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## SECTION 5

### Superhighways

#### Tracing The Steps of Successful Programs

As service learning facilitators for more than 25 years, we recognize that certain thematic threads weave through the service learning activities of a variety of academic subject areas. These themes or perhaps service foci also lend themselves to relatively simple development, implementation and curriculum connection. They provide opportunities for meaningful service that can easily be made applicable to all ages and subject areas. Because of their high rate of success, we highlight them in this chapter and we emphasize the well-worn paths that have led to their fulfillment.

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“Success is the sum of small efforts,  
repeated day in and day out.”

Robert Collier

## Chapter One    **Intergenerational Activities**



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By far the most common service learning focus has been service for the elderly. The aging individuals in our society exhibit a variety of need levels. Some are frail and vulnerable and need help in maintaining quality of life. Others are strong, capable contributing members of society whose needs are similar to all humans. The benefits of service learning that targets the elderly are many, but perhaps most important is the fact that intergenerational communication creates positive futures for the individuals involved as well as society as a whole. Such communication does not just happen, however. We must carefully plan and nurture the intergenerational relationships created through our service learning activities. Both groups must feel that they are contributing and "doing" for the other. Only then will we foster rich, fulfilling aging for ourselves and our children

Anthropologist Margaret Mead warned that lack of contact between generations was creating a "timeless present." When we cross age barriers with meaningful communication we enrich all our lives. The young gain a sense of continuity and significance from elders who have adapted to more change than any other generation in history. They learn life-coping skills. Old age is a time of loss—of family, of friends, of work, even of homes. Intergenerational experiences can provide immutable meaning that will help older adults transcend their losses and all participants gain a sense of purpose and sustained meaning for their lives.

**[continued]**

### **Activity**

[Norman Rockwell Museum Field Trip](#)  
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## Chapter One

### **Intergenerational Activities**

#### **Planning and Community Voice**

#### **Who, What, When, Where and How**

Once you decide to develop service learning that involves senior citizens, the service your students will be performing will determine the specific elderly population you target. Contact and speak to a community agency or organization that can best put you in touch with the seniors who need the service your students will offer. Such agencies and groups include:

- Service clubs such as Lions, Rotary and Kiwanis
- Church groups
- Senior citizen centers and meal sites
- Other elder organizations
- Clergy and Senior Services Coordinators
- Organizations of retired persons such as those who worked for specific company or in a specific field (teachers, health workers, engineers)

The "where and when" of an intergenerational event or class can significantly affect the success of the program. There are important considerations if you expect the elders to come to you and your students. While predetermined transportation particularly during the winter months and convenient parking for private cars at a centrally located site is a foremost concern, the site should also be easily accessible without stairs, well-lighted, warm (72-74 degrees) and comfortable. Meeting in the daytime during the late morning or afternoon is generally the preference of most elders. If the site chosen for the "class" is to be at the school, using the younger participants to welcome and guide the elders to the designated area provides a pleasant way to begin establishing rapport and diminishing the elders' anxiety.

If you are bringing your students to the elders such as at a senior citizen center or nursing home, go yourself ahead of time to preview the facilities available and be sure they are appropriate for your plans. At such facilities, it is critical to work with the staff and be certain that they support the program and will be available to help the elders attend and participate.

## Chapter One    **Intergenerational Activities** **Orientation and Training**



Breaking The  
Myth

page 5.6

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Loss Meditation  
page 5.11

It is absolutely essential for the young people who participate in intergenerational activities to receive orientation to the realities of aging. Plan at least one training session for the students. They should understand at least the basic realities of aging—both physical and psychological—and what is fact and what is myth in the aging process. Role playing some of the infirmities most common in the elderly such as poor hearing, poor vision and lack of dexterity can give the student a better understanding of the impairments that many elderly face.

It is not necessary for the older participants to have a formal orientation, but they should be given a schedule of the activities well ahead of time. This schedule should be accompanied by clear, concise information as to dates, times, transportation, food, agenda and any explanations/descriptions you feel appropriate. It has been our experience that many elders are fearful they will be unable to live up to the activity expectations and therefore they decline to participate, so it behooves you to make your invitation to them as simple and as persuasive as you can.

Regardless of the manner of orientation, both the young and the elders need to feel ownership and understanding of the activity in which they will participate so they can come to it with confidence and enthusiasm.

Chapter One



**Orientation and Training**  
**Breaking The Myth**

**Objective**

To give students an understanding of the realities of aging.

**Materials**

Questionnaires and pencils.

**Physical Setting**

Classroom with open space appropriate for students to work in small group.

**Description**

This activity utilizes the standard education strategy of **Jigsaw**. Break the large group into five small groups of five persons. (Number each group: Group #1, group #2, etc.) Give each group a short reading on the realities of aging. Each group should have a different article or reading. Then have each group discuss their reading so each group member feels knowledgeable about the included information. Thoughtfully develop a true/false quiz based on the information in all five articles. Ask students to regroup so that each new small group numbers itself consecutively. (Each small group now contains a person from group 1, a person from group 2, etc.) Hand out the quiz and allow the groups to work through the answers together based on each person's individual knowledge, the small group should know every answer.

**Suggested quiz statements:**

(The following are all false; vary this in your quizzes.)

- Older adults are sickly, inactive and dependent
- Older adults move to the Sun Belt on retirement
- Intelligence and ability to learn decline with age
- People become more conservative with age
- People grow alike as they age
- Retirement is usually a crisis that brings harmful social and psychological consequences
- The elderly cannot function well sexually
- Old people are senile

**[continued]**



**Ithaca  
College  
Gerontology  
Institute**

<http://www.ithaca.edu/aging/>

**Chapter One**



**Orientation and Training**  
**Breaking The Myth**

**Description**

---

**Suggested quiz statements continued:**

- All the needs of the elderly can be met by a nursing home
- Older people are usually neglected and ignored by their families
- Most elders feel that it is their children's responsibility to care for them
- Grandparenting is universally enjoyed
- Elderly workers are less creative, productive and efficient than younger workers
- The performance of the elderly on IQ tests is lower than that of young persons
- Older people are more religious than young ones
- Most old people are lonely and isolated
- Old age is a period of serenity
- Retirement usually has a negative effect on health
- Medical problems in the elderly are the consequences of aging
- If people live long enough, they will become senile
- Older people complain the most about their health
- The majority of elders live in nursing homes
- Usually men live longer than women
- Older adults have more colds and infections than the young
- Most old people live in poverty
- Older adults often vote alike
- The elderly have a high suicide rate compared to other groups

**Processing**

---

After the groups have completed their work, review and discuss the statements with the entire class:

- Which information surprised you?
- What would you like to know more about?
- Has this information changed the way you think about your own aging? In what way(s)?

**Chapter One**



**Orientation and Training**  
**Aging Simulation**

**Objective**

\_\_\_\_\_

To give students a first person understanding of the challenges faced by those whom they will be serving.

**Materials**

\_\_\_\_\_

Petroleum jelly, safety glasses, ear plugs or cotton work gloves, needles and thread.

**Physical Setting**

\_\_\_\_\_

Comfortable space for sitting and discussion.

**Description**

**Number of  
Participants:**  
6-30

\_\_\_\_\_

Each student should have the opportunity to put on safety glasses that have petroleum jelly on the glass, put earplugs in his/her ears and wear work gloves. The student is then asked to complete tasks such as threading a needle, opening and reading from a book, listening to instructions, and writing while using the "aging simulators." Discussion time should allow students to talk about their reactions to having impaired abilities.

**Processing**

\_\_\_\_\_

After allowing students "think time", the facilitator should question:

- What can you do to promote communication and/or be helpful if the elder has any of these common aging problems?

This activity is described in **Section 3.12**.

**Chapter One**



**Orientation and Training  
Attitude Survey**

**Objective** \_\_\_\_\_  
To help students recognize their own prejudices.

**Materials** \_\_\_\_\_  
Survey sheets.

**Physical Setting** \_\_\_\_\_  
Classroom setting.

**Description** \_\_\_\_\_  
This activity helps participants recognize their own stereotypical attitudes. A survey that looks at a glance as if everyone is receiving the same sheet is handed out to participants. The facilitator firmly emphasizes that this activity must be completed on an individual basis and requests no talking or sharing of information. After all participants have completed their surveys, the facilitator leads the group in sharing answers. He/she first asks all what they put for the first item. Answers usually vary greatly.

Number of  
Participants:  
10-100

After several more items, when answers still vary greatly, the audience usually catches on to the fact that there were really three surveys completed. Now the facilitator goes back to the beginning and first asks those whose surveys read "People usually...." to read their answers to number one. Then he/she asks those whose read, "Young people usually...." and finally those whose read, "Elderly people usually...." As the group progresses through the survey, patterns usually emerge to reveal striking stereotypes.

Make two more survey lists, one that replaces "people" with "young people" and one that replaces "people" with "old people".

**Attitude Survey Leads:**

1. In general, people need....
2. When I am with another person, I....
3. One of the greatest fears of people is....
4. In general, people's appearance is....
5. In general, people tend to resent....
6. In general, sex for most people is....
7. At 15, I am (was)....
8. For most people, work is....
9. People, by and large, are....

**[continued]**

Chapter One



**Orientation and Training**  
**Attitude Survey**

**Description**

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**Attitude Survey Leads continued:**

10. The thing I like best about people is....
11. The thing I like least about people is....
12. One of the greatest pleasures of people is....
13. For many people, death is....
14. People are usually happy when....
15. When a person I don't know sits next to me on a bus or plane, I....

**Processing**

---

Encourage participants to share their conclusions about their own prejudices and stereotypes.

- Are they based in fact or myth?
- How can these stereotypes affect service?
- What effect do the media have on such attitudes?
- How can students overcome these attitudes when providing service?



Drawing by student Amy Chow

**Chapter One**



**Orientation and Training**  
**Loss Meditation**

**Objective**

To encourage students' understanding of the loss involved in the aging process.

**Materials**

Sheets of paper.

**Physical Setting**

Will vary with seminar, but usually a comfortable classroom will be appropriate.

**Description**

The facilitator begins by pointing out that while we gain (win) much in life, we also lose much. Loss is perhaps the most difficult aspect of life. It is also often a part of service learning. Whether it is the loss of a person, pet, physical ability, neighborhood, or job, humans must transcend the loss or forever remain in its power.

Number of  
Participants:  
10-100

Participants fold a blank piece of paper into nine sections and label the center section **SELF**. Starting in the upper left section, label **FAMILY MEMBER**, upper center **AN ACTIVITY**, upper right **FAMILY MEMBER**, left side **A SENSE** (vision, hearing), right side **FRIEND**, lower left **FRIEND**, lower center **HOME**, lower right **FRIEND**. Allow participants about five minutes to fill in names and details for all of the categories.

The facilitator then instructs the participants to tear off the bottom right hand section of the paper, and continues in a likewise manner, one section at a time. The facilitator explains with each tear off that death may not be the cause of the loss. The individual or pet mentioned may have gone away for some other reason, but the participant still experiences the loss of that individual. As the activity progresses, participants share what they are losing and how they feel. The facilitator goes first taking care to model a loss not caused by death so others can participate in the activity without going where they are too uncomfortable. Continue until all sections except self are removed.

**[continued]**

**CAUTION**

Before you begin, take care to explain that this activity may be difficult just as aging itself is difficult at times. Adapt the activity to be appropriate for the age of your students.

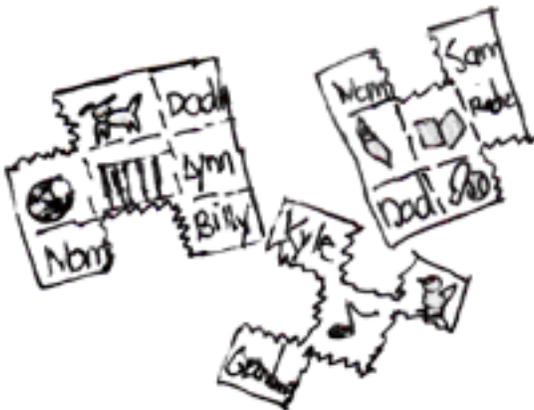
Chapter One



**Orientation and Training**  
**Loss Meditation**

**Processing**

Discuss what individuals must do in order to now have a meaningful existence with only **SELF** remaining. What do they have in their lives that nothing can take away? (religious faith, an interest or hobby, a talent in art or music, a philosophical belief) Students need to realize that all humans need lasting meaning in their lives. This exercise is so powerful that it should not be required that students share their feelings. They may gain insight from merely listening to others who do not find it difficult to express their feelings. The facilitator should conclude with emphasis on the understanding that even healthful aging is not an easy journey, but that it can be a rewarding, meaningful one. Students must have compassion for the aged and also seek and nurture sustaining elements for their own lives.



Drawing by student Amy Chow



## Chapter One    **Intergenerational Activities** **Thoughtful Service**

A myriad of service activities that provide service to elders have been accomplished by teacher/facilitators in our network at every grade level.... We offer here suggestions for a few unique types.

For more ideas, see the resource materials listed in the bibliography of this book.



[Museum Field Trip](#)  
page 5.14

[Group Bingo](#)  
page 5.21

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### **Community-Share Classes**

— Perhaps the simplest and certainly one of the most effective service learning activities for the elderly has been their inclusion into regularly scheduled classes. Students and elders assist each other in completing learning tasks and assignments. The students view the curriculum as far more significant when elders are interested in learning it, and the elders once again experience the joy that comes from sharing learning. We have held numerous Community-Share classes over the past 20 years. In these classes elders attend a scheduled junior or senior high class. They participate as regular students who attend only selected classes. Those that involve some sort of creation such as writing or art are highly successful, but the subject matter could be anything as long as the tasks are presented in a clear, precise, engaging manner and there are opportunities within the lesson for shared discussions or tasks. Our community-share classes have proven very successful in the following topics: creative writing, literature, photography, Studio in Art, art history, Focus on an Artist, Family and Consumer Science, critical and creative problem solving, debate, computer, civics, American history, mock trial, world history, health and fitness, dance, archeology, geology, gardening and journalism. In addition, teachers often find that inviting elders to accompany students as partners on a field trip not only improves the behavior of the students, but also provides everyone with meaningful, multi-perspective learning.

**[continued]**

### **Activity**

[Norman Rockwell](#)  
[Museum Field Trip](#)  
page 5.15

**Chapter One**



**Community Share Field Trip  
Museum Field Trip**

**Objective** \_\_\_\_\_  
To encourage student + elders to learn about art through shared response.

**Materials** \_\_\_\_\_  
Shared response booklets prepared ahead of time by facilitators.

**Physical Setting** \_\_\_\_\_  
Museum.

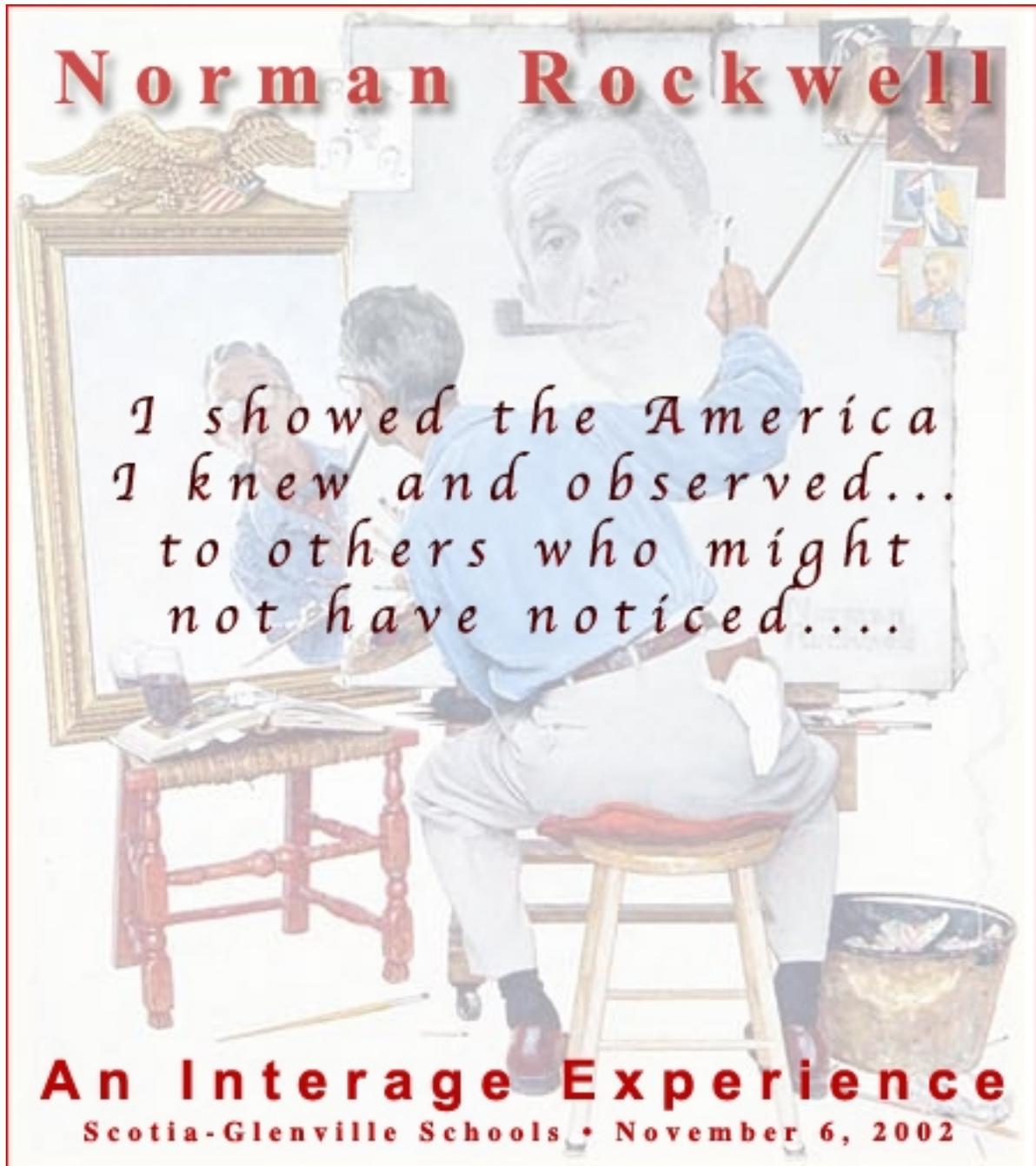
**Description** \_\_\_\_\_  
On the bus elders and students are paired, and they participate in a brief ice breaking activity. At the museum, a museum docent welcomes them and gives a brief introduction to the museum.  
**Number of Participants:** 10-20 They then each receive a response booklet, but they are instructed that they will only have to turn in one booklet for a grade. (One booklet permits hesitant elders to skip writing, but gives them the opportunity if they wish.) The partners must agree on all responses.

**Processing** \_\_\_\_\_  
After a given period of time during which the partners observe, discuss and respond to the exhibits, the group gathers in a room large enough for shared discussion. With activities such as dance cards and art migrations, participants share their reflections.

**Variations** \_\_\_\_\_  
We have used the model for numerous field trips. It has always been a very successful vehicle not only for learning important material but also for powerful, significant intergenerational communication.

A sample condensed **Norman Rockwell Response Booklet:**

Page 1:



Partners: \_\_\_\_\_

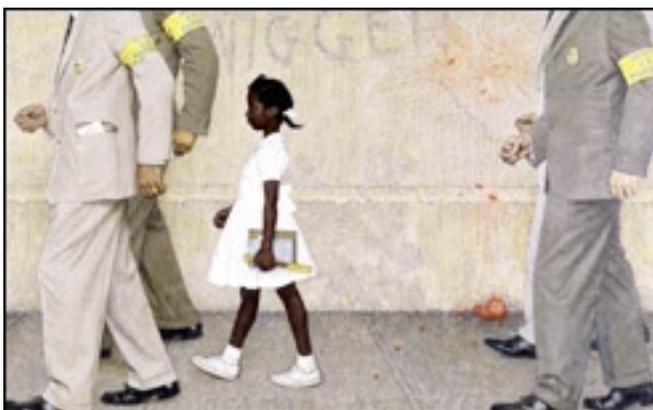
Page 2:

## Norman Rockwell

“My life work is to tell stories to other people through pictures....”



“Maybe as I grew up  
and found that the world wasn't the  
perfectly pleasant place  
I had thought it to be,  
I unconsciously decided that,  
even if it wasn't an ideal world,  
it should be....”



Page 3:

## Biographical Notes

- born February 3, 1894 in New York City
- began drawing at six and had his first illustrations published at 16
- at 19 he became the first art director of Boys' Life Magazine
- joined army during WWI and drew cartoons for a base paper
- married three times (Divorced first wife; second wife died after 29 years of marriage and three sons)
- completed 323 Post covers and 56 Boy Scout calendars plus numerous other illustrations and paintings for publications throughout the world

**Top Painting:** "Girl at Mirror"

Cover illustration for "The Saturday Evening Post" cover, March 6, 1954

©1954 SEPS: Licensed by Curtis Publishing, Indianapolis, IN  
Oil on canvas, 31 1/2 x 29 1/2"

From the permanent collection of the Norman Rockwell Museum.

**Bottom Painting:** "The Problem We All Live With"

Story illustration for "Look Magazine," January 14, 1964  
Licensed by Norman Rockwell Licensing, Niles, IL

Oil on canvas, 36 x 58"

From the permanent collection of the Norman Rockwell Museum.

Page 4:

## Discuss and Complete the following questions with your partner(s)

### Question 1

Look carefully at the painting **The Stay at Home**.

- In this painting, what do the old man and the young boy have in common?
- What does this painting say about the relationship between elders and adolescents?



"The Stay at Homes  
(Outward Bound)"  
Story illustration for "Ladie's  
Home Journal," October 1927  
Licensed by Norman  
Rockwell Licensing,  
Niles, IL  
Oil on canvas,  
39 1/4" x 32 1/2"  
From the permanent  
collection of the Norman  
Rockwell Museum.

### Question 2

Carefully examine Rockwell's **Triple Self Portrait**.  
He carefully chose every object in this painting.

- List the objects and what you think each represented to Norman.
- If each of you were to create a self-portrait, where would you place yourself ?
- What objects would you place in the painting and why would you choose them?

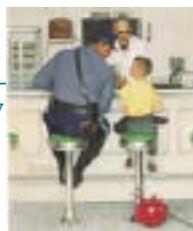


"Triple Self-Portrait",  
Cover illustration for  
"The Saturday  
Evening Post,"  
February 13, 1960  
© 1960 SEPS: Licensed by  
Curtis Publishing,  
Indianapolis, IN.  
Oil on canvas,  
44 1/2" x 34 3/4"  
From the permanent  
collection of the Norman  
Rockwell Museum.

### Question 3

Discuss both of Rockwell's versions of **The Runaway**

- Which one do you both agree you prefer? Why?
- What tells you that the painting took place in the past?
- How would it look today?
- Even though the painting is obviously in the past, it is still relevant to our society today. Why?



"The Runaway"  
Cover illustration for  
"The Saturday  
Evening Post,"  
September 20, 1958  
© 1958 SEPS: Licensed by  
Curtis Publishing,  
Indianapolis, IN.  
Oil on canvas,  
35 3/4" x 33 1/2"  
From the permanent  
collection of the Norman  
Rockwell Museum.

Page 4:

## Discuss and Complete the following questions with your partner(s)

### Question 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Choose a painting that you agree has an important message—a painting through which Rockwell was trying to influence the thoughts and actions of people.

**EXPLAIN** why you chose this painting and what you think Rockwell's message is.

The painting:

The message:

Why you chose this painting:

### Question 5 \_\_\_\_\_

Rockwell thought of himself as a storyteller.

Which painting tells the best story? Why?

The painting:

The story:

Why you chose this painting:

### Fun \_\_\_\_\_

#### Optional Questions

Look over all of the people in Rockwell's paintings and choose one whom you would both most like to meet. (Other than Rockwell himself)

- What person in what painting do you choose? Why?
- What would you say to this person?
- What questions would you ask?
- What do you think makes up Rockwell's talent?
- Why was he so **VERY** successful?
- Which painting do you like the most? Why?

Paintings from the  
Collection of  
The Norman Rockwell  
Museum at Stockbridge  
© The Norman  
Rockwell Estate  
Licensing Company

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## Students As Instructors

<b>Computer Skills</b>	— Elementary through high school students have organized and taught basic computer skills to elders. Sometimes the elders have come into the schools to learn, and at other times the students went to senior citizen centers.
<b>Nutrition and Best Buy</b>	— Students have researched the specific nutrition needs of the elderly and then comparison shopped for those items. They then presented seminars at senior centers on good food choices and where to find the items most reasonably priced.
<b>Nifty Devices</b>	— Students researched devices made to help the elderly such as the "grabber." They created a booklet that described the devices and where to best purchase them.
<b>Silk Scarf Painting</b>	— Students have taught a wide variety of craft and art classes for the elderly.

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## Comfort Kits, Placemats, and Other Gifts for Elders

— Elementary through high school students have made items for Meals-On-Wheels and or nursing home elders. Comfort kits contain toiletries, hand sanitizers, mini shampoos, combs, razor blades and special soaps or perfumes. Placemats have been crayoned, painted or pasted usually according to a holiday theme and then laminated and presented to elders.

---

## Interage Luncheon/Brunch

— This is a relatively simple program to plan and facilitate and can be used successfully with virtually any age from kindergarten to high school as part of the regular curriculum or for a special event. Elders may come to the school or students may go to an Office for Aging Meal Site. Theme luncheons such as Teddy Bear Picnic, Halloween, Spring and other holidays have been especially successful. Students plan and prepare the meal as well as plan and facilitate interage activities such as **Human Treasure Hunt** [See page 2.11] or **Group Bingo** [See page 5.21].

**[continued]**

## Our Social Concerns Civics

— class includes a variety of service learning activities designed and carried out by students to provide services to the elderly.

### Some of the activities include:

**Key Calls** — Students are assigned an elderly, shut-in community member whom they are responsible for calling on the telephone every day of the week including school holidays and vacations to check on the elder's health and brighten their day with interesting news.

**Bridge to Friendship** — The program brings young people together with the frail shut-in population. Teams of students match with an older person of the community who is not able to get out into the world. The students in groups of two visit their elderly "friend" every week.

**Performance** — Students perform and/or facilitate activities at meal sites, senior centers or nursing homes. Taking the same students to the same site on a regular basis encourages the students and elders to establish friendships and thus the learning multiplies. Another example of this is establishing a tradition of inviting senior citizens to dress rehearsals free or even the concerts and dramatic events themselves. Elders always enjoy music. Inviting willing elders to share the performing **WITH** the students really invites interage bonding and creates moving entertainment for the entire community. We had a phenomenally successful jointly planned and carried out **Fashions of the Decades Show** that played to two sold out houses.

**Handy Helpers** — Students perform simple odd jobs for elders living in their homes.



Drawing by student Amy Chow

Chapter One



**Intergenerational Activities**  
**Group Bingo**

**Objective**

To provide a diverse group an opportunity to learn about each other while they are having great fun together.

**Materials**

Large bingo cards with candy kisses or something else to utilize as markers, a microphone or other equipment to insure adequate sound.

**Physical Setting**

A room large enough to accommodate 4-10 small groups gathered around small tables.

**Description**

Make a list of items for calling. Suggestions include a group that:

Number of  
Participants:  
20-100

- can count 36 buttons on themselves
- has four different colored shoes
- has a member who can recite a poem
- has a member willing to come forward and sing

**I'm A Little Teapot**

- has a member who served in armed forces
- has a member who knows the Preamble to the Constitution
- has a member wearing 4 earrings
- has two members who share the same birthday month

The caller sits at the front of the room and calls, "Under the 0, space 3, a group that has someone wearing blue socks!" Every group who can meet the criteria can cover the spot and the game continues. The caller has to be careful to keep track of the spaces called as well as the criteria sought. Several groups may call "Bingo!" at once so be sure to have inexpensive, fun, multiple prizes available.

**[continued]**

Chapter One



**Intergenerational Activities**  
**Group Bingo**

**Processing**

---

**Ask:**

- What was fun about this game?  
(Usually someone will volunteer "a working together" type of answer that can then lead to productive discussion.)
- What did you learn about each other?
- Did anything surprise you?

Be sure to congratulate **ALL** of the groups on their fine work.

**Variations**

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Sometimes we announced that this game would take place ahead of time and participants would all bring small items that they thought might be called for. (Soap, stamps, paper clips, tooth brushes, etc.) Everyone had a great time trying to anticipate the caller's demands.

---

Winners take chances. Like everyone else, they fear failing, but they refuse to let fear control them."

Nancy Simms

**Chapter One**    **Intergenerational Activities**  
**Reflection**



Talking or writing about the intergenerational experience is a must. For many of the elders, it may be easier to respond verbally than to do any extensive writing. The facilitator must be sure that the opinions and views of all age groups are represented in oral responses and that there is always time at the end of a class for intergenerational sharing. For those students who were involved in the planning and facilitating of the activity, reflective activities should focus on their own contributions.

[My Favorite Things](#)  
page 5.24

[The Good Life](#)  
page 5.26

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“Character is more important than  
intelligence for success.”

Gilberte Beaux

Chapter One



**Reflection**  
**My Favorite Things**



**Objective** \_\_\_\_\_  
To give students an opportunity to determine and evaluate their life choices.

**Materials** \_\_\_\_\_  
Sheets to fill in.

**Physical Setting** \_\_\_\_\_  
Will vary, but usually a comfortable classroom setting will be appropriate.

**Description** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of Participants: 10-100  
 This activity helps students examine their choices and plan their futures. Students begin by making a list of 20 things that they like to do. Then they note the following next to each activity.

<b>Column 1:</b>	Write a \$ (dollar sign) if the activity requires \$5 or more each time you do it.
<b>Column 2:</b>	If you usually do this activity alone, put an <b>A</b> (alone) in this column. If you usually do it with others, put a <b>P</b> (people).
<b>Column 3:</b>	If you feel you will still be doing this activity at age 85, put 85 in this column; otherwise leave the column blank.
<b>Column 4:</b>	In this column, put a <b>V</b> if you do this activity as a volunteer for the benefit of others.
<b>Column 5:</b>	If your parents or teachers would disapprove of this activity, put a <b>no-no</b> in this column.
<b>Column 6:</b>	If you do this activity at least once a week, write “ <b>often</b> ” in this column. If you do it once a month, write “ <b>occasional</b> ”. If you do it 3-6 times a year, write “ <b>seldom</b> ”. If you do it fewer than 3 times a year, write “ <b>almost never</b> ”.
<b>Column 7:</b>	If this an inside activity write “ <b>I</b> ”; if an outside activity write “ <b>O</b> ”.

**[continued]**

**Chapter One**



**Reflection**  
**My Favorite Things**

**Description** \_\_\_\_\_

Students should total up their columns and draw some conclusions about their lives and the things that they enjoy. They should each give a brief overview of their totals and discussion should follow.

**Processing** \_\_\_\_\_

Allow students time to reflect upon their totals and the ensuing discussion and then request they write down some conclusions about themselves.

- Does my time reflect my priorities? (For example, if you value family highly, are you spending enough time with them?)
- Are you an "inside" or "outside person"?
- Are you choosing activities you will continue in old age?
- Do you view old age positively?
- Do you need a lot of money to be happy?
- Are you a loner or do you require others to be happy?
- Do you enjoy doing for others?
- Do you like to do things of which others disapprove?
- Are you spending your time in the way you enjoy?
- Do you have control over your life? Why or why not?
- Do your conclusions send any message about your future?
- Based upon what you have learned through this activity, will you make any changes in your life? If so, what?

**Chapter One**



**Reflection**  
**The Good Life**

**Objective** \_\_\_\_\_  
to give students an opportunity to discuss their own values through an examination of their own priorities.

**Materials** \_\_\_\_\_  
10 pieces of paper, black magic marker, sheets with values listed.



**Physical Setting** \_\_\_\_\_  
Comfortable space appropriate for viewing and discussion.

**Description** \_\_\_\_\_  
This activity is a good way of examining one's priorities and what is important for fulfillment. Its purpose is to help participants think about the choices they make in their daily lives and how those choices influence their work. All participants receive a list of values (family, friends, religion, employment, time alone, recreation activities, education, cultural activities, access to nature, volunteer activities) which they rank in order from the one that is most important to them as one to the least important as ten. Give them only about three minutes to complete the ranking and stress that this is a very subjective ranking, and at another moment on another day, their numbers would most probably change.

Number of  
Participants:  
10-100

The facilitator has placed large posters with the names of the values about the room. When the students are finished with their rankings, the facilitator calls, "Number One!" All participants move to stand near the value that they placed as number one. The facilitator encourages all to look around and see the choices of others and to share the reasons for their choices. The facilitator continues to have the students move to their various choices and to discuss each until all priorities have been covered. Students can then complete the activity as they think they would feel when they are 80.

This activity can also be carried out by placing numbers around the room and having participants move to the number at which they place a certain value. This sometimes makes discussion more focused.

**[continued]**

**Chapter One**



**Reflection**  
**The Good Life**

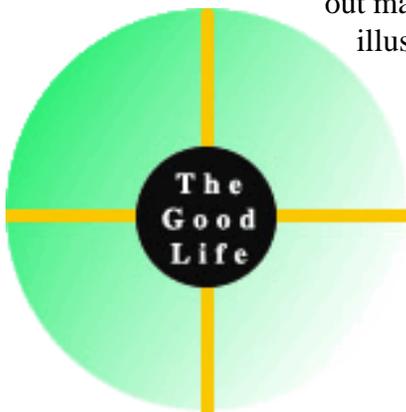
**Processing**

The group discusses the differences age made in their choices. Also they examine what choices were difficult and why, and what they have learned about themselves. They should also consider if their present life reflects their considered values.

**Variations**

This activity is especially useful in interage groups. Small groups of 6-8 brainstorm the necessities for a "good life." Such necessities will be similar to those values listed above. Give each group a large poster upon which is drawn a very large circle with a small circle in its center. In that small circle are the words, "The Good Life." The group must divide the circle into segments that represent their consensus as to the necessities. Their proportion of the circle that each receives will symbolize its importance in relation to other necessities. (For example, good health might receive 25% of the circle, while education receives only 10%.) After the group agrees on the necessities and their relative importance, they draw divisions upon the circle and cut out magazine pictures or draw images in appropriate places to illustrate their conclusions.

**The Good Life Pie**



They then share their creations with the large group. In processing, participants should consider the difference, if any, age made in the choices.

## Chapter One    **Intergenerational Activities Assessment**

Everyone involved in an intergenerational activity evaluates the experience. We find some elders are hesitant to write their thoughts. Therefore, we make the elders' response forms brief and easy to complete. The students, however, must always take time to write evaluatively about the experience. Pre and post tests on understanding aging are often valuable assessment activities.



Student  
Evaluations  
page 5.29

Elder Evaluation  
page 5.30

Dual Awards  
page 5.31

Community  
Exhibits  
page 5.31

Joint Concerts and  
Shows  
page 5.31

For more information consult:  
The Gerontology Department of Ithaca College



Ithaca College Gerontology Institute

<http://www.ithaca.edu/aging/>

Chapter One



**Assessment**  
**Student Evaluations**

**Objective** \_\_\_\_\_

To assess the learning and character development of students involved in the activity as well as encourage student self-assessment.

**Materials** \_\_\_\_\_

Student evaluation forms.

**Physical Setting** \_\_\_\_\_

Comfortable space appropriate for writing.  
(May also be homework assignment.)

**Description** \_\_\_\_\_

Student evaluations should always require students to rethink the activity and determine what they have learned and or gained.

- Have they changed as a result of the activity? If so, how?

It is important to make the leads as specific to the particular activity as possible, but there are some standard leads that are always effective.

These include: [Describe as specifically as possible an elder you met through your service.]

- What have you learned about aging/history as a result of this activity?
- What will you do to make your own aging productive and enjoyable?
- What were the most enjoyable aspects of this activity?  
The most difficult?

**Processing** \_\_\_\_\_

The facilitator **MUST** carefully read every student response and comment in writing.

**Chapter One**



**Assessment**  
**Elder Evaluation**

**Objective** \_\_\_\_\_  
To determine the elder's benefit from the activity and to gain suggestions for improvement.

**Materials** \_\_\_\_\_  
Response documents.

**Physical Setting** \_\_\_\_\_  
Comfortable space appropriate for writing.

**Description** \_\_\_\_\_  
Elder assessment forms should be brief. Ask direct, simple questions.

**Variations** \_\_\_\_\_  
Whenever possible, include assessment interviews with elders. You often receive far better, more detailed information from interviews than from written forms although you should always give elders the opportunity to write their opinions.

---

“Imagine what a harmonious world it could be if every single person, both young and old, shared a little of what he or she is good at doing.”

Quincy Jones



## Chapter One    **Intergenerational Activities** **Celebration**

As with any Service Learning project, celebratory activity must take place. It may be as simple as displaying pictures/ poems/ writing in school or the community or a small reception for the participants. If the project is long term with many people involved, the celebration also should be of a grander scale.

For additional suggestions of celebratory activities refer to **Section III, Chapter 6 page 3.36.**



### **Celebration** **Dual Awards**

#### **Objective** \_\_\_\_\_

To recognize excellence in intergenerational activities as well as remind the community of its worth.

We have found that presenting dual awards at end-of-the-year awards assemblies is not only an excellent vehicle for recognizing students **AND** elders who have given great service to intergenerational activities, but it also serves as a vivid reminder to the students, faculty and community that intergenerational activities are vital for the good health of our communities.

### **Community Exhibits**

#### **Objective** \_\_\_\_\_

To solicit community recognition for excellence in the joint work of elders and students.

Banks, shopping malls, large grocery chains, local museums, city or town halls, doctors' and dentists' offices have all welcomed our traveling exhibits of our intergenerational joint creations and activities. Again we are reminding everyone of this significant connection.

### **Joint Concerts and Shows**

#### **Objective** \_\_\_\_\_

To celebrate the joy of participating in intergenerational arts activities.

Watch, if you can find it, the 1980's award winning documentary, **Close Harmony**. This short film will convince you of the value of bringing the old and young together to share an arts creation whether it be in music or some other vehicle and then presenting it to the community. This indeed represents what is best about living.

## Chapter Two    **Environmental/Health Activities**



[Group Sculpture](#)  
page 5.33

[Jigsaw](#)  
page 5.34

[Problem Solving](#)  
page 5.37

The connection between environmental/health issues and service learning is perhaps one of the most obvious and easiest to develop for classroom use. Nearly all students are excited and enthusiastic about sharing knowledge that directly affects them on a personal level. In some areas students are able to choose a topic that is of particular interest or concern for themselves and then share the findings with the class, school and/or community. This has been the format used in some junior and senior high school health classes. In other classes, a single project that coincides with a curriculum topic may be chosen by the whole class. Water quality testing in a senior high science class, recycling by a junior high science class, an anti-smoking campaign by an elementary group and a Shaken Baby Syndrome Seminar by a Family and Consumer Science class are some that have been highly successful.

### **Orientation and Training**

The orientation and training that must take place before the Service Learning project begins will vary greatly depending on the project chosen. Students who are doing projects that require the use of scientific equipment will need not only training in the use of the equipment but also an adequate amount of practice time for them to become proficient. The project facilitator should provide training in the use of computer, Internet and any other technology that the students will use while working on the SL project. Experts from community agencies may also provide information that will help prepare students for their role in the project. This activity often incorporates students working on small teams or as partners. Some team building activities are useful before the actual service activity begins.

Chapter Two



**Orientation and Training**  
**Group Sculpture**

**Objective**

To provide students with an opportunity for creative teamwork.

**Materials**

Newspaper, masking tape, glue, scissors.

**Optional:** magic markers, colored paper, old magazines, straws, string.

**Physical Setting**

Space for small groups to maneuver with adequate space from other groups.

**Description**

**Number of  
Participants:**  
6-30

Break the large group into small groups. Three to five group members is preferable. Participants are given adequate materials from the above suggestions. Each group is then instructed that they will have five-ten minutes to plan and fifteen minutes to construct a sculpture with only the materials provided. Nothing else may be used. The sculpture **MUST** pertain to the announced theme (service learning) and have:

- (1) stability
- (2) three-dimensional quality
- (3) beauty

The groups thus have a total of twenty minutes to complete their tasks.

**[continued]**

Chapter Two



**Environmental/Health Activities**  
**Group Sculpture**

**Processing**

When the task is complete, request that each group present its sculpture to the other groups. At least two of the group members should be involved in the presentation.\* Then process by first focusing on how each group worked together.

- How did you arrive at a decision of what to construct?
- How did you decide who would do what?

Then focus on the individual participants with questions such as:

- What are your most important contributions to the group effort?
- What was your least important contribution?
- What did you learn about yourself by working as a part of the group?
- What did you learn about group effort?

If possible, keep the sculptures in a prominent place for a while as the entire group moves on to other issues. They should be a point of pride and fun memories for the group. They give the entire group a "history."

**\* NOTE:** It is always preferable to have all group members stand in front and take part in presenting their group's work to the larger group. By their very presence with the others, all are acknowledging ownership of the product.



**Orientation and Training**  
**Jigsaw**

**Objective**

To enable students to cover a large amount of material in a small amount of time and to provide additional teamwork experience.

**Procedures**

Follow procedures for **Jigsaw** on [page 5.6](#) in the **Breaking the Myth Activity**.

Chapter Two    **Environmental/Health Activities**  
**Thoughtful Service**

Some of the most popular and successful environmental/health related SL activities involve the following curriculum topics:

- Diversity issues and school safety
- Water quality testing
- Recycling
  - Clean air
  - Anti-smoking
  - School Safety
- Nutrition
- Shaken Baby Syndrome
- Health, Wellness and Fitness
- Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Clean power sources
- Organic Crops
- Endangered species
- DNA Understanding
- Transportation Issues
- Outer Space Exploration
- Recreation areas
- Wildlife preserves
- New Karner butterfly
- Preservation of the Pinebush



## Chapter Two    **Environmental/Health Activities** **Reflection**



Problem Solving  
page 5.37

Reflection is especially important in service learning in these subject areas because students need to consider the impact of such subjects on themselves and their communities. Decisions they make now may influence the quality of their future lives. Written reflection documents are the most frequently used but by no means the only effective strategy. Oral response is another, but if the facilitator needs to assign a grade, he/she may find it difficult to give each student equal opportunity to respond verbally. SL activities in environmental/health areas often involve data collection and scientific experimentation. Both of these activities call for presentation of results to appropriate individuals or groups. When students come together to discuss the contents of these presentations and to prepare their materials and speeches, they are really accomplishing in-depth, rich reflection.

There are feature films available in video rental stores that deal with current environmental/health related issues and can be used in the classroom to provide a powerful tool for reflection. An example would be showing **Erin Brockovich** to a class that is doing a water quality testing project. Additional environment-related films include **Silkwood** and **A Civil Action**.



**Chapter Two**



**Reflection**  
**Problem Solving**

**Objective**

To help students understand and combat the environmental/health challenges in our world.

**Materials**

Problem solving sheets.

**Physical Setting**

A comfortable classroom in which students can sit together in groups of four.

**Description**

**Number of  
Participants:**  
16-40

The facilitator begins by discussing an environmental or health issue that is menacing our world or community. Sometimes inviting an expert on the subject is a good way to begin this activity. The facilitator also needs to remind students to share what they learned first hand about the problem during their service. Students are divided into groups of four and they select one person from each group to record. Review the rules for brainstorming. (No negatives criticism, as many ideas as possible, hitchhike on ideas of others, combine ideas.) Then the small groups carry out the following steps:

1. They brainstorm the problems that will occur in the future if aspects concerning this issue continue as they are today.
2. They then choose one of the most important problems that they foresee.
3. They then brainstorm what might be done to address this problem.
4. After they have at least 10 possible solutions for how society (the community) should address this problem, they step back and determine the criteria for judging the practicality of their solutions. Often students choose cost, acceptance by the public, time line and perhaps feasibility itself as criteria.
5. Then they list their ten best solutions and rate them from best to worst (1-10) for each criterion. For example, under the criteria cost, solution 1 might be 8, but it might rate a 3 under acceptance by the public. Then students add up the scores of each solution.

**[continued]**

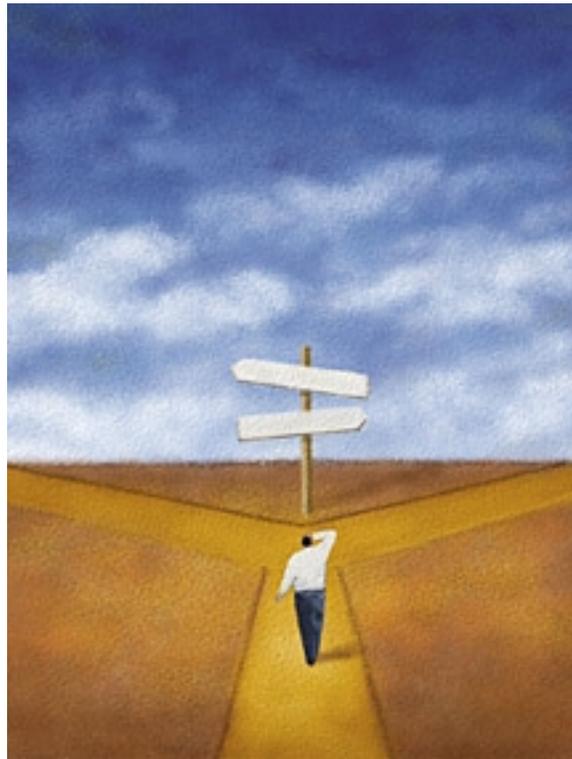
**Chapter Two**



**Reflection  
Problem Solving**

**Processing**

Each group presents its best solution or solutions to the class and attempts to persuade the class members to its point of view. After all the presentations, class members vote on the best solutions and students write why they have voted in a certain way. It is important for facilitators to point out that often what students expected to be their best solution turns out not to be and therefore a process such as this one is useful for their own life decisions.





## Chapter Two    **Environmental/Health Activities** **Assessment**

In addition to the regular evaluations completed by students, facilitator and agency personnel, it is often advantageous to do a follow-up study of the issue to determine the environmental impact of the service activity. Sometimes teachers and students even follow the issue for several succeeding years to obtain more reliable data. Cost of the activity as well as the activity's impact on the local economy is also sometimes an important aspect of the evaluation. Students and teachers who design and carry out future related service activities should make use of the data and assessment information gathered by the students before them.

### **Celebration**

As always, a powerful celebratory event is the presentation of the results to a significant audience whether that audience be parents, community members, and/or local or state authorities. The adult nature of such a presentation lends legitimacy and respect to the service activity the students have recently completed. They invariably are proud and fulfilled by their accomplishments.

Another successful celebration strategy we often use is publication of the results. Seeing one's work in a published format is gratifying and provides a professional tone for the work itself.

Sometimes we have a concluding reception to celebrate the work done. To the reception we invite other students, colleagues, students' families and community members. We take great pains to also encourage local dignitaries and the media to make an appearance. At such a reception, we sometimes show a video that gives an overview of the activity, and we always display activity photos and memorabilia.

## Chapter Three **Civic Activities**

Our democratic way of life is grounded in the principle of citizen participation in government. We feel it is the obligation of public schools to educate young Americans in the understanding that with the wonderful freedoms this country promises comes citizens responsibility to give back to the community in which they live. Service learning activities that seek to address civic needs and problems provide students with the experiential learning important to their understanding and acceptance of their citizenship responsibilities. Opportunities for such service are many and can connect to a variety of academic subject areas.



[Hunger Banquet](#)  
page 5.43

[Mock Agency  
Funding Meeting](#)  
page 5.44

[World of One  
Hundred](#)  
page 5.46

[Assumptions](#)  
page 5.48

### **Planning and Community Voice Who, What, When, Where and How**

We have found government agencies such as parks and recreation departments, village, town and city boards, historical societies, museums, historic cemetery associations, and libraries to be enthusiastic and talented service learning partners. In such a partnership, it is very useful to bring in agency representatives to speak with the students at the very beginning of the activity. Meet with them before they speak with the students to be sure they understand the curriculum to which you are connecting the activity and the parameters you have set for the activity. Involve the agency representations as your students design the activity time line and tasks.

### **Orientation and Training**

Much of the orientation and training for this activity occurs in conjunction with Community Voice. Agency representatives should help students understand the dimensions of the tasks ahead. They should also provide any training necessary for work in their agencies. You may have to provide additional training for students to feel comfortable and capable. Strategies such as debate and job shadowing are often applicable at this time. Be certain that you are careful to see that while students **MAY** advocate for change, they can **NOT** lobby if your program is receiving any public monies. It is important that students understand the difference between these two actions. Advocating really involves educating others to the facts while lobbying implies a one-sided, specifically targeted position.



## Chapter Three **Civic Activities** **Thoughtful Service**

Students and facilitators in our capital region have successfully accomplished numerous civic-related service learning activities such as:

- Voter registration drives
- Assistance in transporting elderly and/or disabled citizens to the polls
- Teen courts
- Polls on community issues with publication of results
- Sponsorship of community forums
- The hosting of a region-wide youth summit or interage seminar
- Presentation of a seminar on teens and the law
- Honoring and serving Veterans
- Developing student and/or adult guides to museum exhibits
- Curating an art show for school or community
- Serving as docents at local historical sites or museums or junior league house tours
- Assisting in community events such as Literacy Volunteers Tastes of Schenectady, the Lark Festival, or the Troy Riverwalk
- Peace Campaigns
- Peer Mediation
- Health Campaigns (anti-smoking, pro-exercise)
- Poverty and Hunger Campaigns
- Coats for Kids
- Walk in MY Shoes
- Conducting, analyzing and publishing a school/community wide survey on an important issue

## Chapter Three Civic Activities

### Reflection

Reflection upon civic-related service activities is character education. It is an ideal time to encourage discussion of civic values and responsibilities and to demonstrate that **every citizen not only should but also truly can make** a positive contribution to this country. The positive results and accomplishments of students involved in civics service activities are often easy to demonstrate. Such statistics as how many people were transported to the polls, how much money was raised for Literacy Volunteers or how many people will utilize your museum booklet are often available and impressive. Civic reflection also needs to bring students to examine what they have learned about the workings and needs of their particular community. They should discuss what they feel are the responsibilities of individual citizens to these processes and needs. Sometimes reflection activities help students to better understand the supporting systems of their communities.

---

“We are not put on this Earth for ourselves, but are placed here for each other. If you are there always for others, then in time of need, someone will be there for you.”

Jeff Warner

**Chapter Three**



**Civic Activities**  
**Hunger Banquet**

**Objective**

To give students the opportunity to experience—for only a brief moment—the hardship of poverty and hunger.

**Materials**

Furniture, utensils and food as described below.

**Physical Setting**

A large room that can accommodate three different settings as well as have access to kitchen facilities.

**Description**

Number of  
Participants:  
24-60

Students are **NOT** prepared for this activity ahead of time. As they enter the room they are randomly handed a green, red or blue ticket. When everyone has entered, students are welcomed to lunch and told that they will eat by groups according to the color of the tickets. They are then directed to one of three sites in the room. At the red site, students receive a bowl of rice, a spoon and a cup of water. They are directed to sit on towels or blankets at a designated spot on the floor. At the blue site, students receive a small box lunch that includes a sandwich, an apple, a cookie and a small box of juice. They are directed to sit on benches at picnic tables. At the green site students are ushered to tables set with tablecloths and candles and are asked for their lunch preference—lasagna, salad, soda and ice cream or steak, French fries, salad, soda and brownies. Solicitous waiters serve lunch to them and they are offered seconds. All students can see each other during lunch.

**Processing**

After lunch the three groups come back together and discuss the event:

- How did it feel to be in your particular group?
- How did you feel about the others in the other groups?
- Do you feel that you deserved your group? Why or why not?
- What does this activity say about real life?
- What lessons have you learned about your own life?
- Are there things you can do so no one has to live his/her life solely in the red group?

**Chapter Three**



**Civic Activities**

**Mock Agency Funding Meeting**

**Objective**

To give students the opportunity to experience the dilemmas facing agencies serving public needs.

**Materials**

Background handouts, deliberation sheets, and pencils.

**Physical Setting**

Tables and chairs for 4-8 groups of 4-6 students.

**Description**

**Number of  
Participants:**  
24-48

This activity is most powerful when a community agency agrees to provide the simulation; however, you can use adult or student volunteers. The Office for Aging and the United Way have each provided our students with a very powerful experience. Introduce the students to the Agency Director (or his/her representative). The director gives a brief overview of the agency and introduces several (at least 2, not more than 4) smaller agencies who traditionally receive funding from the larger agency. For example, when Office for Aging provided the seminar, the agencies who presented requests were Meals-On-Wheels, Elder Congregate Meal Sites and Elder Social Service, all divisions of Catholic Family Charities. When the United Way provided the seminar, the agencies were a YMCA, Bethesda Homeless Shelter and Northeast Parent and Child (an agency that assists at-risk families). Each agency gives a brief overview of its clientele and their needs and then presents a minimum amount of money they need to perform these services. Then the main director tells the students they must decide the funding levels for each agency and he/she gives them a total amount to spend that is a good deal less than the total requested by all three agencies who presented. Of course, the students now face a disturbing dilemma. How can they take away from one group to help another? Their small group each must make a unanimous decision. Often they come back to the agencies with questions such as, **what will you do if we can only half fund you?** In our experience students have truly agonized over these decisions even though they understood this was a simulation.

**[continued]**

**Chapter Three**



**Civic Activities**  
**Mock Agency Funding Meeting**

**Processing**

Each group presents its decision to the agency guests and the other groups. Discussion follows. It is important at this point to encourage the agency representatives present to participate but not dominate the discussion. Students write a personal response to the activity as soon after the activity as possible. We have found this reflection to be one of the most powerful we have ever facilitated. Students speak about it long after its completion. Not only does it give students empathy and understanding of community needs, but it demonstrates the dire need for responsible, committed, knowledgeable citizen volunteers to comprise the agency boards who make such critical decisions.



**Chapter Three**



**Civic Activities**  
**World of One Hundred**

**Objective** \_\_\_\_\_  
To increase students' awareness of other cultures and world conditions.

**Materials** \_\_\_\_\_  
Handouts and pencils.

**See handout-  
page 5.47.**

**Physical Setting** \_\_\_\_\_  
Any room that provides space for students to read and write.

**Description** \_\_\_\_\_  
All students receive the **World of One Hundred** handout and complete its questions. The facilitator should emphasize that they should think carefully about their responses. Allow enough time for the students to make thoughtful responses.

**Number of  
Participants:**  
6-100

**Processing** \_\_\_\_\_  
Students discuss what they have learned from this activity.

- How does this hypothetical community compare with your own?
- What are your responsibilities for the world, country, and community?
- Can you think of specific opportunities available to make a positive impact on any of the startling ratios?

**[continued]**

When the students have completed the handout, the facilitator gives the students an opportunity to share their answers before giving the correct ones.

We give the students an answer key that they may keep.

## Chapter Three

# World of One Hundred

Michael Harms, Hobart College  
from [Lotusandrose.com/DewDrops/100.htm](http://Lotusandrose.com/DewDrops/100.htm)

**Imagine the entire population of the earth has been shrunken into a village of precisely 100 people. With all existing human ratios remaining the same, what would this village look like?**

---

**There would be:** (Place numbers in the blanks.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Asians, \_\_\_\_\_ Europeans, \_\_\_\_\_ from the Western Hemisphere (North & South America) and \_\_\_\_\_ from Africa.

\_\_\_\_\_ white, \_\_\_\_\_ non-white. \_\_\_\_\_ female, \_\_\_\_\_ male.

\_\_\_\_\_ Christian, \_\_\_\_\_ non-Christian.

59% of the entire world's wealth would be in the hands of \_\_\_\_\_ people, of which \_\_\_\_\_ would be citizens of the United States.

\_\_\_\_\_ would live in substandard housing.

\_\_\_\_\_ would be unable to read.

\_\_\_\_\_ would suffer from malnutrition.

\_\_\_\_\_ would be near death.

\_\_\_\_\_ would be near birth.

\_\_\_\_\_ would have a college education.

\_\_\_\_\_ would own a computer.

---

**The correct answers are:**

- There would be 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere (North & South America), and 8 Africans.
- 51 would be female; 49 would be male.
- 30 would be white; 70 would be non-white.
- 30 would be Christian; 70 would be non-Christian.
- 59% of the entire world's wealth would be in the hands of only 6 people, all of whom are citizens of the United States.
- 80 would live in substandard housing.
- 70 would be unable to read.
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition.
- 1 would be near death; 1 would be near birth.
- Only 1 would have a college education.
- Fewer than one person would own a computer.

**Chapter Three**



**Civic Activities  
Assumptions**

**Objective**

To give students the opportunity to understand the unreliability of assumptions that all of us make and their danger to our community.

**Materials**

Handouts and pencils.

**Physical Setting**

Any room that provides space for students to read and write.

**Description**

Number of  
Participants:  
24-35

Students must imagine video glimpses of the following and then list in preferential order the individuals who would be the best candidates for caring for their younger brother and sister. Or they can list them in order of their ability to own a large, luxurious home.

**The list:**

**Mary**

38—Spanish—heavysset, long, black hair with a touch of gray—  
She carries two large shopping bags and hurries her children into the subway at 3: 30 p.m.

**Grace**

65—White—dressed in soft pastel pink suit, hat and gloves—  
She is browsing a Madison Avenue art gallery

**Rodney**

18—Black—dressed in stone washed jeans, a "goose" jacket and Fila sneakers—  
He is carrying a baseball bat and a boom box.

**James**

15—Chinese—dressed in sweat jacket, designer jeans, Reebok sneakers—  
He carries his books neatly under one arm and a calculator.

**Morris**

55—White—wears a checkered flannel shirt, old navy pea coat and a woolen captain's hat—  
He is in a cafeteria, talking on a cell phone, smoking a cigar and reading the racing page of the Daily News.

**Lisa**

16—White—long blond hair and wears overalls—  
She sits on the steps of a school with a guitar and a poetry book.

**[continued]**

Chapter Three



**Civic Activities  
Assumptions**

**Waquina** 23—Native American—  
She is eating dinner with her family on an Indian reservation.  
She has a high school diploma.

**Shelby** 42—Jewish—wears a 3 piece suit, lives in Scarsdale, NY—  
She is walking into an office building on the streets of NYC.

**Miguel** 31—Mexican—small, Yankee T-shirt—  
He is sitting at a table in an Albany deli, obviously waiting for  
someone.

After students finish their prioritized lists, give them the  
following additional information:

**Mary** elementary teacher in NYC, lived all over world, speaks 5  
languages

**Grace** no family, no other information

**Rodney** honor student, on academic scholarship at Hunter College

**James** on his way to meet fellow gang members, a numbers runner, in  
and out of juvenile institutions

**Morris** executive in large insurance firm, happily married, four children

**Lisa** back in school after giving up her baby for adoption

**Waquina** finishing her PHD in physics at MIT, home on vacation, engaged  
to be married

**Shelby** divorced 3 times, works as a maid

**Miguel** waiting for his brother so they can go and volunteer for Habitat  
for Humanity

**[continued]**

**Chapter Three**



**Civic Activities  
Assumptions**

**Processing**

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Students discuss how they would change their lists after receiving the additional information. They then discuss how assumptions can be detrimental to our lives and the welfare of our community.

- Can you think of specific examples from your own lives or the media?
- What can we do to change the way people make assumptions?

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“As long as you keep a person down,  
some part of you has to be down  
there to hold them down, so it means  
you cannot soar as you otherwise  
might.”

Marian Anderson



## Chapter Three **Civic Activities**

### **Assessment**

In addition to the completion of evaluation forms and/or pre and post tests, we have found writing and speaking to be very effective civics service learning assessment strategies. Sometimes students write an essay on their perceived responsibilities of citizenship. Often they write essays for college applications or essay contests based on their civic service. These written assignments insure that the students reexamine how the activity affected their civic values and understanding. We also find debate a very powerful assessment tool in this area. Based on what they have learned from their service, students debate a civics related issue. This evaluative method not only helps the students and teachers to assess the success of the service learning, but often also provides a service by teaching other students or community members about the issue.

### **Celebration**

The best civics service learning celebrations are those held in public places with members of the community present. It is always very inspiring for students to be part of wider celebrations that honor not only the volunteer work by students, but that done by older members of the community as well. This kind of celebration sends a strong character message to students—that is that they are significant, respectable, contributing community members.



## Chapter Four    **Character Education School-Wide**

When considering the values that form the basis of good character one must accept respect for others, trustworthiness, honesty, fairness, personal and civic responsibility and caring as key elements. Schools need to play a major role in instilling these core values. We are all faced with a rapidly changing world—high speed travel taking us to foreign cultures, cell phones offering us instant communication with anyone and mass media exposing us to diverse cultures, religions, values and ethics. It is urgent that we prepare our children to live as caring, responsible, world citizens in harmony with those different from themselves. Utilizing service learning as an education strategy fosters such preparation. It may be accomplished in any single classroom, but is often more meaningful and memorable when undertaken by the whole school community.

The following are suggestions and examples of proven character education/service learning activities that were undertaken by the students and teachers of an entire school. We highly recommend them to you.

### **School Mural**

One Service Learning activity that has proven highly effective as a whole school project is the creation of a mural signifying peace. Students of any age can understand this concept, and at their level of understanding can identify problems and solutions. Students gain experience working cooperatively with classmates, sharing thoughts, ideas, and actual materials when they finally reach the "doing" stage. The orientation and training program should reinforce and perhaps even introduce concepts about peace as it is fostered through understanding of cultures, races, religions, etc. Depending on the focus of the mural, students may also have an opportunity to work directly with people from the community whose backgrounds may be very different from their own. In schools that have a diverse population, the facilitator should make every effort to insure the diversity of any small group working on the mural. In celebration the students continue to learn core ethical values while sharing what they have learned and taking pride in their contribution to the beauty of their school.

**[continued]**

## Chapter Four    **Character Education School-Wide**

### **Diversity Celebration**

Many schools have days or weeks devoted to celebrating diversity. Such celebrations are excellent themes for whole school service learning activities. Student representatives from each class (including all special education classrooms) should meet to plan the activities. Help them to develop specific goals. Be sure that the learning involved is significant. Questions the student need to address include:

- What do we need to learn?
- How can we make everyone in our school better informed and more respectful of those different from us? How can we help those different from us?

After the students have decided what they want to do, they must develop a workable timeline and assign tasks. It is important that every class in the school has an opportunity to contribute to the celebration. Most of our schools choose a week for such a project and have a variety of different activities each day with a culminating celebratory event on the final day. But other schools have effectively utilized such a theme for a month or even the entire school year.

### **Adopting a Senior Citizen Facility**

Glen Worden Elementary School in Scotia, New York has the "oldest" whole school service learning program in our collaboration. Facilitated for 20 years by a second grade teacher, the program involves a partnership between Glen Worden and the Baptist Health and Rehabilitation Facility, a long term care institution in Glenville. Elders in wheel chairs and with canes arrive at the school twice a month to visit the classroom to which they are assigned for the year. Some help the students with reading and math while others just enjoy speaking with the students and telling stories. Each grade is assigned a month of the school year and during their month, all of the students in that grade visit

**[continued]**



## Chapter Four    **Character Education School-Wide**

Baptist to carry out a special project. One grade sponsors a St. Patrick's Day Party. Another holds a Teddy Bear Picnic. The second grade with help from their parents, plans, cooks and serves a Thanksgiving breakfast. In December, the entire school works on decorating the institution. Each class elects two representatives to the Core Team. This intergrade group visits the Center twice each month to visit and carry out projects. In June, a large celebratory event is held and local dignitaries are invited. Such events have included a Luau, a circus and a rodeo.

Many graduates of Glen Worden remember with fondness the wonderful friends they made in this program. Based on this unusual intergenerational friendship, several years ago, the school district leased some of Glen Worden's land to the town, which built a senior center on the property. The school and the Center now collaborate many joint endeavors including students who regularly share lunch at the meal site and elders who volunteer in the after school program.

### **Peer Mentoring**

Peer mentoring is another SL program that we have found highly successful at



all school levels—elementary students working with younger students, middle and high school students mentoring their peers as well as younger students. All students involved learn to work cooperatively and respectfully with each other regardless of individual differences. Glasser's Learning Pyramid emphasizes the benefit of peer mentoring when it explains that students remember 90% of what they teach to others. Students, regardless of their age or chosen subject, repeatedly cite better understanding of the subject as a positive result of their peer mentoring.

The Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology [TOAST] an Albany City magnet school has created a highly successful peer mentoring program. See **Model** page 5.55.



## Chapter Four

## Peer Mentoring

Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology

### Community Voice

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Student Council members met with the faculty and PTA to discuss possible service learning activities for their school. A kindergarten boy suggested that peer mentoring/tutoring in reading might help raise the reading levels of the students. Students, parents and faculty supported the idea despite some reservations. Student Council members met with their advisor and other faculty members to design a program. They went online to research programs in other schools. Few elementary schools had large-scale programs. With teacher recommendations, council members selected two Student Directors and developed an application form. They invited any student in grades 4-6 including special education students to apply. Applications had to be approved by a student's classroom teacher as to the times they could be excused from class to mentor. The Student Directors, in conference with their faculty advisors, developed criteria for selecting mentors and then selected a small group of mentors. Special education students were among those selected. The number of mentors has increased in subsequent years to a maximum of 40 mentors. The selection committee pays close attention to the applicants' reasons for applying. Faculty have commented that the Directors are amazingly mature in their judgements and do not select students based on popularity. Perhaps some of this serious sense of purpose comes from their experience and responsibilities as student council members involved in service learning projects.

Teachers in grade preK-3, special education and special subjects submit requests for mentors. They request help for specific subject areas and for day/time periods.

**[continued]**



## Chapter Four

## Peer Mentoring

Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology

### Orientation and Training

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The corps of peer mentors attends orientation and training meetings that include: presentations by the school's reading and math specialists, a teacher education professor from SUNY Albany and a specialist on learning disabilities. They also carefully review the academic subject in which they will be working. They role-play and discuss possible mentoring experiences and discuss the importance of being a role model for younger students. They develop a list of "Mentoring Do's and Don'ts."

### Thoughtful Service

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Student Directors assign mentors to classrooms according to subject expertise vs. subject needed and compatible available times. Mentors must work in their assignments two half hour time blocks per week. They must arrive on time and return to their classroom on their own. They have mentor badges they must wear when moving between classes.

### Reflection

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Every other week mentors attend a required reflection class facilitated by the faculty advisor. Activities in these classes include:

- Dance Cards
- Spinning Circles
- Carousel Brainstorming
- Circle the Question
- Winners and Losers
- Voices
- Guest speakers

After each reflection class, students turn in a **Response Document** on which they have completed leads concerning both their service and this reflection session. The Student Directors and faculty advisors read every document carefully, writing responses to the students and returning the documents to the students' growing service learning portfolios. In this way, they can quickly identify mentors who need assistance.

**[continued]**



## Chapter Four

## Peer Mentoring

Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology

### Celebration

Mentors sometimes give rewards such as stickers to the students they help. The mentors themselves receive end-of-the-year rewards including pens and pencils with program name, congratulatory letters from principal or advisor and award certificates. They also enjoy taking part in capital region service learning fairs.

Special privileges for mentors have included: assisting at field day, accompanying their assigned class on field trips, mentor ID buttons and/ tags, opportunities to speak to adult groups (BOE, faculty, teacher groups, PTA) about their work, and nominations for local, state and national awards.

