

Loving Our Neighbor

Month: Mar.

Week #: 29

Day: c. Wed. Time: 30 min.

Choosing a Class Service Project

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Objectives/Aims

The students will: choose a class-wide service project that will help meet other people's needs.

Materials

white board, markers

Illustration

This class chose a service project where they pick up trash in a slum area in their city. They thought that if the area was cleaner, people might feel better about themselves. Plus, they wanted to help the environment.



Background

Whereas the focus of the previous lesson was on the individual student helping others in need, this lesson will focus on the classroom as a whole determining and undertaking a service project. Some schools will already have selected a school wide service project in which case this will be an opportunity to both educate and elicit the students' cooperation.

Note: This activity was placed late in the year with the Montessori three year cycle in mind. This is a situation in which the first and second year students will be returning to the same classroom the following year to continue the service project. If your students are with you for only one year, you might want to move this 'Loving Your Neighbor' unit to the beginning of the school year.

Group Activity

1. Remind and encourage the students to follow through with their commitment to help someone else by Friday. Also tell them that if they didn't fill in a card yesterday, that they can still decide to help someone else today.

2. Say, "Yesterday we dealt with individuals helping others, which is really great. We can also help even more people if we join together as an entire class (or school) and commit ourselves to a long term service project. Today we're going to brainstorm for another situation in which people are in need. In fact, now you can think back to Monday when we imagined that we visited a third world country or natural disaster, so you can think much bigger or 'globally.' Once again we're going to brainstorm and list as many situations as possible and then discuss the needs inherent within it." Write the heading 'Situations' on the board and under it list the student's thoughts, editing and paraphrasing for brevity and accuracy whenever necessary. The teacher can also share ideas to 'prime the pump.'

3. When the students have run out of ideas discuss what the needs are in each situation if they aren't self-evident. Then say, "I'd like you all to look carefully at our list of situations and decide on

Group Activity

one that you'd like the entire class to do. Who would like to tell us which one they're interested in and why they think it would be a good idea to do as a service project." Listen to all of the students' reasons and then say, "I'm hearing some really good ideas, but I think we need some more information before we commit to a class service project. After all, we will be engaged in this project for an entire year. Who would like to do some research on some of these potential projects?" The projects students are willing to do some initial research on are probably the ones the students will be willing to commit to. Give the chosen students time during the day to do some research with the idea that they'll report back to the class the following morning.

Group Discussion Questions

1. Why are we deciding to do a service project as a whole class for an extended period of time?
A: More people can be helped and to a greater degree.

Variations/Extensions

1. As part of their research, encourage the students to find video clips, speakers and real life stories of the situation, the needs and how it could be remedied.

Conclusion

Say, "Tomorrow the students that did research will share their findings. I'll be very interested to find out what they've discovered."



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