

Donate A Quilt

A Berkeley Unified School District Service-Learning Project

Contact Information

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Introduction and Description of the Lesson

John Muir School in Berkeley, California, is a small (250 students) urban elementary school. Students in the Kindergarten class used ripped and slightly worn clothing to make quilts to donate to Project Linus. This is a non-profit organization that matches donors to those in need such as sick children, convalescents, and the elderly, and the organizations that help them.

Along with learning the duty of helping others, the students learned to look around their homes to help reduce the waste put into the landfill by making the quilts out of old discarded clothing. Students realized that some items that are regularly thrown away could be used to make something that someone will treasure. Students even had a chance to write and draw about their experiences.

Instructional Process

Preparation

Before the lesson began, the teacher contacted Project Linus who identified the need for quilts. The teacher then guided students to suggest making a quilt for a sick hospitalized child or an elderly person. The teacher held a class discussion on how the students feel when sick. They then discussed how they could help make someone else feel better. Afterwards, teacher read several books about quilts (The Keeping Quilt, The Tamale Quilt, The Patchwork Quilt). After reading books about quilts, students wanted to make a quilt for the project.

The teacher told the students about Project Linus and compared making quilts long ago by hand to today's quilting by machine while the teacher showed the students examples of handmade and machine made quilts. They then talked about keeping old clothing out of the landfill by reusing/recycling it and discussed using pieces of old clothing to make the quilts.

The teacher guided students in completing a KWL (what they Know, what they Want to know, and what they Learned) chart about quilts to tie their prior knowledge to the lesson. The teacher also needed to make sure that the volunteers assisting in sewing knew how to sew a quilt well.

California State Academic Content Standards

Kindergarten Social Science

Learning and Working Now and Long Ago K.6.3

2nd Grade Language Arts

Reading 2.3

1st Grade Mathematics

Number Sense: 1.2

Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability: 1.2

Action

The students practiced making quilts by making paper quilts. The students brought in cotton clothing no longer useful for wearing because of a stain or rip, but still in relatively good condition. The teacher cut squares of fabric 7" x 7". Each quilt required 42 squares arranged 6 x 7. The students counted out the quilt squares and arranged them in patterns and the class selected the final fabric arrangement and quilt design.

Students needed an extra adult supervising them when they worked with the sewing machine. Therefore, the students sat with a parent volunteer, one on one, to help sew the strips of squares together with a one-inch seam. (This is larger than the regular quilter's seams but is easier if you have a volunteer helping with the sewing.) The students pushed the foot control and the adult controlled the fabric to keep little fingers safe. The students and their helpers sewed the backing to the top on three sides like a pillowcase and then turned it right side in. They inserted the batting and tied the quilt on all four corners of each square and in the center of each square using embroidery floss on a needle. The helpers folded the open end in and sewed the quilt closed.

When finished, a representative of Project Linus came to the school to receive the quilt. The class held a potluck for the donation.

Reflection

During the project, the students discussed quilts and their feelings about their favorite blankets. The students wrote their own quilt stories and drew a picture of how they felt about making the quilt. They also discussed how the new owner of the quilt probably felt and then drew a picture of the quilt with its new owner.

Student Assessment

The teacher observed the students counting and patterning in the paper quilt activities. The teacher also graded the students' stories.

Project Evaluation and Expansion

The students completed an assessment of the lesson. The students asked the Project Linus staff member how the quilt helped. The project could expand to include more classes in the school community or as a full year project.

Celebration and Public Recognition

The class held a potluck and quilt show for their families and the Project Linus member receiving the quilt. The school newsletter announced the donation of the quilt.

Materials and Staff Development Needs

- Parents or volunteers to help with the sewing who know how to sew
- 42 7"x7" Fabric squares cut from clothing or sheets that have been ripped (I.e.: the fabric is good but the clothing is no longer useable because of the rip.)
- Fabric
- Batting 36"x42"
- Thread
- Sewing machine
- Embroidery floss
- Embroidery needles
- Several child sized quilts
- Children's storybooks about quilting

Funding, Resource Support, and Sustainability

This activity did not require a lot of money. A total of \$15-20 for thread, batting, and backing material sufficed. www.projectlinus.org will help you find a place to donate the quilt.

Lesson Plan Profile Information

Contact Information

Sponsoring Organization; (Provide the name of your School)

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Abstract

Students in the Kindergarten class used ripped and slightly worn clothing to make a quilt to donate to Project Linus. This is a non-profit organization that matches donors to those in need such as sick children, convalescents, and the elderly, and to homeless shelters. Along with learning the duty of helping others, the students learned to look around their homes to help reduce the waste put into the landfill by making the quilts out of old discarded clothing. Students realized that some items that are regularly thrown away could be used to make something that someone will treasure. Students even had a chance to write and draw about their experiences.

Academic Content Areas

Reading

Social Studies

Mathematics

Degree of Complexity

Medium

Educational Setting and Participant Information

Educational Institution

Public

Comprehensive Schools

K-3

Participant Configuration

Whole Class Project

School Schedule

Traditional 9 month

Kinds of Service Provided

Overview of Service

Level of Service

Direct Service

Indirect Service

Service Issue Areas

Human Services and Social Needs

Environment

Duration of Service Activity

Long Term

Specific Service Activity Areas

Educational

Human and Social Needs

Disabled Issues / Needs

Elder Care and Fitness

Homelessness

Environment

Recycling/ Conservation

Lesson Content

Subject Area(s)

Reading/ Language Arts

History / Social Science

Mathematics

California State Academic Content Standards

Social Studies: K.6.3 Understand how people lived in earlier times and how their lives would be different today.

Reading: -Reading comprehension 2.3 Connect to life experiences the information and events in texts.

-Speaking applications 2.3 Relate an experience or creative story in a logical sequence.

Mathematics:-Number Sense: 1.2 Count objects

-Statistics, Data Analysis, and Probability: 1.2 Identify, describe and extend simple patterns.

Collaborating Partners

Individual Partners

Parents

Grandparents

Reflection

Journals

Artistic presentation (dramatic or fine arts)

Oral presentation