

UNICEF Coin Drive and International Cook Book A Tracy Service-Learning Project

Grade Level: 7th & 8th

Service Area: Education, Human Services & Social Needs

Academic Area: English-Language Arts, Science, History-Social Studies, Mathematics

Duration: Short-term

Degree of difficulty: Low-Medium

Contact Information

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Introduction and Description of Lesson

Monte Vista Middle School serves sixth through eighth-grade students in the semi-urban, central valley community of Tracy.

A shared lesson on world history and war brought one seventh-grade and one eighth-grade class together in an effort to help children from underdeveloped nations whose daily lives are affected by social unrest and warfare. The students organized a coin collection for The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and produced and sold an international cookbook with the proceeds benefiting UNICEF.

The collection of the coins incorporated weights and measures from the academic science content standards, while the production of the cookbook applied the language arts content standards. The study of world history and effects of war satisfied the history-social science content standards.

Instructional Process

Preparation

In a group brainstorming session, one of the students recalled that the Coinstar machine in the grocery store accepts donations for UNICEF. Coinstar machines are coin-counting kiosks that offer a *Coins that Count* donation program for pre-selected non-profit organizations. The students researched UNICEF and its mission, the financial distribution of UNICEF's funds, and the different services UNICEF provides for disadvantaged women and children. For information on

Coinstar kiosk locations and donation options go to:
<http://www.coinstar.com/us/html/a-home>.

Before this service-learning project, the students studied different cultures and the way of life for people in other countries. In preparation for the cookbook, the students studied the use of single and double-beam balance and estimating. In addition, they practiced interviewing skills in preparation for interviewing their parents and other members of the community about life and food from their native countries.

Prior to starting the activities, the students went to great lengths to gather a clear idea of what recipe books look like. They compiled a pool of recipes from different countries and evaluated their layouts and formats, which many turned out to look almost like lab write-ups. Lastly, the students reviewed the use of balance, weights, and estimating.

California State Academic Content Standards

Sixth through Eighth Grade History-Social Science: Historical Interpretation 2.0

Seventh & Eighth Grade Science: Investigation and Experimentation: 7a, 7b, 7c, 7e; 9a, 9b

Seventh & Eighth Grade English-Language Arts: Writing 1.3, 2.3, Listening and Speaking 1.1, 1.4, and 2.0

Seventh Grade Mathematics: Strategies and Solutions 2.8

Action

Coin Collection

The students collected and labeled plastic jugs to gather coins in denominations from pennies to quarters. The mass of an empty bottle and the masses of each coin were recorded. When the bottle for a particular denomination was filled, the mass was recorded followed by the subtraction of the mass of the bottle, which left the total mass of the coins. With the final data, the students estimated the total amount of money in the bottle. The money was then taken to the Coinstar machine, counted, and donated to UNICEF. The students calculated the deviation from the actual amount and hypothesized why they differed from the real amounts.

The students were able to utilize the California Academic Science Content Standards from taking the data from balances and comparing them to weights and measures from previous CoinStar fund raising projects by UNICEF.

Cookbook

Students utilized sources like the Internet, family interviews, and cookbooks to gather recipes from around the world. Each class listed all the countries they had interest in or had ancestral origins and selected two countries to focus on while avoiding duplication. Working in small groups, they gathered different recipes

from the countries through family interviews and research, and wrote the recipes in agreed-upon standardized formats.

The academic content standards for language arts were fulfilled through note-taking and outlining of existing recipes, editing and printing of the final recipe draft.

When all the recipes were gathered from the groups, the students helped organize all of the materials into book format by creating an index, table of contents, an introduction to the cookbook, and a cover. When the book was assembled into the correct order and format, it was taken to the copy shop to be printed and bound. The first copy was proofed and sent back to the copy center for final printing. The students then created fliers to advertise their creation and promote the sale of the cookbooks to benefit UNICEF.

Reflection

In the beginning, the students reflected on their community. They thought about how they, as young students, could impact people in other countries. They also reflected on what it would be like to live in a different country under the tough conditions children are exposed to. The students thought about what kind of impact their donation would have on children in other countries. The children also contemplated the impact of organizations like UNICEF and other charities.

The teacher facilitated an important discussion about the impact the students made on their classmates, families, and the world community. Introspective questions on the impact of the activity came to the forefront. Questions such as what they learned, what was fun for them, and would they entertain the idea of conducting another service-learning project again were posed.

Throughout the activity the students were asked to reflect upon the following from a personal and social context:

- Would you like to be involved in creating and developing a book?
- What do you think of when you hear the words war, famine, and medicine?
- Tell me about how the group works together. Is everybody contributing? Do things need to change?
- What is the most surprising thing you learned while working on the project?
- How have your interview skills improved while performing this project?
- Why is it important to care about children in other countries?

Student Assessment

Students were assessed through informal and formal observations during class time. Informal observations consisted of the teacher circulating, observing, and asking questions during class time. Students were also assessed based on the quality and accuracy of their field notes, research notes, and final product. Group effort and cooperation were assessed. The written reflections and project logs

were the secondary assessment tools. Students completed self-evaluations halfway through the project and again at the end.

Project Evaluation and Expansion

Immediate evaluation was based on the accuracy of the facts contained in the cookbook and the accuracy of the measurements in the coin drive. The book was also evaluated on the quality and precision of the recipes on the pages. The students, parents, and classrooms that used the cookbook evaluated the overall quality of the service-learning activity. Their feedback served as the primary basis for evaluation, as well as for improvements to future books.

Celebration and Public Recognition

The success of this service was celebrated in several ways. The students hosted a classroom cooking party to try out some of the recipes and in so doing, received praise from parents and school staff about the creative way they brought attention to children in other countries.

Materials and Staff Development Needs

The project required the use of paper, the Internet, research books, sample cookbooks, computer access for word processing, and recipes from around the world. The staff was not required to contribute, except for the ever-present supervising teacher to help the kids stay on track.

Funding, Resource Support, and Sustainability

Start-up funding for paper, printing, and supplies came from the general classroom budget. Additional funding came from generous donations from parents. If needed, some of the profits from the books could be held to create a new batch of books.

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