Grow Berlin Green
**Berlin Intermediate School, Worcester County,
Dolphin Team, Rhonda Walsh,
Rhondawalsh@gmail.com**

Primary Subject: Social Studies/Science

Level: Grade 6

Additional Subject Area Connections:
Integrated Language Arts (ILA) and Math

Project Title:
Grow Berlin Green

Type(s) of Service: Indirect and Direct

Project Description:
This project deals with several aspects of the environment including planting trees, cleaning up local areas, and the importance of water conservation. It offers a variety of actions for the students to complete. The project also encompasses all subject areas so the teachers can work as a team.

Potential Service-Learning Action Experiences:
Weeding, planting, clean ups, painting rain barrels, writing informational fliers and creating radio announcements

---

Maryland State Curriculum Indicators

Integrated Language Arts, Science and Social Studies:

4.A.2.c ILA
4.A.2.e ILA
7.A.1 ILA

6.A.1.c Social Studies

6.A.G7 Science

1.C.a Math

IIIB Art
I.C Art

See #2 on next page for details of each indicator.

Alignment with Maryland's
Best Practices of Service-Learning:
Grow Berlin Green

1. **Meet a recognized community need**

   Grow Berlin Green is a fairly new organization in our community. They have a program where they pass out rain barrels to local residents encouraging water conservation. However, there are two problems; the barrels are plain, blue and ugly and the residents do not know how to use them. Students wrote fliers to be included with the rain barrels with easy step by step instructions on how to use them along with pictures and diagrams. They also painted the rain barrels with a stain glass design to add beauty to any rain garden. Grow Berlin Green is also responsible for several community clean ups each year. Our students participated in cleaning up local parks, neighborhoods and streets depending on where they lived.

2. **Achieve curricular objectives through service-learning**

   Students met many of Maryland's State Curriculum objectives across the curriculum during their service-learning project. In ILA they "composed to inform/persuade" and "demonstrated appropriate organizational strategies and delivering techniques to plan for a variety of oral presentation purposes" by writing informational fliers for Berlin residents and preparing information to be shared on the morning announcements encouraging their peers to get involved in their community. In Visual Art students "demonstrated the ability or organize knowledge and ideas for expression in the production of art" and demonstrated the ability to perceive, interpret and respond to ideas, experiences, and the environment using art" by painting the rain barrels. In math students, "organized and presented data in tables and graphs and identify the relationships they reveal" by graphing the amount of precipitation each month and how that water could be used with a rain barrel. In Science they are responsible for monitoring the water quality of the three ponds on school property and ensuring its safety for local habitats. In Social Studies students are following Maryland's Service-Learning guidelines and Worcester County Service-Learning Curriculum.

3. **Reflect throughout the service-learning experience**

   Students are given the chance to reflect throughout the entire service-learning experience through a variety of ways. Students are responsible to keep a service-learning journal, take photographs throughout their experience and complete a county

---

service-learning survey at the end of the school year. In their journals, students respond to a series of prompts by writing and/or drawing about their experiences, what they have learned, how they can change, and about future happenings in their journals. Students are also required to keep photographs for a school bulletin board displaying the "action" part of their projects. Students also participate in oral reflection by sharing information with the entire school on the morning announcements and the local radio station Ocean 98.1.

4. **Develop student responsibility**

Students are responsible for collaborating to make a budget in order to complete our projects. Students meet in groups to decide what is going to be the most efficient way to get our tasks completed. Students are responsible for respectfully communicating with our community partners, teachers and peers about their projects. They have to decide how they are going to present their information at the end of each project.

5. **Establish community partnerships**

Our students partnered with Grow Berlin Green and Maryland Coastal Bays.
www.growberlingreen.com   www.mdcoastalbays.org

6. **Plan ahead for service-learning**

The first step in this process was for our team of teachers to meet with the partners over the summer to find out their needs and how our team of 126 sixth graders could help. The teachers then met again to plan a meaningful project that met our community partners' needs while integrating our curriculum content standards and following Maryland's service-learning requirements. We also organized our service-learning calendar at this time. We chose days for our partners to come in and meet with our students and days throughout the school year for the action part of the project. We also developed a budget and arranged transportation for all students to complete the project. Finally, I met with all of the students explaining service-learning, introduced them to our partners and asked for their input on the project. The project was then proposed, submitted and approved at the county level.

7. **Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for service**

Students are prepared in September for their service-learning experience. We begin by reading "success stories" of students their age who have helped their local communities. We then have a discussion of why helping your community is important. I then lead students through a PowerPoint presentation explaining what service-learning is, understanding the goals and components or service learning, and how they can fulfill their service-learning requirements. Students participate in several activities about the three parts of service-learning (preparation, action and reflection). Students participate in a friendly

competition using MSDE's 7 Best Practices. Students also dissect and critique service-learning plans from the past.

Students are educated about the organizations we are helping and introduced to our community partners. Students complete webquests to familiarize themselves with Grow Berlin Green and Maryland Coastal Bays, and generate a list of questions for our partners. Community partners come in to meet the students. They introduce themselves, explain how our students will assist them in person and answer any questions the students have. Throughout the year, in science, students use different types of maps to identify local areas of watershed and their importance to our environment. In science, they also learn the proper technique to plant a tree and grasses to prepare them to plant dune grasses along the beaches.

In art, students are preparing to paint rain barrels by learning about different types of paint and stain glass design.

In Integrated Language Arts, they prepare the students to write the informational fliers to be included with the rain barrels, by analyzing several sets of directions and deciding what makes "easy to read," but good directions.

Last, but not least, students are prepared in etiquette. They need training on how to speak to community partners, adults and volunteers.

Created: 1/4/11