



SERVICE LEARNING

Educator Guide | Integrating service with learning goals



Inspired by National Geographic Channel's *He Named Me Malala*.

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HE NAMED ME MALALA



We at National Geographic are excited to offer this Service Learning Educator Guide for you to plan, develop and implement service learning projects in your classroom. Inspired by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Malala Yousafzai and her remarkable work as a leading global activist for girls' education, this educator guide draws on the groundbreaking documentary *He Named Me Malala*, featured on National Geographic Channel. This film, based on the book "I Am Malala," provides intimate insight into her relationship with her family, and her powerful global impact. We hope you take advantage of this resource and that it inspires you to execute a service learning project in your school or community in the same spirit that Malala and the film about her life inspired us to create it.

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Why Service Learning?

In a special education classroom at Hall Fletcher Elementary School in Asheville, North Carolina, a student with cerebral palsy plays a video game by touching giant arrows made from play dough. Across the room, another student plays an online piano by stepping on giant “keys” made of aluminum tape applied to a tarp. Throughout the room, other students in the special education program play games using keyboards created especially for them. Watching them play are their

teachers and ten high school students from nearby Asheville School. The high school students look on at first with nervousness and then increasing pride. The keyboard designs the elementary students are testing represent weeks of work by the high school students—and a valuable learning experience. This is service learning.

Service learning combines learning goals with actions that benefit individuals or communities. In their report “Learning In Deed,” the National Commission on Service-Learning describes



service learning as “a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.” (National Commission on Service-Learning 2002) What distinguishes service learning from volunteering or community service is the melding of the service and the learning, and the active learning that occurs as a result. Students who participate in these well-designed processes have the opportunity to apply their learning in real-world settings, to see how their learning benefits others, and to reflect on what they have done. Combining service with learning that provides context and focus on the social issues involved provides an important framework for civic education and an authentic outlet for learning in many disciplines.

Service learning represents the marriage of two concepts – community service and authentic education – that have benefits for students. Service learning provides an authentic educational experience, where students can both learn and apply their learning in real-world contexts. Research on quality service learning shows significant gains for students in academic engagement, academic performance, educational aspirations, acquisition of 21st century skills, community engagement, and personal and social skills. (Theriot 2009) Studies have shown that students who participated in quality service-learning experiences scored higher on achievement measures, including standardized tests. (Corporation for National and

Community Service 2007) Service learning is also highly motivational to students. Studies have shown higher attendance rates among students who participate in service learning. (National Commission on Service-Learning 2002) Service learning can have a positive impact on civic behaviors and social skills, as well. Studies have found a reduction in risky behaviors that can lead to arrest or pregnancy among students who participate in service learning. (Corporation for National and Community Service 2007) Service learning has also been shown to increase the likelihood that students will vote and participate in community organizations as adults. (Corporation for National and Community Service 2007) Service learning can be a valuable tool for increasing students’ motivation to learn and improving their academic success.

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An educator planning service learning activities.

Organizing the Learning

This guide includes a number of activities organized by a four-step process to maximize the benefit of service learning. These steps include exploring assets and needs in the community, planning a service, conducting that service, and communicating and reflecting on that service. This approach enables students to center their service around a need that is important to them, explore the social context in which their service will take place, and reflect on the service and their learning. This approach can work with any type of service, from direct action to fundraising, and



can be structured as individual, small group, or whole class projects. A number of activities are included in each step so educators can select the ones that work best for their students. A workbook is included to guide students through the steps of the process.

Learning Goals and Standards

In any service learning, it is important to keep the learning goals and standards that you want to address foremost in the planning process. Most service learning lends itself to the language arts and social studies standards listed below, but specific standards in science, math, foreign language, history, literature, physical education, and many other subject areas can also be addressed through service learning. Identifying standards early ensures that your service-learning experience will provide an authentic outlet for the application of your content standards.

- Common Core Language Arts
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W. 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 7.2, 8.2, 9-10.2, 11-12.2
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W. 3.4, 4.4, 5.4, 6.4, 7.4, 8.4, 9-10.4, 11-12.4
 - CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W. 3.7, 4.7, 5.7, 6.7, 7.7, 8.7, 9-10.7, 11-12.7
- Social Studies
 - 10: Civic Ideals and Practices

Project Size

Service learning can be conducted individually, in small groups, or as a whole class. No matter how the project is grouped, establishing milestones is key to having students work through the project step by step in a meaningful way. Regular peer reporting can also increase accountability.

Individual Service

Individual projects can best capitalize on students' individual interests and passions. The actual service can be done outside of class, if needed, without the need to coordinate among multiple students.

Tips for Individual Service

- ▶ **Tracking Progress:** When managing individual projects, track students' progress by having them turn in an initial proposal (a template is provided in the workbook) and by having them turn in brief progress reports at each milestone. This will allow you to help redirect students if a project is veering off course.
- ▶ **Peer Support Groups:** Even though students are working on individual projects, they can still benefit from peer support. Create peer support groups of three or four students. These groups should meet briefly but regularly during the process so group members can report on their progress to their peers and ask for help when they hit stumbling blocks. Peer support groups will help keep students accountable for showing progress and enable

them to vocalize what they are learning informally throughout the process. Students can also provide mutual support if a need arises for more people to join in a particular experience.

- ▶ **Project Wall:** A project wall, either virtual or physical, can also help students process thoughts and experiences throughout the process. This can be an actual wall in your classroom where students place sticky notes, a bulletin board, or an online application, such as a scrapbook or private Facebook page. Invite students to post brief reflections, share experiences, and provide information they have found valuable. Keep requirements for posting minimal so the items shared have real meaning to the student. Encourage the use of the wall by sharing key posts with the class on a regular basis. This wall can provide motivation for students and a tangible way to share the learning that is taking place with parents, administrators, and other interested parties.

Whole Class Service

The active service time for whole class service can be easier to coordinate for younger students and students who may not have the ability to arrange transportation for themselves outside of class. In addition, whole class service can be easily coordinated with units of study so that the topic of the service connects to what is being learned in class. A whole class grouping is particularly appropriate for event projects that require a larger effort.

Tips for Whole Class Service

- ▶ **Project Selection:** Involve students in selecting the service project in which the class will participate. Depending on the age of the students and your focus, there are several ways to go about this:
 - Offer several choices and let students vote or come to a consensus. This option makes it easier to plan in advance by coordinating with specific organizations, but it allows the least ownership for students, so it is not the best option.
 - Brainstorm some community needs. Assign students to further research these needs and report back to the class. You might also provide students with a specific topic related to your classroom studies and brainstorm ways students can address this topic.
 - Have students research and propose their own ideas for service projects, then let the class decide which to pursue based on a class vote or consensus agreement.
- ▶ **Goals:** Set goals for your project as a class, but also have individual students set goals for their own participation.
- ▶ **Assigning Tasks:** Once you have a project, work as a class to specify the tasks and responsibilities needed to accomplish this

project. Assign tasks or responsibilities to individuals or small groups of students. Allow students to self-identify roles and responsibilities that build upon their personal interests, skills, and talents. Have students report to the group on their progress throughout the project.

Small Group Service

Small group projects can provide some of the benefits of both individual and whole class projects. They offer an opportunity for students to select a project that is in their area of interest, while also collaborating fully with peers. Small groups can more easily coordinate outside of class for the actual service action. Because there are fewer projects overall, it may also be possible to facilitate service action during the school day.

Tips for Small Group Service

- ▶ **Tracking Progress:** When managing small group service, track groups' progress by having them turn in an initial proposal (a template is provided in the student workbook) and by having them turn in brief progress reports at each milestone. This will allow you to help redirect groups if a project is veering of course.
- ▶ **Group Roles:** To keep all students active and invested in the project, have students assign group members specific responsibilities. Relevant responsibilities will depend on the

specific project, but some ideas are: leader, treasurer (if money is involved), teacher liaison, communications manager (to make sure all group members are aware of meeting times, tasks, etc.), community partner coordinator (to manage all communications with any organization with whom the group is working), and editor (to review all papers, outside communications, etc.). Group members may take on more than one role.

- ▶ **Peer Catch-ups:** To help keep groups accountable for all milestones, hold peer catch-ups. Create small peer groups composed of no more than one member from each service group. Have each peer group member report on their service group's progress, seek peer help for any stumbling blocks, and share any interesting or meaningful experiences they have had. Give two or three peer groups a chance to share something from their catch-up session with the class.
- ▶ **Project Wall:** As described in the Tips for Individual Projects section, create a physical or virtual space where students can share experiences, information, and reflections on an ongoing basis.



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Increase motivation by allowing students to select their service learning project.

Exploring—Finding Your Passion

Among the benefits of service learning are the relevance it has for students and its ability to intrinsically motivate them. To best maximize these benefits, students should be as actively involved as possible in selecting their service. The activities in this section are designed to help students expand their knowledge of needs in their community and ways in which they can help.

Activities

Brainstorming

- Have students use the brainstorming section of their workbook to brainstorm some areas of need in the community. Give them just two or three minutes to jot down their ideas. Remind students that brainstorming means listing everything you can think of quickly, without comment or judgment.
- As a whole class, brainstorm some general topic areas of community needs, such as hunger, homelessness, or animals. Students can offer ideas from their brainstorm list, as well as new ideas.
- Divide students into smaller groups and have them continue brainstorming. Ask them to use a web concept map to drill down some of the high-level topics that interest them. For example, when brainstorming hunger, they might drill down to children, seniors, or homeless populations, among others. Encourage them to get more specific and introduce more local or personal issues that are important to them.
- Use prompts to expand students' thinking during the whole class and small group brainstorming: What are some issues that affect the environment? Individuals or families?



What are problems you have seen or experienced? What are some issues you hear others discuss? What are some issues that may be important to young people that maybe aren't as important to adults?

- After students have brainstormed, display all the lists and concept maps from each of the small groups. Give students different colors of markers and have them put their initials beside any of the ideas from brainstorming that they are interested in. Then have them go back and list these ideas in the Possible Service Learning Project Topics section of their workbooks. They can reference these lists when selecting

ideas to research for a service. The class lists can serve as a starting point for organizing into small groups by interests or narrowing down topics for whole class service.

Inspiring Stories

- As inspiration, share examples of two or three services that other students have done. These can be from your personal experience or you can find examples at DoSomething.org, the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards webpage, or the Odyssey Angels website.
- Have students research some service projects led by students. You can direct them to the websites from the previous step or have them search online.
- Allow students to briefly present their favorite service projects to the class.
- Have students jot down any ideas they get in the Possible Service Learning Project Topics section of their workbook.

Community Walkabout

- At least a week before your walkabout, send home permission slips and arrange for additional chaperones

so you can have one adult for every six to eight students. Select an area where students will be able to observe a variety of people, infrastructure, and services available to your community.

- Before beginning your walkabout, divide students into groups of six to eight students. Within each group, assign two or three students to focus on the following: physical infrastructure, humans, services/buildings. Make sure each student has a notebook and pencil to take notes and draw observations. Have some students use cameras to document observations.
- Take students to your selected location. Have the chaperones walk in different directions with their groups of students. Have students observe the area as they walk, focusing on their assigned topic.
- Back in the classroom, discuss what you saw. Have students point out things they had never noticed before. Have them point out problems they observed, as well as positive things they observed.
- Have students summarize important observations in the Community section of their workbooks.



Survey with Community Members

- Introduce students to a few examples of surveys. Discuss what makes a good survey and what makes a good survey question. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of fixed-response and open-ended survey questions. This resource is a useful reference: Science Buddies (http://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project_ideas/Soc_survey.shtml)
- Divide students into small groups. Explain that groups will create a survey to find out what community members believe are pressing needs for their community on a local, national, and international level. Have each group write a purpose statement for their survey and decide what types of questions they will ask (i.e., open-ended, fixed response, or a combination).
- Next, have students write a draft of their survey. Have groups exchange surveys, answer their partner group's survey, and give feedback. Give groups a chance to revise their survey based on peer feedback. Collect the surveys and provide feedback for students to use to create a final draft.
- Have students distribute their questionnaires to at least ten people. When the questionnaires are returned, have

students use their math skills to compile the results and share them with the class. Discuss any trend you see.

- Have students summarize what they learned through the questionnaires in the Community section of their workbooks. Have them add any ideas they were inspired by to the Possible Service Learning Project Topics section.

What Do I Want to Learn? Starting with the Curriculum

- Have students review learning objectives for your specific course subject.
- Discuss how these learning objectives could be applied to real-world problems. Ask: "Why do I need to learn the course knowledge and skills? How could I apply the knowledge and skills to solve a real problem? In what careers are these skills used, and how? How could I use these skills to make a real difference?"
- Make a class chart of students' ideas for applications of the course learning objectives.
- Have students brainstorm in small groups potential community issues or problems that would allow them to learn and apply course objectives.

CASE STUDY: Malala Fund

What it is: The Malala Fund works to “enable girls to complete 12 years of safe, quality education so that they can achieve their potential and be positive change-makers in their families and communities.” (Malala Fund 2015)

Who is behind it:

Malala Yousafzai

Age when she started making a difference:

About 13



Courtesy of Fox Searchlight Pictures

Malala is a global advocate for girls who have been denied access to education.

Highlights: Malala has received many awards for her work in advocating for girls’ education, including Pakistan’s National Youth Peace Prize (2011), now called the National Malala Peace Prize; the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice (2012); the Simone de Beauvoir Prize for Women’s Freedom (2013); and the Nobel Peace Prize (2014). (National Geographic 2015)

What’s the story?

Malala Yousafzai was born in Mingora, Pakistan. Her father was a teacher and the founder of a

school, and he inspired Malala to highly value education. During her youth in Pakistan, religious extremists began to destroy schools in the country. One extremist group, the Taliban, was particularly opposed to secular education for girls. As schools were targeted, Malala began to speak up about the importance of education, especially for girls. She gave interviews and speeches and blogged about her beliefs. Malala continued to promote the importance of education even after she was threatened by the Taliban. In 2012, when Malala was 15, her school bus was attacked

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by the Taliban, and Malala was shot in the head. After undergoing treatment, including a partial skull reconstruction, Malala continued to speak out about the importance of education for girls. Her bravery and outspokenness won her many supporters throughout the world, and she used her fame to start the Malala Fund. (National Geographic 2015)

Malala’s work is important because girls still don’t have the same access to education as boys in some parts of the world, including Africa, Southeast Asia, and some parts of the Middle East. Education for girls is important for many reasons. For example, babies born to literate mothers are 50 percent more likely to live past the age of five. (National Geographic 2015) The World Bank reports that one extra year of education for a girl can enable her to earn 20 percent more as an adult. (National Geographic 2015) Today, the Malala Fund works in various ways to promote education for girls. In Nigeria, it has provided scholarships for 30 girls who escaped captivity by an insurgent group. In Kenya, funds have been used to build schools, and funds are currently being used to help Syrian refugees have access to education. (Malala Fund 2015)

Malala was inspired to take action by the importance she placed on education. Today, she is inspiring people around the world to recognize that importance and to help make a difference in the lives of girls around the world.

Discussion Questions:

- Is education a right or a privilege?
- Why do extremist and terrorist groups oppose secular or public education?
- How does access to a free and public education support a democratic society?
- Malala was inspired by education. What inspires you?
- Would you brave the dangers Malala braved in order to go to school? If not, what would you take a stand for?
- What problem did Malala identify in her community? What did she do to address this problem?

Learn more about Malala natgeoed.org/malala.



A concrete project plan includes defining project goals and a step-by-step plan.

Setting Goals and Planning

The activities in this section are designed to help students take the areas of interest they identified in the exploration activities and turn them into a concrete project plan. From this point forward, students should work with the group with whom they will conduct their service learning.



Activities

Research

- Ask students to narrow down their list of possible service topics by first eliminating any that are less interesting to them and then circling their top three choices. If students already know which topic interests them the most, they can move on to the next step. If they need help deciding, they can do some quick preliminary research or make pro and con lists. If students are working in a group, it is important that they decide on a topic area by consensus, rather than voting.
 - Once students have identified the area on which they want to focus, they should do some general research. Their goal is to become as informed about the topic as possible to help them better address it with their service project. Some things they might research include the prevalence of the need they are focusing on; what organizations work to address this need across local, state, regional, national, and international levels; and statistics and stories about people who are affected. Have students take notes on their research for use in a brief paper.
 - Have students use multiple resources, such as books, newspapers, interviews with school and community members, and surveys, to expand their research beyond a general Internet search.
- Have students write a brief paper describing the problem or need they plan to address and why it is important. This can become the first draft of the Background Information section for the Project Proposal described in their workbook.

Field Observation

- Have students identify a local organization—or a larger organization with a local presence—that addresses the topic on which they want to focus. Have them arrange to do an onsite observation or to volunteer with the organization for at least an hour.
- Have students record their observations in a notebook.
- Have students write a brief description of their observation or volunteer experience. Some questions they can consider are: What did you learn about the problem? What did you learn about how the problem is addressed? What did you do during your field experience? How will this help you address the need you identified? If desired, students can incorporate this description into the background information or description for their Project Proposal.



Interview

- Have students select either someone who works with an organization that addresses the problem/need they identified, a community member who is directly affected by this problem/need, or another community member who is knowledgeable about the topic. For example, if they want to focus on homelessness, students might interview a worker at a homeless shelter or a person who is homeless.
- Once students have identified who they will interview, they should write questions for the interview. Encourage students to be prepared with possible follow-up questions, as well, to elicit more detail from the person they are interviewing. Students should draw on the background research they did, as well as their experience during the field observation, to craft these questions.
- Reinforce active listening and interview skills, such as eye contact, body language, maintaining focus on the topic, and opening and closing the interview, prior to conducting interviews.
- Have students partner with a classmate and practice asking their questions. Classmates should give feedback on both the interviewing process and questions, and students should revise based on this feedback and their own notes.
- If possible, students should conduct their interviews in person so they can adapt and adjust their questions based on the responses they get. Interviews may also be conducted over the phone. Students should record and transcribe their interview. This page suggests some useful resources on how to digitally record and transcribe an interview: <http://commons.trincoll.edu/jackdougherty/how-to-record-and-transcribe/>.
- If interviewees are invited to the classroom, have students prepare for and do all parts of the hosting, including inviting the person, notifying the office, escorting their guest to the classroom, and introducing their guest.
- Have students write thank you notes to interviewees. Guide them with a reflection prompt such as, “What struck me about your comments was . . .” or “I realized that . . .”
- When students have completed their interviews, they should write a summary of the interview and list the most important takeaways for their project.



Project Proposal

- Have students follow the prompts in their workbooks to work through each step of their Project Proposal:
 - *Background Information:* This section should be based on students' research and explain the topic area they will address with their project and why it is important.
 - *Project Description:* This section should give an overview of the service project they will do. Unlike the more general information in the background section, the information in this section should focus specifically on the service project students plan to conduct.
 - *Project Goal:* The project goal should be specific and brief. Students should use the final version of the goal they developed in the Set Goals section of their workbook.
 - *Step-by-Step Plan:* Students should use the step-by-step plan they developed in the Step It Out section of their workbook. As students are working on their plans, circulate around the room and help guide them to be specific and thoughtful about each step of the plan. It may help to do the first and last steps first, then fill in the middle steps.
 - With group projects, the students may want to build a physical word wall using index cards, add the steps, and rearrange them as they re-evaluate.
- Once students have completed their proposals, place them in small peer review groups. (If they are working in small groups for their service project, form new groups with no more than one member of a service group.) Have students share their proposals with their peer review group and get feedback. Students should revise their proposals based on peer feedback.
- Proposals for projects should be submitted to the teacher for approval before students begin the service project. When reviewing proposals, look for:
 - A strong goal and step-by-step plan
 - A realistic project
 - Potential pitfalls or holes in the plan
- Give students feedback and allow them to revise as needed.

CASE STUDY: Asheville School Computer Engineers

What it is: High school students in Asheville, North Carolina, used inexpensive Makey Makey technology to design custom keyboards to enable elementary students with disabilities to play video games.

Who is behind it: Ten high school students taking a computer science course at Asheville School.

Age when they started making a difference: 15-18

Highlights: This project was featured in a TEDTalk at TEDxGreenville and in a workshop at the MakEdu Making Educational Conference at the Atlanta Maker Faire. The project involved a group of high school students that developed innovative assistive technology applications for elementary students with disabilities.

What's the story?

Inspired to provide computer science students at Asheville School in Asheville, North Carolina, with a more meaningful, authentic learning experience, educator Tom Heck volunteered to help a group of high school computer science students with a project to design assistive technology for elementary students with disabilities. After finding a partner in nearby Hall Fletcher

Elementary School, the students' first step was to meet the elementary students they would be helping, as well as their teachers, and hear and see firsthand the difficulties these students faced in using computer programs.

After this initial meeting, the high school students learned to use the Makey Makey, which is a small, inexpensive circuit board that can be connected to any conductive object, enabling that object to serve as a computer key. For example, users can operate the space bar by touching a banana or the right arrow by touching play dough. Next, the high school students selected video games for the elementary students to play. They then planned and created prototypes for keyboards that would address some of the difficulties the elementary students experienced. For example, a student with cerebral palsy—a disease which, among other things, affects fine motor skills—had difficulty pressing keys on a standard keyboard because they are too small and close together. The high school students addressed this issue by creating a keyboard with large play dough arrows and other keys needed to play the selected game. The Asheville School students tested and refined their prototypes, then returned to Hall Fletcher with prototypes in tow. Then it was the elementary students' turn to really test how effectively the high school students had designed for their special

needs. Some students played computer games using their feet on a large mat. Others were forced by the design of the keyboard to work collaboratively to accomplish goals in their game. The Asheville School students demonstrated, helped, and observed, taking ideas back to their classroom to reflect and assess the success of their project.

For organizer Tom Heck, the initial meeting with the Hall Fletcher students was key to the success of the project. Not only were the high school students able to gather information, but this meeting formed the “heart” of the project. According to Tom, “After this meeting, it was no longer about completing the project for some grade. It was about getting this done for those kids.”

Discussion Questions:

- For this project, how did the high school students gather information?
- How is the process followed by the students in this project similar to the engineering process? The students involved in this project used their knowledge of computer programming and their creativity to solve a specific problem faced by nearby

elementary students. What knowledge and skills do you have that you could use to help others?

- Do you think this project was important? Why or why not?
- Do you think the outcome of this project would have been different if the high school students had been given a description of the challenges faced by the elementary students instead of seeing those difficulties for themselves? Why or why not?

Learn more about this project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noGF9Gak1QY>



Integrating with Subject Areas

Learning is what distinguishes service learning from a service project. Service learning can be integrated into most aspects of the curriculum and can serve as a vehicle to address learning standards. In fact, service learning projects often lend themselves to a multidisciplinary approach. Below are a few ways service learning can be integrated into various subject areas.

Integrating with Social Studies

- Analyze surveys in preparation for creating a survey tool to gather information.
- Listen to interviews (see Story Corps <https://storycorps.org/> for brief and compelling interviews) and analyze what is and isn't successful.
- Combine service learning with a study of civics and government. For example, have students learn about roles within local government while advocating for a specific change in their community.
- Connect current community issues to historical events and trends.

Integrating with Language Arts

- Meet research standards by researching topic areas for a service learning project.
- Service learning projects incorporate writing, including proposals, letters and emails, and in communicating the results of the project.
- Incorporate a multimedia presentation as part of communicating the results of the project.
- Pair a service learning project with relevant literature. For example, incorporate a service learning project dealing with homelessness with reading *Maniac Magee*.
- Incorporate persuasive writing skills in advocacy projects by having students write public service announcements or present to government officials or a community board.



High school student applies reading and math skills by tutoring another student.

Integrating with STEM

- Focus service learning on a topic you are covering in science. For example, conduct an advocacy campaign on the effects of drugs and alcohol on adolescents as part of a biology class, or have students propose service actions when studying the effects of climate change.
- Use the engineering process to develop solutions to real-world problems that are close to home. For example, a group of middle school students in California engineered a device that would allow a quadriplegic student to play cymbals by tapping his fingers so he could play with the marching band. (Odyssey Angels 2015)
- Use math and technology skills to analyze and represent data collected via surveys.

- Apply math skills with hands-on service such as constructing community garden beds, preparing food for a free meals program, or tutoring younger students on specific skills.

Integrating with Other Subject Areas

- Physical Education: Have students propose ideas to benefit others with their knowledge of health and physical education. For example, they could play soccer with children with disabilities.
- Theater: Students could put on a show benefitting a favorite nonprofit organization or cause or to educate the community about a topic or issue.
- Art: Students could create an exhibit around a theme to advocate for a cause. They could also hold an art show and sell their work to raise money for a cause.
- Economics: Students could create business plans to turn a \$10 investment into as much money as possible and donate their earnings to a nonprofit organization or cause of their choice.
- Foreign language: Students can tutor English language learners, translate important documents for parents, or host events to promote cultural diversity.



Students collecting trash as part of a clean-up and recycling campaign.

Conducting the Service Action

The service action is the central component to any service learning. Many projects include more than one type of service action. Regardless of the type of project, students should document their event if possible with photographs and/or video. They should also engage in reflection after each service experience. The Activity Log in the workbook provides a space for students to summarize activities

after each session, and the Reflection section provides space for them to record thoughts and details throughout the service action. Design reflection activities that engage students in multiple ways throughout the service learning process.

Direct Action

In direct action service learning, students work directly with the people their actions will benefit, with animals, or the planet. Examples might include playing games with nursing home residents, reading to young children, or planting trees. Benefits of direct action service projects include enabling students to directly see who their service impacts. Students should prepare for direct action experiences by anticipating what they will encounter and challenging any stereotypical thinking or biases. Direct action experiences foster personal and social skills such as empathy, communication, and collaboration.

Tips

- ▶ Well in advance of the project, send home permission slips for parents.
- ▶ If you will be relying on students completing the actual service outside of class time, inform parents early on, and ask them to sign an agreement to assist their student with this aspect of the project. That way if some parents are

unable to assist, students can tailor their project accordingly or other transportation arrangements can be made.

- ▶ Obtain permission and make arrangements with any organization or community members students will be working with. Older students may be able to complete this step on their own, but should bring in signed permission for their project from the relevant person.



Family members help students organize collections for service learning projects.

- ▶ Finding relevant community organizations: Students may be aware of organizations with which they want to work or they may be easy to find through an online search. If not:
 - Contact your local United Way. United Way partners with a number of community organizations and may be able to direct you.
 - Have students refer to their research to identify potential partner sites.
 - Contact people or organizations in the relevant field. For example, if students want to work with pre-school children, call a local pre-school and ask what is necessary to make that happen.
 - If all else fails, call 2-1-1. This is a number set up to help people in need find the community services that can help them. They will have access to contact information for a variety of organizations.

- ▶ During the proposal phase, evaluate the safety of students' project and identify any areas of concern. If students will be working one-on-one with an adult, consider requesting a background check from the adult.

- ▶ Have students track their service hours using the Activity Log provided in the workbook.

Activities

- Preparatory Activity: Have students write a paragraph describing a time that someone helped them. They should include what their need was, how they were helped, and how it felt.

- Reflection Activity: Have students answer the following prompts in their workbooks: Describe who was helped by your actions. Reflect on something that you learned or saw that was important to you.



Students teaching a senior person how to use a computer.

CASE STUDY: Rockford Odyssey Angels

What it is: A team of elementary, middle, and high school students spent months teaching 18 senior citizens to use computer technology, enriching their lives by enabling them to communicate with loved ones, play games, and do other activities.

Who is behind it: Odyssey of the Mind participants from Rockford, Michigan

Age when they started making a difference: 8-15

Highlights: This team was selected as the 2013-2014 Odyssey Angels. They were invited to present their project at the opening

ceremonies of the 2014 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals, where more than 4,000 students from around the world were inspired by their story.

What's the story?

The Odyssey Angels program is a community service offshoot of the Odyssey of the Mind program, which stresses teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving. The Odyssey Angels program asks team to put those same skills to work to benefit their community. The Odyssey Angels team from Rockford, Michigan, did just that when they found a simple way to address a need they saw in the senior community. Team members noted that senior citizens in assisted living were often unable to travel outside their facility and could be hungry for conversation. They came up with a simple solution—students would spend time teaching senior citizens at nearby Richter Place Apartments to use technology to connect with loved ones they didn't get to see often. Students met with a gerontologist to learn more about the needs of seniors and created a survey tool to measure the success of the project. They then approached Richter Place about a partnership.

Students met with the seniors regularly over the course of several months. They encountered an unexpected problem when students' iPods and other devices were too small for the seniors to use, so the team raised funds to buy tablets for the seniors. Over time, the seniors

got more comfortable with the technology and with the students and began to direct their own learning. One 96-year-old resident expressed excitement about playing scrabble online. Another resident was able to get in contact with relatives she hadn't spoken to in over 50 years. Seniors weren't the only ones to benefit from the project. Team member Catherine Witte loves hearing the seniors' stories. Cheryl Micklus, director of the Odyssey Angels program, expressed her hope that this "simple but also thoughtful and creative" project would spread to other communities. (Honey 2014)

Discussion Questions:

- What steps did students take before beginning this project?
- How did students in this project directly help the seniors?
- What benefits did the seniors get?
- What benefits did the students get?

Learn more about this project: Odyssey Angels (<http://www.odysseyangels.org/content/2013-14-odyssey-angels>); Odyssey Angels Honored For Teaching Technology To Seniors (<http://www.schoolnewsnetwork.org/index.php/2013-14/odyssey-angels-honored-teaching-technology-seniors/>)



Indirect Action

Indirect action service projects are one step removed from the final recipient. These actions might include raising money for a cause, collecting winter coats for people that are homeless, or building a ramp for a person in a wheelchair. While students don't work directly with the people their project will benefit, they may meet them or even see them enjoy the final result. Some indirect actions can be easier to schedule than direct actions, and some can be done virtually, such as fundraising through social media or building a website for a community organization. Some indirect action projects can be done without leaving the school campus, such as school-based gardens or recycling. Some common types of indirect actions include fundraising events, drives (such as food or clothing drives), and work parties.

Tips

▶ Hosting events:

- Avoid spending money up front for your event. Instead, solicit donations for food, drinks, decorations, etc. The less money you spend up front, the more money you will make for your cause.
- Try to avoid times of year when there are many competing events. For example, many schools host a fall festival fundraiser, and the December holidays are often a crowded time for many people.

- Be sure to have contingency plans in advance for weather events or other complications.

▶ Conducting drives:

- Make drop-off locations easy and convenient for donors, such as the pickup line at school or a local grocery store.
- Remind, remind, remind! Get the word out through phone calls, email, social media, flyers, and posters.
- Give advance notice, then hold the event for a limited time—no more than one week.
- Plan time to go through the donations and remove any that don't fit the requirements.

▶ Holding work parties:

- Provide all safety and other equipment needed. For example, for a park cleanup, provide gloves and bags. Have a safety kit on hand, as well.
- If you can't provide a necessary item, alert volunteers well in advance so they can provide it.
- Have water and snacks on hand to sustain the work crew. A break spot in the shade or away from the cold is a good idea for any outside work.

▶ Avoid common pitfalls:

- Consider the pros and cons of fundraising within your school community, such as undue pressure on

economically challenged communities and saturation of multiple fundraising drives.

- Follow school board procedures to gain approval.
- When fundraising, emphasize involvement with the cause over the amount of money or goods raised.
- When fundraising, always include advocacy components related to addressing the underlying cause.
- Before beginning a campaign to raise money or donate items to a cause, have the students vet the organization that will be your beneficiary. You can find information and rankings for various organizations using tools such as charitynavigator.org and charitywatch.org. These tools use different criteria to rate charitable organizations, including how much of their money goes directly to benefitting the people they serve.
- Make sure your donations are currently needed by the organization you intend to benefit. In fact, well-meaning donations that are not solicited by an organization can actually impede people getting the help they need. For example, used items collected and sent in the wake of a natural disaster can take up space for more urgently needed supplies, such as medicine and shelter. If an organization is not directly requesting items, they would probably prefer a financial donation. Local organizations such as homeless shelters may be more

in need of in-kind donations, such as used clothing, than organizations working on a larger scale.

Activities

- Preparatory Activity: Discuss with students what they think makes a good charity organization or cause. Create an evaluation tool that they would use to vet an organization based on their criteria. Introduce some charity monitoring tools and discuss what criteria these tools use to evaluate organizations. Have students select a general topic, such as disaster relief or hunger, and use at least two charity ranking tools to identify one or two organizations that support that topic that they would recommend. Ask them to present the organizations and explain why they would recommend them.
- Reflection Activity: Have students answer the following prompts in their workbooks: Describe who was helped by your actions. Reflect on what you are most proud of about your service action and why.



High school students wearing prom dresses.

CASE STUDY: Becca's Closet

What it is: Becca's Closet is "a national, non-profit organization that donates formal dresses to high school girls who are unable to afford to purchase them." (Becca's Closet 2015)

Who is behind it: Rebecca Kirtman

Age when she started making a difference: 15

Highlights: From its simple beginnings as one girl's project, Becca's Closet has grown to include student-led chapters across

the country. The mission of the project has also expanded to honor other students who share Becca's spirit of generosity by awarding them with college scholarships.

What's the story?

During her freshman year in high school, cheerleader and honor student Rebecca Kirtman decided that no student should be unable to attend the prom because they couldn't afford a dress. She began a drive to collect gently used prom dresses and accessories and redistribute them to girls in need. During her sophomore year she personally redistributed 250 prom dresses to girls throughout South Florida. In August 2003, Becca, then 16, was killed in an automobile accident. To honor her memory, family and friends continued her work to help girls in need attend prom in style.

Today, Becca's closet has expanded from its beginnings in Florida to include chapters in states from Alaska to Pennsylvania. Chapters are student-led and provide locations for young people in need to come and select a dress. Becca's Closet now offers scholarships to young men and women who, like Becca, work to make a difference in their community.

Discussion Questions:

- What is unique about this project?
- Why is this project important?
- Do you think adults would be likely to think of a project like this? Why or why not?
- How do the girls who receive the donated dresses benefit from this project?
- Why might Becca's friends and family have chosen to continue and expand on her work? What can you infer about Becca from their actions?

Learn more about Becca and the organization she inspired:
<http://www.beccascloset.org/beccas-closet-chapters/#>

Malala and Indirect Service

The Malala Fund conducts indirect service actions by raising money to fund a variety of projects around the world in support of girls' education. Projects like building schools for girls in Kenya will continue to benefit girls for years to come.

Advocacy

Advocacy campaigns seek to create change or raise awareness of a problem through grassroots or government action. For example, students might petition their city government to create a new park, use social media to spread the word about an injustice, conduct a campaign to get more people to visit a local preserve, or create public service announcements for broadcast in the school to prevent bullying. These campaigns can have the benefit of focusing learning on the complexities of government actions and policy. They also have the potential to be controversial, so care should be taken with the causes for which students advocate. Some common types of advocacy campaigns include social media, community events, petitions and meetings with government officials, and awareness campaigns. During advocacy projects, guide students to explore the root causes of the societal issues behind the problem area. Because advocacy projects engage students in deeper thinking, social analysis, and persuasive expression, they are excellent strategies for increasing higher-order thinking and academic outcomes. Student voice and choice

during advocacy projects can enhance social and emotional skills such as efficacy, ethical and moral responsibility, and communication.

Tips

► Strategies for a social media campaign:

- Use an image with every post or tweet to make it more visible.
- Get the main point of your message across in as few characters as possible so it will be seen “above the fold.”
- Create an event page so you can regularly update people who are interested. Use other social media posts to point to this central page.
- Post regularly, but no more than daily. Vary your posts so they stay interesting. If you are hosting an event, gradually increase your posts from once a week to daily as the time for the event or action gets closer to build excitement.
- Identify community or special interest pages that may be interested in your action and post your event to those groups. Keep your event visible to

Malala and Social Media

Malala has made very effective use of social media in her fight to increase girls' access to education. Malala first came to international attention through her blog, and the trending of #withMalala has helped spread the word about her cause.

others by regularly commenting on it to bump it to the top.

- Decide on a hashtag for your event and incorporate it in all posts and tweets.

► Finding community media partners:

- Getting the word out is key to any advocacy campaign. Depending on what students are advocating, they may want to focus their campaign on their school, local community, or a wider audience.
- If you are looking for a wider local audience, enlist the help of community media partners. Have students make a list of all the media outlets in their local area. These could include newspapers, TV stations, radio stations, and even blogs.
- Students should research the websites of each media outlet for ALL relevant contacts and create a list of contacts, their phone number, email address, and physical address, as well as what their “beat” or specialty is. Often reporters will focus on certain types of stories, and your project may be of

potential interest to more than one reporter at each media outlet.

- Have students create a base press release that contains all the important information for your campaign. This should also include a way to contact students for additional information. Then encourage students to tweak or “spin” that base release to better fit a particular media outlet or individual contact’s area of interest. For example, if a reporter covers human interest stories, they may want to stress how this issue affects a particular individual to make the story more personal. If the reporter covers education, they may want to focus the release on their own role in the campaign. If there is a large number of contacts identified, students could create categories and send the same tweaked version to everyone in that category (e.g., education or human interest). Alternatively, students could pick a few high-value targets and send the basic press release to other contacts.

- Include photos with your press release. Having photos will help capture the reporter's attention.
- Encourage students to follow up with high-value contacts to confirm that they received the press release and to offer to answer any questions. They can follow up via phone or email.

▶ Hosting events:

- Avoid spending money up front for your event. Instead, solicit donations for food, drinks, decorations, etc. The less money you spend up front, the more money you will make for your cause.
- Try to avoid times of year when there are many competing events. For example, many schools host a fall festival fundraiser, and the December holidays are often a crowded time for many people.
- Be sure to have contingency plans in advance for weather events or other complications.

▶ Coordinate with existing awareness campaigns:

- Some causes have an existing month or week dedicated to awareness of that cause. Breast Cancer Awareness Month is one example. Students should research to see if there are existing awareness campaigns with which they can coordinate their actions. To find a list of awareness weeks and months go to America's Charities (<https://www.charities.org/>) and search for the Cause Awareness Calendar.

▶ Presenting to government officials or community boards:

- Have students do outreach to schedule the presentation.
- Have students work collaboratively to prepare and rehearse their PowerPoint or other presentations.
- Have students identify roles and responsibilities for the presentations.
- Have students prepare a handout or takeaway for the officials.
- Have students follow up with the officials to seek their feedback, learn about next steps, and to thank them for their attention to their concerns.

Malala and Advocacy

Malala is a well-known advocate for girls' education. As the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Malala is uniquely positioned to reach a global audience with her message of the importance of education for girls around the world.

► Vet Your Cause:

- Before beginning an advocacy campaign for a charitable organization, vet the organization that will be your beneficiary. You can find information and rankings for various organizations using tools such as charitynavigator.org and charitywatch.org. These tools use different criteria to rate charities, including how much of their money goes directly to benefitting the people they serve.
- If you are advocating for something other than an organization, vetting the cause can be trickier. If advocating for political action, do due diligence to ensure that the action matches students' intentions.

Activities

- Preparatory Activity: Have students find examples of highly effective advocacy campaigns and analyze what makes them successful. Then have students brainstorm at least five reasons their charitable organization or cause is worth supporting.

- Reflection Activity: Have students answer the following prompts in their workbooks: Describe someone who may have been helped by your actions. Reflect on what you are most proud of about your service action and why.

CASE STUDY: Make-a-Wish Ambassador

What it is: The Make-a-Wish Foundation grants wishes to children with a life-threatening medical condition. Make-a-Wish ambassadors advocate for the organization by speaking at public events and helping to spread the word about what the organization does, who it serves, and why it is important.

Who is behind it: Lilly Mills

Age when she started making a difference: 15

Highlights: After benefitting from Make-a-Wish herself, Lilly now gives back by speaking at events to raise awareness that Make-a-Wish benefits not only terminally ill children, but also children who have to manage a life-threatening illness.

What's the story?

Lilly Mills is a busy 16-year-old. Besides the classes she takes as a high school junior, she also acts in local theater productions, works part-time with children at a local community theater, and is a member of her high school's a cappella team, as well as the science and music honor societies. Lilly also lives

with CVID, an immune system disorder that prevents her body from making enough antibodies. This disease takes a daily toll, making sufferers highly susceptible to bacteria and other foreign invaders and often leading to chronic infections. In February 2014, Make-a-Wish granted Lilly's wish to meet her favorite stage actors Norbert Leo Butz, Brian d'Arcy James, and Aaron Tveit. With her family, she traveled to New York, where she attended Broadway shows, visited the Empire State Building, and, of course, met her favorite stage actors.

It was while making the arrangements to make Lilly's wish come true that Make-a-Wish coordinator Meredith noticed how articulate and well-spoken Lilly is and recruited her as an ambassador. Lilly is glad to give back to the foundation that she believes gives kids with life-threatening illnesses a much-needed boost. As an ambassador, Lilly helps put a face to the program, making it more personal for donors. She also uses her position to raise awareness that all children who live with a life-threatening illness—not just those who are terminally ill—are invited to make a wish. Lilly helps find children in her local area who may be eligible for the program and don't know it.

Lilly says many people misunderstand the foundation's mission and think it applies only to terminally ill children. So children suffering from some diseases that are on the foundation's list of qualifying illnesses may not even realize they have the option to make a wish, even though their illness makes it difficult to lead a normal life—sometimes because they are too sick and sometimes because the costs associated with a lifelong illness can leave little money for anything else. She mentions Eric, whose wish was to go to Disney World. Though he lived nearby, he had never been able to go because managing his chronic heart condition didn't leave much for extras. Lilly says it is important to reach those children because she “never thought that I would be able to make a wish. When people have a lifelong illness they can't afford to give into it. Sometimes it is a struggle to find anything positive. Make-a-Wish recognizes and acknowledges that struggle and the wishes give those kids a boost to help push them through a little longer.”

Discussion Questions:

- Why is Lilly a good choice to be an advocate for Make-a-Wish?
- Does hearing a little bit of Lilly's story help you to better understand the value of the Make-a-Wish Foundation?
- How does Lilly's advocacy benefit other children with life-threatening illnesses?

Learn more about Make-a-Wish: <http://wish.org/>

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Student reflecting on the outcomes of a service learning project.

Demonstrating and Reflecting

Allowing students the time to process and reflect on their experiences adds value to their service learning experience. By evaluating their own role in the project, students can practice using a growth mindset to improve their own learning. Reflection should occur during all phases of the project and should include modalities in addition to writing, such as discussion, movement, art, music, or film. Students can design reflection activities—challenge them to be innovative and creative. Reflecting on the project as a whole helps students be better prepared for future projects



and reinforces the content learning that supported their project. Identifying next steps provides a framework in which students can begin to explore an iterative process important in many fields, including engineering. Finally, communicating with others gives students an authentic audience with whom to share their experience.

Demonstrating Service Learning Outcomes

Demonstrating project outcomes can take many forms. If possible, provide students with basic parameters and allow them to determine in what form they will share their learning outcomes. Parameters for communicating outcomes should include demonstration of both the academic learning objectives as well as the service objectives. You may want to ask students to think about how they will demonstrate their learning before their service project so they can take video or photos to support their demonstration. Some possibilities for presentations include:

- TEDTalk: TEDTalks are brief, engaging, live presentations involving multimedia. Students can create a TEDTalk and present it live to parents, other students, and community members.
- Video: Students can shoot video during their service experience. For events, students may also want to film during preparation. They can edit this footage and add audio using Windows Movie Maker or other free video editing programs. Be sure to get permission before taking video, particularly if posting online.
- Website: Students can use a free web platform such as Weebly or Webnode to create a webpage about their service experience. These platforms are simple to use so students will be able to create their page without any specialized knowledge. Using a website to communicate about their project allows students to integrate text, video, and images, and may be a good choice if the audience is unable to gather for a live presentation.
- Written Presentation: Students can write a detailed case study of their experience with service learning.
- Poster Session: Students can create poster displays that use text, images, and artifacts to reflect their service learning experience. Have students set their poster presentations up in one room and designate a time when visitors can tour the displays and ask students questions about their projects. This is a low-tech presentation solution that can be done in far less time than individual presentations.
- Authentic Product: Students may present a product, such as an invention, a published book, or the launch of a website designed for a community partner. Students can determine what product best demonstrates their learning.
- Culminating Event: Students can plan and host a culminating event where they demonstrate their learning and service outcomes via some sort of presentation or launch. The event also serves to signal closure and to recognize the students and their community partners in a celebratory manner.

Malala as Communicator

Communicating about community service work can sometimes serve as an inspiration to others. The film *He Named Me Malala* tells the truly inspirational story of Malala's life and the important work she continues to do advocating for educational opportunities for girls.

Reflection

- Place students in small groups to discuss what worked well and what could be improved with their service learning project. If students worked in small groups for the project, allow them to stay in those same groups for reflection.
- Ask each small group to write down a list of advice they would give to other students who wanted to complete a similar service project. If students completed individual service learning projects, they should complete this step individually.
- Have students complete the Self-Evaluation Rubric in their workbook individually. Encourage them to use specific examples to justify the rating they assign themselves for each part of the project.

Next Steps

- Working again in small groups, have students discuss what they would like to do next. Would they like to apply their learning to another service action? Would they like to continue with the service work they started

in this project? What additional steps could they take to further address the problem/ need they identified?

- As a class, discuss whether students think the service they did could serve as a model for other students to follow. How could they facilitate that? Brainstorm some ideas for ways to share how to complete a similar service project with other students. What would these new students need to know?
- If students are motivated to take additional action based on their experiences, provide support for their efforts.

Assessing Content Learning

To ensure that students are addressing the content learning goals for their service learning, create a rubric to assess how they meet these goals. Provide students with the rubric early in the process. Alternatively, have students write an explanation for each content learning goal, explaining how their service learning addressed that goal.



Appendix

Vocabulary

Advocacy: a type of service learning in which students seek to make social change through grassroots, community, or government action

Authentic education: a type of learning that connects what students are taught with real-world applications

Direct action: a type of service learning that involves students working directly with the people, animals, or the planet they are trying to help

Indirect action: a type of service learning in which students work for the benefit of a population without working with that population directly

Service learning: a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities

Resources for Further Study

Edutopia: Service Learning: <http://www.edutopia.org/blogs/tag/service-learning>

Malala Education Resources: <http://education.nationalgeographic.org/malala>

DoSomething.org: <http://www.DoSomething.org>

Prudential Spirit of Community Awards: <http://spirit.prudential.com/view/page/soc>

Odyssey Angels: <http://www.odysseyangels.org/>

Background Resources

Service Learning K-12: <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/servicelearning/>

National Coalition for Academic Service-Learning: <http://ncasl.org/>

Learning In Deed: The Power of Service Learning for American Schools: http://ed253jcu.pbworks.com/f/LearningDeedServiceLearning_American+Schools.PDF

Engaging Students Through Service Learning: <http://nylc.org/2015/12/11/engaging-students-through-service-learning/>

Unpacking What Works in Service Learning: <http://www.msde.maryland.gov/NR/rdonlyres/CEFD2869-9129-46A3-91CE-443928D1ED6C/24876/UnpackingWhatWorksInServiceLearning.pdf>



The Impact of Service Learning: A Review of Current Research: http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/issuebrief_servicelearning.pdf

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