local shelters and churches to assess programs in place. Students invited the leaders to come speak to the class to educate us on the contributing factors to homelessness and current interventions available. This greatly enhanced the learning. Speakers brought in an experience and understanding that simply wasn’t available from the curriculum alone.

Part 4. Students selected a program to partner with and make the beneficiary of our fundraising.

Part 5. Distribution time. Then the book was marketed in the district office and the school office. We also advertised it in the local and school papers and announced it on the school marquee. The local mall allowed us to sell the cookbooks at a courtesy gift- wrap/canned food drive fundraiser that the leadership class held before Christmas break. All proceeds from these endeavors when directly to the shelter.

Reflection

The students were asked to reflect in their journals on different topics relating to the issue including: importance of family, family support systems, challenges to traditional roles, effects of joblessness, personal relationships, the role of government in these issues, social programs available, and civic responsibility and involvement.

Student Assessment

I gave a rubric to the students at the start of the project for the finished book. The ongoing assessment was grading the steps of the writing process as we went through them. As part of the 7th and 8th grade writing requirement our students participate in an annual district-wide student author fair. Books from the different schools are displayed and all schools come to view them. This cookbook became their author fair entry. I also gave participation points to those who arranged speakers, spent time copying and collating, or manned the booth at the mall.

Project Evaluation and Expansion

Monte Vista Middle School and the Tracy District are committed to Character Education. Community Service is required at the high school level. This project could be used to further

those goals and gain recognition there. It could easily be expanded to different grade levels. Many students started bringing extra clothes and planned food baskets for needy families on their own accord. If that was coordinated school-wide; the impact to the community would be tremendous.

Celebration/ Public Recognition

We contacted the local paper to come when we were assembling the cookbooks. The event was written up in local newspaper with a photo of the students involved. This helped get the word out locally. We presented the funds raised to the shelter staff at the mall booth on a busy shopping Saturday before Christmas. The mayor and several city council members and school board members were present. This was also covered by the press.

Materials and Staff Development Needs

Materials needed included

Access to computers for typing recipes

Colored paper for the different cookbook sections

Card stock paper for the front and back covers

Laminating

Spiral binding

I combined efforts with the Leadership teacher for the booth space and staffing. This project would benefit if each part had a project leader.

Funding and Resource Support/Sustainability

Start up funding for the books came from the general classroom budget. Additional funding was provided by the Student Author Fair committee. Future funding could be attained by partnering with a local business. Many businesses, like the newspaper and radio stations, sponsor similar events during the holidays.

Cookbook for the Community

A Service Learning Project

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Abstract

In early September, 7th-8th Grade Home Economics students focus on community needs, particularly families in transition. Students chose a service to the community and the need for food in the face of coming holidays. The original idea to write and sell a cookbook to raise money for a local shelter can quickly branch into something bigger! They created a cookbook of favorite recipes from home and classroom. They wrote, edited, designed covers, printed and bound the cookbook. The book was marketed in the district office and the school office. We also advertised it in the local and school papers and announced it on the school marquee. The local mall allowed us to sell them at a courtesy gift wrap/canned food drive fundraiser we held before Christmas break. All proceeds from these endeavors went directly to the shelter.

Degree of Complexity

Medium to High

Educational Setting and Participant Information

Educational Institution

Public

Comprehensive Schools

7-8

Participant Configuration

Whole Class Project

School Schedule-

Traditional nine month

Service Provided

Overview of Service

Level of Service

Indirect Service

Service Issue Areas

Human Services and Social Needs

Duration of Service Activity

Long Term (all quarter/ semester /year)

Specific Service Activity Areas –

Health

Social Services

Hunger

Human and Social Needs

Family Life

Homelessness

Lesson Content

Subject Area(s)

Consumer and Home Economics

English/ Language Arts

California State Academic Content Standards –

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Mathematical Reasoning- 1.0

Other Standards (Optional)

Middle Grades Home Economics Curriculum Guide

Civic/Social / Personal Responsibility Goals or Standards

Civic Responsibility

Collaborating Partners

Community Based Organizations (CBO)

Volunteer Center of California

UNICEF

United Way

Local Conservation Corp

State Conservation Corp

Boy's Girl's Clubs /Scouts, Campfire of America

Associations and Agencies

Hospital and Health Centers, Associations and Agencies

Human Services Associations (Shelters)

Local/State/Federal Governmental Agencies

Social Services

Educational Institutions

Middle Junior High

Individual Partners

Parents

Other

Reflection

Journal

Demonstration

Oral presentation