



Maryland State Department of Education **Service-Learning Fellow Project**

Buddy Bags

Pine Grove Middle School, Baltimore County
Grade 7, Visual Arts
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Primary Subject: Visual Arts

Grade Level: 7

Additional Subject Area Connections:
Language Arts

Project Title: Buddy Bags

Type(s) of Service: Indirect

Project Description: Students design and hand paint a book bag that will hold a children's book. These bags are donated to primary age classes to encourage literacy.

Potential Service-Learning Action Experiences:

Students research the causes and effects of illiteracy and consider how they can encourage younger students to be excited about learning how to read. Students plan a design for a book bag that incorporates an idea from a book that they themselves have read. After sketching the bag design, they transfer the drawing to muslin fabric. Acrylic paints in bright colors are used to paint on the surface of fabric and handles. The paintings are cut out and glued to another piece of fabric to create the bag, and the handles are glued to the top. Students bring in and share their own books with the younger children by placing them in the bags. They also design a gift tag that is stapled to the bag. The receiving school often draws pictures and writes thank you note. A relationship is established between schools.

Maryland State Curriculum Indicators

Visual Arts:

Standard 1: Indicator 3. Analyze the application of the elements of art and principles of design in artistic exemplars and personal artworks.

1.3a. Compare and describe how artists use design concepts to organize the elements of art and principles of design to convey ideas, thoughts, and feelings in selected artworks.

Standard 2: Indicator 1. Compare and explain how works of art from various cultures communicate feelings, ideas, and universal themes.

2.1b. Select and describe images and forms from different times and places that explore similar universal themes about human experiences.

Standard 3: Indicator 3. Demonstrate understanding of processes for solving visual problems.

3.3a. Describe the processes—strategies, techniques, and resources—used to generate and organize ideas to solve visual problems.

Standard 4: Indicator 2. Construct and apply different sets of criteria for making judgments about artwork.

4.2c. Establish and apply a set of criteria for assessing personal artworks.

Standard 5: Indicator B1. Develop and practice artistic behaviors and the safe use of materials.

5B1.1 Set goals, make decisions, and solve art problems by using and applying art knowledge and behaviors, taking responsibility, and showing initiative for developing appropriate sequences to meet goals.

Alignment with Maryland's Best Practices of Service-Learning: *Buddy Bags*

1. **Meet a recognized community need** (*e.g. What health, education, environment or public safety need was met? How did you determine there was a real need in this area? Who was helped by your project?*)

Literacy issues became important to the students themselves when they saw that poor readers were not able to always participate in art assignments. Students devised this project as a way to encourage reading at an early age, as well as reminisce about how they learned to read and what books were their favorites.

2. **Achieve curricular objectives through service-learning** (*How did the project reinforce or enhance student academic learning?*)

Students were able to use this activity as a painting and crafts unit. They compared crafts from many different cultures and time periods. The bags were designed with a particular client in mind, just as a graphic artist might design something for the marketplace. They created a flow chart with the directions in order to follow all of the steps involved. They also used shading techniques with acrylic paints.

3. **Reflect throughout the service-learning experience** (*What types of activities did students engage in to reflect on their project?*)

Students made suggestions about changes to the bags, such as making them into backpacks, and reflected on their involvement with literacy. They received "Thank you" cards that made them realize that they had impacted another person's life.

4. **Develop student responsibility** (*How did students have opportunities to make decisions about the service-learning project and take on leadership?*)

Students decided what was going to be put on the bag (the painting) as well as what would go in the bag. They selected the book for their bag. They took leadership in distributing supplies and formed groups to help with the gluing and packing of the bags for shipment.



5. **Establish community partnerships** *(With what community partners did you collaborate? Non-profits, civic organizations, businesses that provided donations, etc.)*
Each year that I organize this project, I contact a different elementary school in Baltimore county to receive the bags. I contact the teacher and then receive the “Thank you” cards back. I have also used the services of “That Book Thing” in Waverly, Baltimore City, to supply some of the donated books.
6. **Plan ahead for service-learning** *(How did you prepare and plan for the project?)*
First, I make sure that I have contacted an elementary teacher who needs the bags. I make sure that I have supplies such as muslin fabric, acrylic paint, brushes, water containers, samples of book illustrations, glue, scissors, etc. I make a trip to “That Book Thing” and yard sales to pick up books. I also make sure I have all of my curricular materials together, including worksheets and textbooks with pictures of crafts, as well as the power point presentation I created for this unit.
7. **Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for service** *(What did students learn through the experience?)*
Students learn about the importance of learning how to read and how literacy impacts a person’s future. This project not only encourages the elementary students, but also reminds the middle school students of how important literacy is in their lives. They learn about sharing with others, in this case, their books. They also learn about the importance of following directions, remaining focused on a task, working within a timeline, as well as art skills for future projects.

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