

Guideposts for Success: Lesson Plans and Activities

Developed by the Institute for Educational Leadership

LESSON 22: CHOOSING COMMUNITY SERVICE

AT-A-GLANCE

Making the conscious choice to perform community service demonstrates leadership. Within the choice of service to the community, one might not be in charge, or seen as the obvious “leader,” but by simply making the choice to get involved in some way, they are practicing some of the skills of leaders.

Icebreaker Quote

Failure is the foundation of success; success is the lurking place of failure.

-Laozi

Icebreaker Discussion

What is meant by this quote? How could “failure” be thought of as the foundation of success? Can you both fail and succeed at the same time?

Lesson/Activity

This lesson will give the group an opportunity to create some “community” meaning out of their participation in your program. Begin with a discussion about community service. How many students have participated in community service before? What have they done? Have they done these activities because they chose to do them or because they were forced to?

1. Divide the class into two or three groups (6-8 students per group).
2. Have each group choose a leader and an assistant leader (to support the leader), a scribe (to keep a record of the group's discussions), and a reporter (to speak to the larger group about the project the group has chosen). The remaining students will be researchers. All participants need to be involved.
3. Each group should decide on a way to research the needs in the community and pick a Community Service project that addresses one of those needs.
4. Have each group's reporter give the class a 5-minute description about the Service-Learning project they chose.
5. Have the students select one of the Community Service projects to perform as a class.

If students have a difficult time thinking about or researching a community need, they might consider contacting the local volunteer bureau to find out ways in which the community is need of service. Some other suggestions include:

This is a great opportunity to infuse discussions about ways to “green” the environment, as well as projects that have to do with or use Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Reflection

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What does community service mean to you? Why do you think people choose to serve their communities? Do you think community service should be mandated for high school students? Why or why not?

Extension

As part of the Community Service experience, have a few students take pictures, create a newsletter or develop a video about the overall experience. Be sure to include quotes from student participants and those who have benefitted by the service.

Discuss the processes students used to determine who would be the leader, the co-leader, the recorder, etc. Were they similar across groups?