

# **The Time is NOW for Service Learning: Engaging, Relevant, REAL**

You must be the change  
you wish to see in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi

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**IN A FEW WORDS ...  
SERVICE LEARNING:**

- Rigorous Learning Applied** with **Purpose**
- Deliberate **Academic Connections**
- Social Analysis** through **Action Research**
- Development of **Competence** and **Confidence**
- Integration of **Response-Ability**
- Internalization of **Learner Profile Attributes**
- Sustained and Diverse **Reflection**
- Informed **Youth Insight** and **Initiative**
- Engagement in **Civic Knowledge and Literacy**  
through **Relevant, Meaningful Participation**

**SKILLS for SUCCESS as  
a LEARNER and for LIFE**

- To ask questions
- To listen and retain
- To be observant
- To identify similarities and differences
- To work independently, with partners, and in groups
- To identify and apply their skills and talents
- To acquire assistance as needed
- To be resourceful
  - to gather & manage information
  - to summarize & take notes
- To effectively solve problems:
  - test hypotheses
  - to follow-through with reasonable steps
- To transfer knowledge and skills to new settings
- To understand the process of learning, i.e.,  
metacognition
- To have **LITERACY** skills

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**Knowing the Difference**

<b>Community Service</b>	<b>Service Learning</b>
Extrinsic Emphasis	<b>Intrinsic Knowing</b>
Required	↓ Elements of Youth Voice and Choice
Co-curricular	↓ Academic Integration
More about Hours	↓ Meets Authentic Needs
Minimal Reflection	↓ <b>Life-long Habits for Success</b>

**Resources**

- **www.GoToServiceLearning.org** for examples of service learning experiences contributed by teachers
- **www.WaterPlanetChallenge.org** for videos about the Five Stages of Service Learning and free downloadable Action Guides related to environmental issues
- **www.ServiceLearning.org** for the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
- **www.YSA.org** for Youth Service America and information on Global Youth Service Day
- **www.ABCDbooks.org** for service learning resources and the downloadable CD-Rom *Service Learning in International Schools: A World of Possibilities* (after March 22, 2011)



# The Five Stages of Service Learning

## Inventory and Investigation

Using interviewing and other means of social analysis, students:

- catalog the interests, skills, and talents of their peers and partners.
- identify a need.
- analyze the underlying problem.
- establish a baseline of the need.
- begin to accumulate partners.

## Preparation and Planning

With guidance from their teacher, students:

- draw upon previously acquired skills and knowledge.
- acquire new information through varied, engaging means and methods.
- collaborate with community partners.
- develop a plan that encourages responsibility.
- recognize the integration of service and learning.
- become ready to provide meaningful service.
- articulate roles and responsibilities of all involved.
- define realistic parameters for implementation.

## Action

Through direct service, indirect service, research, advocacy, or a combination of these approaches, students take action that:

- has value, purpose, and meaning.
- uses previously learned and newly acquired academic skills and knowledge.
- offers unique learning experiences.
- has real consequences.
- offers a safe environment to learn, to make mistakes, and to succeed.

## Reflection

During systematic reflection, the teacher or students guide the process using various modalities, such as role play, discussion, and journal writing. Participating students:

- describe what happened.
- examine the difference made.
- discuss thoughts and feelings.
- place experience in a larger context.
- consider project improvements.
- generate ideas.
- identify questions.
- encourage comments from partners and recipients.
- receive feedback.

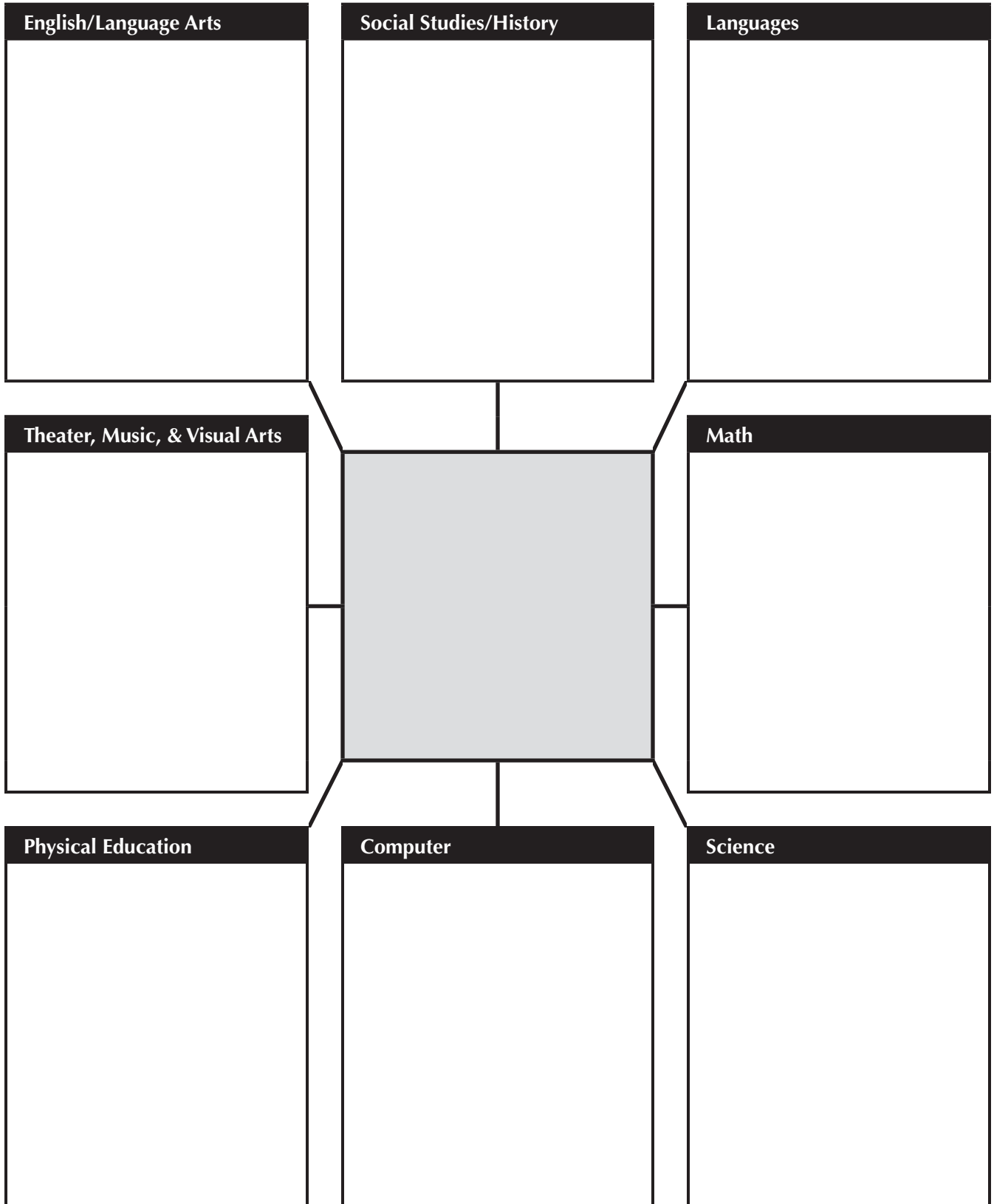
## Demonstration

Students showcase what and how they have learned, along with demonstrating skills, insights, and outcomes of service provided to an outside group. Students may:

- report to peers, faculty, parents, and/or community members.
- write articles or letters to local newspapers regarding issues of public concern.
- create a publication or Web site that helps others learn from students' experiences.
- make presentations and performances.
- create displays of public art with murals or photography.



## Across the Curriculum





# Gathering Information About a Community Need

What does your community need? Use the questions in the following four categories as guides for finding out. As a class, you might agree to explore one topic, for example, how kids get along at school, hunger and poverty, or an environmental concern. Or you might decide to learn about general needs at school or in the surrounding area.

Form small groups, with each group focusing on one category and gathering information in a different way.

**Finding out about** \_\_\_\_\_

## Media

What media (newspapers—including school newspapers, TV stations, radio) in your community might have helpful information? List ways you can work with different media to learn about needs in your community.

## Interviews

Think of a person who is knowledgeable about this topic in your area—perhaps someone at school or in a local organization or government office. Write four questions you would ask this person in an interview.

**An interview with** \_\_\_\_\_

Questions:

- 1.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4.



## Survey

A survey can help you find out what people know or think about a topic and get ideas for helping. Who could you survey—students, family members, neighbors? How many surveys would you want completed? Write three survey questions.

Who to survey:

How many surveys:

Questions for the survey:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

## Observation and Experience

How can you gather information through your own observation and experience? Where would you go? What would you do there? How would you keep track of what you find out?

**Next Step:** Share your ideas. Make a plan for gathering information using the four categories. If you are working in small groups, each group may want to involve people in other groups. For example, everyone could help conduct the survey and collect the results. Compile the information you learn into a list of community needs.



# Four Square Reflection Tool

<p><b>What happened?</b></p>	<p><b>How do I feel?</b></p>
<p><b>Ideas?</b></p>	<p><b>Questions?</b></p>



# Planning for Service Learning

Grade level(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Essential Purpose or Question:

Content—Learning About:

Service Need:

Service Idea:
Investigation of the Need:
Preparation and Planning:
Action:
Reflection Methods:
Demonstration to Others:

Youth Voice and Choice:

Curricular Connections:

*English/Language Arts:*

*Social Studies/History:*

*Mathematics:*

*Science:*

*Languages:*

*Art and Music:*

*Technology:*

*Other:*

Skills Being Developed:

Books and Other Media Used:

Community Partners:



**Opportunities for Students to:**

- Experience and explore diversity:
  
- Participate in progress monitoring:
  
- Learn about careers:
  
- Strengthen social, emotional, and character traits:
  
- Make global connections:
  
- Develop leadership:

**Duration of the Service Learning Experience (approximate timeframe):**

**Teacher Collaboration:**

**Public Awareness or Presentations Planned (including media, alerting public officials, recognition, and celebrations):**

**Tangible Product(s) from the Experience:**

**Additional Notes:**



# A Brief Step-by-Step Guide to Service Learning

## **Step One: *Points of Entry***

Select your method for getting started and making curricular connections, beginning with an existing program or activity, content and skills, a theme or unit of study, a student-identified need, or a community-identified need.

## **Step Two: *Review the K–12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice***

Familiarize yourself with these eight recommended categories that support best practices for service learning. Referring to this list will give you reminders for what will provide the greatest impact for both learning and civic participation.

## **Step Three: *Map Out Your Plans***

Identify your curricular objectives. Write out your specific ideas for curricula, community contacts, literature, and each stage (of the five stages) of service learning.

## **Step Four: *Clarify Partnerships***

Make contacts with any collaborators—teachers, parents, community members, agency representatives, or others—who will participate. Discuss and clarify specific roles and responsibilities for all involved.

## **Step Five: *Review Plans and Gather Resources***

Review your plans. Gather needed resources, such as books, newspaper articles, Web sites, and reference materials from partner agencies. Schedule any visits, guest speakers, or field trips. Note that these are good tasks for students to take on as they gain skills and experience.

## **Step Six: *Begin the Process of Service Learning in Action***

Initiate the process of investigation, preparation and planning, action, reflection, and demonstration. Encourage youth voice and choice as you move through the service learning process. Be flexible! Service learning works best when students are able to see their own ideas in action. Continue to look for opportunities for reflection.

## **Step Seven: *Assess the Service Learning Experience***

Once the demonstration and the closing reflection have been completed, review and assess the learning accomplished, the impact of the service, the planning process, the reciprocal benefits for all involved, and ways to improve for next time. Debrief with all partners.