

Title of Project: Contribution to the Beautification of Parma

Grade Level: 1st grade

Number of Students Participating: 14

Contributed by: Sheri Faust

Teacher: Eileen Laca

School: Parma Learning Center

District or County: Parma School District, Parma, ID



Overview/Description of Project:

Provide students with the opportunity to plan, prepare, complete and deliver flower boxes to a four-plex located near downtown Parma. These units are very run down and the beauty of our flower boxes may encourage the low-income families that live in them.

Goals:

- To give the student an opportunity to give something of beauty to families in their community,
- To teach basic principles of flower arranging in a flower box or larger planter pot,
- To teach social skills of greeting someone you don't know, introducing yourself, presentation of your purpose for coming to see them,
- To give practice in writing a letter of introduction

Core Content Areas:

(Teacher completes this section)

Life skill of flower arranging (care of plants, transplanting, arranging by color and size etc),

Language arts—practice in writing a letter of introduction and person-to-person introduction.

Vocabulary/Science - expansion through learning names, types and categories of various flowers.

Reading to find out practice—read seed packers to decide how and where to plant flowers.

Civic Responsibility—think of ways to improve our community.

PARC MODEL STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

STEP 1: PREPARATION

We gave our children knowledge, appreciation and a love for gardening. In the fall we discussed ways to beautify our community with flower planters. The children wanted to make flower boxes or planter pots for someone who didn't have them. The fourplex, motel-type units downtown was suggested. I asked the ESL Teacher who knew the families living in

these units to get their permission to do this project. Once this was secured we cleared the project through the PLC Director, Sheri Faust.

STEP 2: ACTION

In the spring I bought a variety of flowers and greenery. I also selected large planter pots for our miniature flower gardens. We listed what plants need in order to grow. Soil, space, food (fertilizer), water and sunlight were listed. I added that proper drainage was important. Now we needed to make sure our planter box provided each of these elements.

Since our pots had no holes, the first thing we did was drill air and drainage holes in them. The class was arranged in groups of four, each group with an aide to help the children. Each group prepared the planter pot by adding rocks to the bottom to aid in drainage, soil, and a little fertilizer. They were now ready to select plants according to color and size for their flower planter. They arranged the cascading plants around the edge, mid-sized plants next and chose a larger plant for the center. Care was given to leave enough space for growth. Each group had to decide which colors, sizes and shapes of flowers would look good together.

Finally each group watered their creation and placed it in a sunny area to mature

STEP 3: REFLECTION (Reflection is not sequential; rather it is encouraged throughout the lesson)

This project not only made learning come alive through hands-on activities, it also gave the children a sense of accomplishment. They learned the names of many flowers. They were taught (and discover) which flowers grow from seeds, which from bulbs, starts and rezones. They had to read seed packets to see how large each flower would grow, how much space they needed between them, and how much sun they could tolerate. They also learned the difference between annual and perennial flowers. All in all I could witness a growing appreciation and interest in gardening. Perhaps this interest and knowledge will lead to a career for some of my students.

STEP 4: CELEBRATION

After three weeks our planters were beautiful and ready to deliver. In class the children wrote letters to the recipients of each planter in which they introduced themselves and told them how to care for the flowers. With a help of a small bus we brought the planter to the fourplex downtown. In the same group of four the planter was presented to the families. The children were prepared to introduce themselves and to say why were there ("To present a gift to you we made ourselves. We hope it gives you something beautiful to look at everyday.") We also gave each family a watering can to use to water their pot. The last person's line was, "And don't forget to water it!"

We celebrated with root beer floats when we got back to school.