Special Topics, General

Special Topics in Service Learning

1993

Fairy Tale Friends

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Recommended Citation

Fairy Tale Friends - Mary Chamberlain

OVERVIEW - Theme of unit/Need the unit will meet

As students grow into responsible citizens, they need to realize that the quality of their lives is affected by the quality of the relationships in their lives.

This Community Service Learning Unit - Fairy Tale Friends - was designed as part of the Language Arts, English and Reading, curriculum. Middle School students will work on a Fairy Tale Unit. They will learn characteristics of Fairy Tales and fiction, using strategies of the writing/reading process, and cooperative learning. After the completion of the unit, they will work with elementary students, helping them write Fairy Tales.

Part two of their instruction will be Life Skills - how to interact with younger students as mentors and academic coaches. The purpose of Fairy Tale Friends is to establish a friend/coach relationship. Too often, because of TV, the fast pace of our society, working parents, etc., young children today feel isolated and alone and do not develop the skill of conversation. They need people in their lives who are role models in an academic and social sense.

This Community Service Learning Unit was designed to provide these role models. Although a specific Language Arts skill - writing Fairy Tales - is used as the vehicle to create these relationships, any academic or speciality subject curriculum could be used. This unit was also designed for at-risk Middle school students. However, it could be used with any heterogeneous grouping. Developing quality relationships is not limited to any special group. It is a worthy life-long goal of every individual.

SERVICE EXPERIENCE: Fairy Tale Friends

LEARNING OUTCOMES/CURRICULUM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING GOALS.

I. Students will increase their capacity of reading and writing skills by

    1. Demonstrating knowledge of fiction and fairy tale characteristics

    2. Using reading process to discover characteristics of fairy tales

    3. Showing an understanding of the reading process through demonstration of focused reading to younger children

4. Using process writing to write fairy tales

5. Applying knowledge of process writing by coaching younger children to write fairy tales

II. Students will effectively participate in learning/teaching activities by

1. Developing an awareness of "early writing" characteristics

2. Demonstrating knowledge of learning styles and teaching strategies as they work with younger children

III. To value, understand, and develop interpersonal relationships, each student will

1. Seek to create an interpersonal relationship with a younger child by learning the art of conversation with younger children

2. Work cooperatively with each other and younger students when writing fairy tales

3. Recognize and demonstrate the responsibility of each individual in developing a quality relationship

RESOURCES:

1. Partnership School
2. Whole Language/Early Childhood Expert
3. Life Skills Teacher
4. Local Art Store
5. Library

DESCRIPTION OF CURRICULUM/COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING ACTIVITIES:

STEP I. In-class Fairy Tales with Peer Partners

1. Learning Log Activity: Write for 8-10 minutes on "Everything I Know About Fairy Tales." Pair-share with a partner. Write for two more minutes. Have some volunteers share with the class. Using the information in their Learning Logs, begin to formulate a working definition of a fairy tale. Put on classroom chart.

2. Reading Activities:
   a. Read fairy tales to the class.
   b. Students read fairy tales individually.
   c. Learning Log Activities:
      1. Relate to personal experience - For example, before reading Goldilocks and the Three Bears, give students these journal starters:
         -One time I went into someone's room or used someone's things without permission
         -One time someone went into my room or used my things without permission
      2. Investigate fairy tale characteristics - after reading a fairy tale, list the characteristics found in that fairy tale
      3. Compare and contrast - read different versions of the same fairy tale and write about the similarities and differences
      4. Life Skills - After reading a fairy tale, write about the moral dilemma in it. Ex. Hansel and Gretel killing the witch
      5. Themes - List and write about the theme/s in the fairy tale.
      6. Movies - Compare and contrast the film version to the book.

(Learning Log Activities help focus students on the task at hand and help them gather and collect fairy tale information.)

3. Process Writing
   a. Teach or review writing process - prewriting, drafting, conferring, revising, and editing.
   b. Mini-lesson Ideas:
      1. Leads - setting quickly established as well as characters and conflict
      2. Development and organization - beginning, middle, and end
      3. Story map - See attached diagram.*
         * From Fairy Tale Unit with Hope Berard and Nancy Gagnon
      4. Repetition of phrases/unusual phrases
      5. Magical numbers - 3,7
      6. Conclusion - happy ending; justice prevails
      7. Characterization - usually flat; good/evil; kings, queens, princes, princesses, animals
      8. Major themes - virtue is rewarded, power of love, kindness and mercy, inner quality more important than appearance/power, weak and the innocent/evil and power
      9. Conflict has resolution

10. Motifs - supernatural beings, magical objects or power, recurring tasks/wishes - usually 3, long sleep, magical transformation, trickery, romance - hero sets forth on journey

c. Task - to write an original fairy tale or a fractured fairy tale with a partner

d. Teach cooperative learning strategies:
1. sharing tasks
2. listening to partner
3. reaching consensus
4. discussing ideas productively
5. negotiation and compromise

e. Learning Log activities - Writing process
As students begin to write with their peer partner, have them reflect about the process. Sample journal starters:
1. Is it easy? Why?
2. What is difficult about writing the tale? Why?
3. What is one obstacle you overcame? How?
(Concentrate on both processes - writing and working together cooperatively. These logs can then be used as a guide as they plan their activities with the younger children.)

f. Write, revise, edit, and publish a fairytale.

STEP II: FAIRY TALES WITH YOUNGER STUDENTS

1. Learning Log activities: These activities are now focused on the Community Service Learning experience. Sample journal starters:
Before the experience:
What does Community Service mean to me?
What can I learn from this experience?
What are my expectations?
How do I need to prepare for this experience?
After the experience:
What did I learn from this Community Service Learning experience?
How did I feel about the experience?
How did I feel when things went well?
How did I feel when things didn't go well?
What did I learn about teaching younger students?

2. Preparation
   a. Design a fairy tale kit to bring with them - books, paper, markers, crayons, scissors, stapler, tape, etc.
   b. Write letters to art stores for donations of special paper for publication.
   c. Invite Early Childhood expert in to discuss:
      1. Characteristics of K-1 students - attention span, learning styles, etc.
      2. how to talk with young children, what is appropriate/inappropriate, how to help shy students overcome shyness
      3. characteristics of "early writing"

   d. Prepare a lesson plan for the visitation day - discuss different teaching strategies, effective ways to help learners learn, introduction and warm-up activities, story mapping, etc.

Culminating Service Activity:

1. Visitation Day - go to partnership school and write fairy tales with K-1 students.
2. Publish younger students' fairy tales and invite them to school for a Writers' Party to celebrate the publication.

REFLECTION:

1. The Learning Log is the primary source of recorded reflection. It is important to use the Learning Log while preparing for the experience and after the experience to record observations and feelings.

2. Pre- and post- survey on service experience - Refer to Section 2 under Assessment.

3. Group Discussions - Ask the following questions:
   1. Did we make an impact on our Fairy Tale Friends with this experience?
   2. What did we learn about working together cooperatively?
   3. What did we learn about responsibility?
   4. What did we learn about interpersonal relationships?
   5. What did we learn about role models in a community?

ASSESSMENTS:

1. Review the Fairy Tale Learning Log.
   a. Design a checklist of fairy tale characteristics.
   b. Write an original fairy tale.
   c. Refer to the checklist and self-evaluate the fairy tale for characteristics.

2. Pre- and post- survey on service experience:
   a. Describe some ways you act around younger children.
   b. Do you see yourself as a teacher? Why? Why not?
   c. Name things you have to do to work cooperatively with others.
   d. Do you have to be responsible when you are around younger children? If no, why not? If yes, why?
   e. How do you create a good relationship with another person?

3. Review the Community Service Learning part of the Learning Log. Write an organized piece on the experience. Suggested genres: poetry, play, letter, traditional report, fictional story

FAIRY TALE

LEAD - beginning

PLOT

CONCLUSION - ending - usually happy

CHARACTERS - magic animals, people, royalty, rich/poor, quickly established

1. Major theme - love, kindness
2. Magic
3. # 3 and # 7
4. good /evil
5. trickery
6. repetition
7. unusual phrases
8. suspense
9. wishes come true

NEW HORIZONS
Gerena Community School
Community Service Learning Project

REFLECTION/ASSESSMENT STATUS REPORT

A.   Following the May 5 visit to Chestnut Knoll Retirment Home, a
student survey was completed to discover student perceptions of
the visit; to compare expectations with actuality; and to help
determine the future direction of the project. A summary of the
responses follows.

QUESTION #1: What did you expect to see when you visited
Chestnut Knoll Retirement Home? Responses included: "An old house
with wierd stuff in it". "People who couldn't get around".
"Both men and women". "With energy to sing and move around".

QUESTION #2: WHAT DID YOU ACTUALLY FIND TO BE TRUE? "A group of
women who were very interesting and interested in many things."
"Able to share many wonderful life experiences". "Wonderful
people and a nice place". "People could get around." "I thought
we would talk more". "The house was great. Everything I thought
was the opposite".

QUESTION #3: What did you learn from the visit? "We need to
speak loudly, slowly, clearly". "They enjoy music very much".
"Old people can be lively". "Being old doesn't mean you're in-
capable". "Lots of fun". "They want someone to love them". "When
you grow up, you can still do lots of things". "Their favorite
songs". "We can learn from their experiences".

QUESTION #4: Which of our songs do you think was their favorite?
Why? "CRAWDAD - It had spirit" SING A SONG OF PEACE - It was
smooth; smiling, applause, familiar". "Patriotic songs". "CLOUDS
- Somebody said 'beautiful' after we were done"."AMIGOS - It had
a different language".

QUESTION #5: Do you remember anything humorous or touching about
our visit? "The 80 year old who said 'I wish we had men'. "One of
the ladies was crying". "When they asked each other questions".
"That we all had different names-different generations". The
lady who saw our shortest choir member and joked about her size.
"They made me laugh".

QUESTION #6: Do you think that it is valuable to make friends
with the elderly people of our community? Why? "Valuable lessons
in history". "We will be elderly and want to keep in touch with
young people and their ideas". "They have a lot to offer and they
can use the friendship". "They are no different than us". "A lot
of people don't visit the elderly". "They need to know we want to

be their friends". "Can teach each other things".

QUESTION #7: What songs do you remember as being their favorites? "America, the Beautiful", "America", "You Are My Sunshine", patriotic songs.

QUESTION #8: Would you enjoy learning some of their favorite songs? "Yes". "but not all of them".

A. Activities planned for the remainder of this academic year:
    1. Invite residents to our school concert, June 7.
    2. Learn some of the "old favorites" and sing them on our return visit, June 9. Invite residents to join us.
    3. Videotape the June 9 visit for critique by the chorus.
    4. Certificate of participation for students.

B. Looking ahead to the 1993-94 academic year:
    1. Continue monthly visits with select group.
    2. Invite residents to participate in occasional rehearsals of Choral and Piano groups at Gerena.

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