

Community Unit Overview and Presentation

UNIT: Enriching and Building Community

TIME FRAME: 1 Semester

GRADE LEVEL: 3rd grade (can be adapted for multiple grade levels)

Unit Summary and Rationale: This unit was used to create a student led service learning project that focuses on community. This unit asks students to identify their community and how it has shaped them and how they have shaped it. They will plan a project that celebrates their unique communities as well as identifies the ways in which they can improve and uplift it in meaningful way.

Students voted to plan and volunteer to create a community event through their Homework Diner. This event will center in uplifting school community by demonstrating the areas they have chosen to focus on (Mindfulness and Meditation, Recycling, Anti-Bullying/Kindness Exercises, and Composting). The major goal is that as the weeks pass, students will learn about action, agency, social justice, goal setting and organizing as parts of being a community member. As this project developed, students partnered with organization throughout the city to give resources and to present alongside for their community event.

Students Will:

- demonstrate independence.
- value evidence.
- build strong content knowledge.
- respond to the varying demands of audience, task, and discipline.
- critique as well as comprehend.
- use technology and digital media strategically and capably.
- develop an understanding of other perspectives and cultures.

Essential Questions: Our major issues focused on the problems, concerns, interests, and themes relevant to the community. *What is community? What communities do I belong to? How do I shape my community? How has my community shaped me? What can I do to improve and celebrate my community?*

Big Ideas: My goal was to help students will discover their important role in their community as a result of instruction and learning activities. These topics were open-ended and meant to apply to more than one area of study. Some of our big ideas included students learning about social justice and civic action. Strength based vocabulary was used as a means of transportation to get them to the power of words. To be able to talk about what empowers, transforms and ignites our community was the main focus.

Learning Tasks:

Reading Tasks- Several class periods are devoted fully to researching the topic students have chosen for their project. Utilizing library books, students recorded their findings of what they learned and what they feel their community should know about their set topic.

Writing Tasks- Students respond to worksheets as well as reflections recorded in their journal (WOYM) every class period. Each student is encouraged to share if they want to and thanked when they finish their reading. They also completed a poetry example describing where they come from.

Discussion Tasks- Discussion is included within Agreement selection, vocabulary presentations, and through group work assignments.

Language/Vocabulary Tasks- Vocabulary is encouraged through storytelling. Students connect words to their experiences and reflect on the ways they can use new words to describe their lives and personalities.

Skills: To be able to do the tasks they were instructed to complete, they needed to work on specific skills. These skills are adapted to fit standards and represent measurable verbs, instructional targets, and descriptors for the sake of consistency across teachers in the same content area and grade level. The focus for this unit included:

Research and Planning

Dialogue and Reflection

Writing and Public Speaking

Key Terms/Vocabulary: Vocabulary words chosen to be rooted in empowerment and have an academic but personal value for students. These words were chosen because they are layered. They are meant to be unpacked and explored for personal as well as professional meaning. Words Include: **Community, Agreement, Empathy, Contribute, Renewable/Non-Renewable, Empower, Transform, Mindfulness**

Assessments: Assessments come in the form of their completed worksheets which include: research guide, community questionnaire, completed sign/poster, speech, and workshop sheets. Students will also be giving a speech at the end of the semester to family, friends, and community at their Homework Diner event.

Learning Activities: Weekly Community Agreements, Weekly Vocabulary Words, What's on Your Mind journaling as well as weekly group work on their service learning project. One of the most important and hardest to measure components was active reflection and making connections to the work, words, and ideas presented in class. Students were given large portions of time to speak up about their experiences and how they are directly affecting the way they see the worlds.

Resources / Text Selections: Research was conducted on specific topics using the internet and public library books. No textbooks were used for this service learning project. We did utilize videos to help explain vocabulary words and I created PPTs each week to highlight main ideas and post our agenda for the week.