

Learning to Tolerate Differences An Ojai Service-Learning Lesson Plan

Contact Information

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Introduction and Overview of the Lesson

Thirty fifth grade students in Mrs. Garrett's class at Topa Topa Elementary School created and produced a Public Service Announcement animation video to bring awareness of the needs of *ALL* people. The students interviewed a blind community member and asked her what her specific concerns and needs were within our community. They then brainstormed a way to help to meet some of these needs. Topa Topa School is located in a semi-rural town. There are two blind adults who live in the town of Ojai. This service learning project used animation software to bring awareness of these individuals' needs and concerns out to the community. The use of Technology, Art, the Language Arts, Math (especially measurement) and Social Science helped to complete this project.

Instructional Process

1. Preparation: Identifying a community needs, preparation steps, and academic content standards addressed in the service-learning activity.

One of the students in the class has a mother who is blind and received a new Guide Dog in the fall of the school year. The mother brought the dog in to show her to the students and to educate them on appropriate behavior with a working dog. The students asked many great questions and learned about a REAL need to educate the community around them about these needs and issues related to a working dog and a disabled person.

The collaboration between the community partner and the students took place through interviewing and discussion.

The civic responsibility outcomes for the students were mostly social and civic.

Writing-Research and Technology: 1.3, 1.4

Listening and Speaking-Comprehension: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3

Listening and Speaking-Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media

Communications: 1.8

Visual and Performing Arts-Creative Expression: 2.6, 2.7

Visual and Performing Arts-Connections, Relationships, Applications: 5.2

Mathematics-Measurement & Geometry: 1.4

The students learned about the field of Orienteering and Mobility and how persons in these professions help the blind maneuver through a community. The students also learned about tolerating differences between people. This covers Kindness, Respect and Responsibility in Character Education.

Through discussion and special presentations by professionals, these outcomes were addressed prior to the project.

The biggest preparation issue that needed to be addressed prior to the service was learning how to utilize and teach the technology component that was used.

Through discussion we learned what the students already knew about blindness and the needs within our community.

2. Action: Describe the service activity that occurred.

We kept in close verbal contact with our blind community member.

What specific activities/actions link the content standards to the service-learning project?

Language arts: interviewing and note taking from the interviews, used the computers to locate information and created simple documents with the computer.

Mathematics: Measured the inside perimeter of a piece of drawing paper to sketch out the animation on.

Visual and Performing Arts: Created original artwork through animation to tell the story we wanted to tell about tolerance of other people's differences.

The activity was participated in during the regular school day. The students worked mainly in cooperative group settings to put together the animation.

The students had to be supervised throughout the process to make sure that they were following the guidelines laid out by the animation product's company.

They worked in groups independently with supervision happening sporadically.

Reflection: Describe the methods that were used for the students to reflect on the service-learning activity.

The majority of this project was done through discussion. We reflected in a discussion format when the project was complete.

The students reflected on their personal response to how this project made them feel. Were they now more likely to be more sensitive to the needs of others?

Were they going to look for ways to help out people with differences in the future? And, most importantly, how do they feel about the project that they completed?

Student Assessment: Describe the methods that were used to assess the students' knowledge and skills.

The students were mainly assessed using observation skills. The final product was also used as an assessment tool.

Academic standards were assessed through observation of the final product.

Social/Civic skills were assessed through discussion.

5. Project Evaluation and Expansion: Describe how the quality and success of the service-learning activity was evaluated.

Describe how the following areas were evaluated:

California content standards were assessed through observation of the final product.

Since the community partner is blind, she was unable to physically observe the final product but she was able to dialogue with the students to assess whether or not they understood her needs better.

So far the community needs have only been met by showing our animation video to other classrooms in the school.

We started out making three separate animation videos but time restraints only allowed us to complete one of the videos. During the next school year we will complete the other two videos and then we are going to try to air them on our local cable station as Public Service Announcements.

The biggest recommendation that I would make to other teachers about this project would be to become VERY familiar with the Animation Software package prior to implementing it with the students. Also realize that it will take more time than you think to complete the animations so start the project early in the school year.

Celebration and Public Recognition:

We had an in-class celebration where we viewed our video multiple times. We showed it to several other classrooms in the school and shared it with our principal. It is also available to be viewed on the Topa Topa school website. The public has been informed of the project on the school web site.

7. Materials and Staff Development Needs:

Materials are available on request.

The software package is called "Animation" and it comes with a teaching video and complete instructions for the teacher. Also includes is all of the materials needed including color pencils to complete the animation.

8. Funding, Resource Support, and Sustainability:

The software was purchased through an OEF (Ojai Education Foundation) Grant This software can be used over again multiple times in any way imaginabl