

Title of Project: Senior Historians

Grade Level: 3rd & 4th Grade

Number of Students Participating: 30

Contributed by: Gayl Loutzenheiser

Teacher: Ms. Orler

School: Highlands Elementary

District or County: Boise School District

Overview/Description of Project:

Work with senior “historians” in our community to learn about Boise and Idaho history as part of the 3rd & 4th grade curriculum requirements.

Goals:

Incorporate writing activities by having students write a paragraph about a fact or story that they learned from their interview with their senior “historian”. They will also illustrate their story. The students will put these stories in a book about Idaho and Boise history and use illustrations to make note cards to sell. The proceeds will go to the Idaho Humane Society’s Pets for People program (a program that helps seniors and the disabled with pet adoption/vet care costs).

Core Content Areas:

(teacher completes this section)

Language Arts: Writing skills, note taking and interview skills.

Social Studies/History: Idaho history

Math: Counted money from sale of note cards

Art: Illustrated stories for book and note cards

PARC MODEL STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

STEP 1: PREPARATION

Contacted seniors who are willing to be “historians”. The students came up with a list of questions like, “When did your family move to Idaho? Can you describe what it was like as a kid when you were our age?” Practice interviewing skills and note taking in the classroom.

STEP 2: ACTION

Students interviewed senior “historians” three times during the school year with their list of questions. One adult volunteer per historian helped facilitate the interviews and took notes. It was hard for the students to take complete notes while listening to the historians. The students enjoyed looking through the photos that the historians brought in. Some historians even brought old antiques like a hand crank ice cream maker, butter churn, etc.

Students wrote a paragraph about their historians, something they enjoyed, facts or story that were told. They then drew illustrations of what they had written about. These were scanned into the paragraphs and cards were created. A local paper store gave a 20% discount on cards and envelopes since all proceeds were going to charity. Color copies were donated by another local business.

Packed cards into 3 sets of 7 cards each were sold for \$5.00. Over \$600 was raised and the students chose to donate the money to the Idaho Humane Society's Pets for People Program.

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

Students wrote reflections on what it was like to interview these seniors, and what they learned.

STEP 4: CELEBRATION

Note cards were printed with the student's story and illustration. Approximately 125 sets of cards were sold in 2 weeks.