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Peace Crane Earring Project Meg Clayton's Sixth Grade Barnet, Vermont

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**PEACE CRANE EARRING PROJECT
MEG CLAYTON'S SIXTH GRADE
BARNET, VERMONT**

1. Description of Activity

This service learning project was conducted with a group of seventeen sixth-graders during the 1998/99 school year. It evolved out of another service learning project, which several of these students had participated in the previous year. As with the best of learning experiences, it ballooned and carried both students and teacher in exciting new directions.

In fifth grade, these students had participated in an international children's project to make and contribute one million paper cranes to the Sadako Peace Monument in Hiroshima, Japan. We learned of the project via the Internet. Because we had just read Ellen Coerr's moving novel, Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, about Sadako, a young WWII victim of the nuclear bombing of Japan, we were excited to participate. The students grew very skilled at folding cranes and successfully fulfilled the class quota of 1000 cranes for the monument. One student happened to notice that some of our tiniest cranes would make great earrings. She made a pair for her teacher. So many people complemented the teacher on these tiny cranes that students made more to sell to teachers and parents at our annual Fall Foliage Festival.

By selling these initial earrings for \$2.00 each, we were able to earn some seed money for a small business. Some students really enjoyed refining and reducing the size of these tiny earrings. These students became our production staff. Other students were very adept at assembling the earring hardware. They assembled the complete earrings while another crew packaged them. We conducted market research by polling prospective customers about the price they would be willing to pay for our newly refined product. Several students were assigned the mission of investigating the competition and reporting back to the class what the going price was for similar earrings. By early November we had used the seed money to buy earring fittings and origami paper, created a growing inventory of stock, and set our price at \$5.00 a pair.

The class decided to donate all of our profits to a charitable cause, as the spirit of folding paper cranes for peace is an altruistic one. We had been collecting money for UNICEF during Halloween. They decided to add the profits from our Peace Crane Earring business to that cause as well. Then Hurricane Mitch hit Central America. We followed the tragic results of the hurricane in our daily current event lesson. The students, moved by the plight of the people in Central America, unanimously decided that this particular cause was worthy of our business profits.

They mobilized to take advantage of the holiday shopping season and approached local businesses about displaying their earrings. A group of students attended the Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium Christmas Open House demonstrating crane folding and selling the earrings. They received newspaper coverage at that event and made contact with a student from the White Mountain Academy, who volunteered to sell the earrings for them in her school. The Museum Shop and two area merchants also agreed to sell the earrings. The class read a list of hurricane

horror facts at a school wide presentation and invited other classes to join ours in raising money to help hurricane victims. Two students contributed a thoroughly researched article about the Hurricane to our school newspaper.

By the end of the holiday season, the Peace Crane Earring Project had raised over \$600. The students proudly drafted a letter to UNICEF. They explained their project and asked that their contribution be given specifically to children in Central America whose lives had been destroyed by Hurricane Mitch. The business ended when the letter and the check were put in the mail. The students were very proud that they had raised so much money for such a worthy cause. They were also very proud to have created and operated such a successful business!

2. Service Learning Objectives

Students will identify a humanitarian cause requiring financial assistance by:

- reading and discussing current world events
- selecting a worthy cause that all students wish to assist
- brainstorming ways they can help out

Students will collaboratively design and operate a small craft business learning to:

- fold origami cranes
- assemble earrings
- package earrings
- design displays
- set prices
- keep accounts of expenses and profits
- market earrings
- advertise
- test-run and improve the product and business

Students will involve the community in their service project by:

- contacting local businesses for help
- advertising within the community
- educating the community about their chosen cause

Students will donate all profits from their business to their chosen charity by:

- communicating with receiving organization

Applied Academics

Students will apply geographic knowledge by:

- locating region on humanitarian relief on a world map

Students will problem solve by

- applying mathematics to real life situations
- keeping track of finances

- gathering and analyzing data
- pricing products

Students will communicate by

- writing news reports
- communicating with area businesses
- presenting the project orally to the community

3. Vermont Standards Addressed

VITAL RESULTS

COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

EXPRESSION STANDARDS

Notation and Representation

1.17 Students interpret and communicate using mathematical, scientific and technological notation and representation. This is evident when students

- aa. Appropriately represent data and results in multiple ways (e.g., numbers and statistics, drawings and pictures, sentences, charts, tables, equations, simple algebraic equations, models);

REASONING AND PROBLEM SOLVING STANDARDS

PROBLEM SOLVING

Problem Solving Process

2.2 Students use reasoning strategies, knowledge, and common sense to solve complex problems related to all fields of knowledge. This is evident when students:

- aa. Seek information from reliable sources, including knowledge, observation, and trying things out; bb. Evaluate approaches for effectiveness and make adjustments;
- cc. Consider, test, and justify' more than one solution;
- dd. Find meaning in patterns and connections; and
- ee. Select and apply appropriate methods, tools and strategies.

Improving Effectiveness (applies to grades 5-12 only)

2.4 Students devise and test ways of improving the effectiveness of a system.

This is evident when students:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of a system;
- Identify possible improvements;
- Test-run the improvements and evaluate their effects;
- Make changes and monitor their effects over time;
- Identify further possible improvements; and
- Test-run and evaluate results.

APPROACH

Application

2.6 Students apply prior knowledge, curiosity, imagination, and creativity to solve problems.

Taking Risks

2.8 Students demonstrate a willingness to take risks in order to learn.

Persevering

2.9 Students persevere in the face of challenges and obstacles.

Flexibility

2.12 Students modify or change their original ideas and/or the ideas of others to generate innovative solutions.

Product/Service

2.13 Students design a product, project, or service to meet an identified need.

This is evident when students:

- Identify a need that could be met by a product, project, or service;
- Justify the need and design the product, project, or service, researching relevant precedents and regulations; and
- Evaluate the results.

Planning/Organization

2.14 Students plan and organize an activity. This is evident when students:

- a) Develop a proposal for an activity, and obtain approval for it to take place;
- b) Plan and organize all aspects of the event (with adult supervision PreK-4 & 5-8); and
- c) Oversee all aspects of the event through to completion (with adult supervision PreK-4).

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

WORTH AND PERSONAL COMPETENCE

Civic/Social Responsibility Standards

Service

4.1 Students take an active role in their community. This is evident when students

- a. Plan, implement, and reflect on activities that respond to community needs; and
- b. Use academic skills and knowledge in real-life community situations.

RELATIONSHIPS

Teamwork

3.10 Students perform effectively on teams that set and achieve goals, conduct investigations, solve problems, and create solutions (e.g., by using consensus-building and cooperation to work toward group decisions).

Dependability and Productivity

3.14 Students demonstrate dependability, productivity, and initiative. This is evident when students:

- a. Attend school on a regular basis;
- b. Complete assignments on schedule; and
- C. Participate in classroom and group discussions.

Career Choices

- 3.15 Students know about various careers. This is evident when students:
- a. Describe the types of work done by their parents or other members of the community.
 - aa. Collect information about careers, and experience careers directly or indirectly through classroom work and community experiences such as job shadowing, working with a mentor or performing community service.

Learning Opportunities

A. ACCESS

INSTRUCTORS

A.2.2 Access to instructors who share their knowledge, who work with others to plan and assess curriculum, and

who themselves are continually learning. For example:

- b) Instructors working with others (e.g., colleagues, parents, other community members, and students) to plan and assess curriculum.

RESOURCES

A.3 Equitable and prompt access to accurate materials and current resources (in addition to textbooks) that are appropriate for learning goals. For example:

- a) Frequent opportunities to engage the community as a resource and a learning laboratory (e.g., learning from artists, businesses, health-care providers, town records, town meeting, community theater, the local landfill).

B. INSTRUCTION

AQUIRING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

B.1 Learning experiences that engage students in active learning, build on prior knowledge and experiences, and develop conceptual and procedural understanding, along with student independence. For example:

- e) Strategies that help students organize and interpret new learning (e.g., having students create graphs and charts, graphic representations, flow charts, distributed practice sessions).
- f) Questions that extend and refine learning (e.g., open-ended questions, error-analysis questions).
- g) Opportunities for students to bring up and explore their own misconceptions, and to replace these with accurate conceptions of knowledge.

VARIETY OF INSTRUCTOR ROLES

B.2 Teachers who use a variety of teaching roles (e.g., direct instruction, facilitating, modeling, coaching, reflecting, guiding, observing), and adapt these as appropriate for different purposes of instruction and student needs. For example:

- d) Teacher as explorer and co-learner.

MULTIPLE STUDENT ROLES

B.3 Opportunities to learn through a variety of roles (e.g., planner, questioner, artist, scientist, historian), alone and with others. For example:

- a) Collaboration in both small and large groups.
- b) Students teaching other students, formally and informally.
- c) Pursuit of individual concerns, learning interests, and projects.
- d) Co-design (e.g., with teachers, peers) of learning activities.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

B.4 Projects and assignments that require students to integrate and apply their learning in meaningful contexts, and to reflect on what they have learned. For example:

8. Extended investigations through which students address essential questions.
9. Opportunities to transfer learning from one format or context to another.
10. Experience with designing products, services, and systems.
11. Student planning of activities, implementation of teaching-and- learning activities, and carrying out of projects that meet real needs.

ADAPTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

B.5 Learning environments that are adapted so that all students achieve success. For example:

- c) Collaboration among those involved with the child's learning experience (e.g., family members, teachers, health care providers, business partners, bus drivers) in order to meet student needs.

D. CONNECTIONS

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

D1. Learning experiences that illustrate strong connections within and across the fields of knowledge. For example:

- a) Direct experience with "real-world" questions, problems, issues, and solutions that are complex and that cross discipline boundaries (e.g., students design and build a nature trail using math skills, mapping, and principles of design), as opposed to contrived or superficial themes.
- b) Application of skills learned in one discipline to other disciplines (e.g., questioning, estimation, and technical writing used in both social and physical sciences).

RELEVANCE

D.2 Learning experiences that have personal, community, and/or global relevance. For example:

- b) Involvement by students in the development of study units, and in pursuing their own questions to extend or focus a unit.
- c) Service-learning experiences that are linked to classroom learning (e.g. writing a resource book for younger students).

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

D.3 An educational climate that is collaborative, in which school staff, families, health and human services personnel, and community members work together to support all learners. For example:

- c) Use of a variety of learning environments that are available in the community (e.g., libraries, lumber yards, shops, historical societies, forests, watersheds, hydroelectric dams).
- d) Service-learning experiences that help students discover how communities work and their own role in them

4. BUDGET

The initial funds for this project were minimal. The first seventeen pairs of earrings sold at \$2.00 each, bringing in \$34.00, which was more than enough to pay for the initial supplies and to continue making additional earrings. At the end of the project, after deducting expenses, the students calculated that we earned \$608.41. We sent a cashier's check for that amount to UNICEF. We did discuss how our business would be different if we were running a profit business. (In the future it would be wonderful to actually visit a crafter and learn how he or she handles overhead and sales tax, etc.) This project was self-sustaining and could be duplicated with other products and charities.

Peace Crane Earring Project (Student Account Sheet)

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Earnings</u> | |
|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| | | <u>Pairs of Earrings</u> | <u>Amount Earned</u> |
| 10/98 | Bountiful Barnet | 17 | 34.00 |
| 11/98 | UNICEF Boxes | | 27.00 |
| 12/7/98 | Museum Open House | 13 | 66.00 |
| 12/13/98 | Northern Lights | 12 | 60.00 |
| 12/13/98 | White Mountain School | 4 | 20.00 |
| 12/17/98 | Northern Lights | 15 | 75.00 |
| 12/17/98 | Bayley-Razen Store | 5 | 25.00 |
| 12/20/98 | Bayley-Hazen Store | 6 | 30.00 |
| 12/22/98 | Northern Lights | 7 | 35.00 |
| 12/22/98 | Museum Gift Shop | 2 | 10.00 |
| 12/23/98 | Northern Lights | 20 | 80.00 |
| 12/25/98 | White Mountain School | 7 | 35.00 |
| 1/7/99 | Northern Lights | 13 | 65.00 |
| 1/9/99 | Bayley-Hazen Store | 7 | 35.00 |
| 1/11/99 | White Mountain School | 15 | 75.00 |
| 1/12/99 | Museum Gift Shop | 3 | 15.00 |
| | TOTAL | 146 | 687.00 |

Expenses

| Date | Item | <u>Cost</u> |
|-------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 9/98 | Origami Paper | 5.75 |
| 10/98 | 2" Eye Pins | 2.99 |
| 10/98 | Steel Fish Hook Earring Wires | 5.99 |
| 11/98 | Origami Paper | 9.98 |
| 12/98 | 2" Eye Pins | 2.99 |
| 12/98 | 2" Eye Pins | 2.99 |
| 12/98 | 2" Eye Pins | 2.99 |
| 12/98 | 2" Eye Pins | 2.99 |
| 12/98 | 2" Eye Pins | 2.99 |
| 12/98 | 2" Eye Pins | 2.99 |
| 12/98 | Steel Fish Hook Earring Wires | 5.99 |
| 12/98 | Steel Fish Hook Earring Wires | 5.99 |
| 12/98 | Steel Fish Hook Earring Wires | 5.99 |
| 12/98 | Steel Fish Hook Earring Wires | 5.99 |
| 12/98 | Steel Fish Hook Earring Wires | 5.99 |
| 12/98 | Steel Fish Hook Earring Wires | 5.99 |
| | TOTAL | 78.59 |

5. Goals

One goal of this project was to expose students to the experience of designing and operating a small craft business.

Another goal was to help students become aware that they are in the position to help those who are less fortunate than they are.

6. How to Replicate This Project

This project is easily replicable and adaptable to any simple craft and worthy charity. Part of the success of our particular craft item and charity was the timing of the project. Hurricane Mitch was in the news constantly during the late fall. In addition, the holiday season was a great time to be selling a kid-made product to support an altruistic cause. One gentleman told a student, ~'How could anyone go wrong buying your product this time of year! Your earrings capture the essence of this season for me. Every lady in my life will be proud to receive a pair of student-made earrings and know that kids still do care about helping others.'" He proceeded to buy ten pairs!

7. Barriers Encountered

There were no real barriers with this project. The only tricky part for us was deciding when it was time to stop selling and send the check to UNICEF. Our community business friends helped

us out by pointing out that sales had slowed significantly after the holidays. The students were anxious to let their hard earned dollars be put to good use in Central America, so we called it quits in mid-January.

8. Contact

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