

I.P.A.R.D.E. - Brainstorming Your Service-Learning Project

Directions: Use this form to help plan your service-learning project. Various examples have been provided to illustrate each stage of service-learning.

INVESTIGATION How will students brainstorm the issues affecting their school and community?

Example: Students will silently free write on the issue affecting their school the most, share these ideas in small groups, and report out the most pressing issue to the class. The class will then vote on an issue to address.

PREPARATION How will you connect the identified need to your curriculum? What is your budget? What supplies will you need? What roles do students want to take in the project?

Example: Have students read a newspaper article about unsafe conditions in their neighborhood to inform their persuasive letters to the town mayor with suggestions for how to increase safety. The letters will be used in their writing portfolio. Gather letterhead and schedule time at the computer lab to write letters. Students can form committees to proofread letter drafts.

ACTION What will your project look like? How long will it take?

Example: After learning about the environmental benefits and financial savings of using Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) bulbs, students visit a housing authority for a day to educate residents about these benefits and distribute CFL bulbs.

REFLECTION How will you get students to understand their service-learning experiences?

Example: After working with seniors to create an oral history of their town, students will interview each other at various points throughout the process to capture what they have learned as a result of working with the seniors. Students can share quotes from the interviews during the next stage of service-learning, demonstration.

DEMONSTRATION How will you recognize the work that students did?

Example: After cleaning up a local waterway, students put together a slide show of photos taken at different stages of their project and show it to students, teachers, and parents during Parent/Teacher Night.

EVALUATION How will you assess how well the project went?

Example: After hosting a game night at local shelter, students and teachers conduct two surveys to find out participant satisfaction – one for the residents in the shelter and one for the students participating in the project.

I.P.A.R.D.E. - 6 Steps to Service-Learning

Questions to Consider When Planning for Service-Learning

INVESTIGATION

- Is the project youth-led and adult guided?
- Has a genuine community need been identified?
- Does the service project meet this need?

PREPARATION

- Are the service objectives aligned with learning goals?
- Have the participants gathered the necessary supplies to implement this project?
- Have the participants informed other students, parents, community members and the media about the project?
- Have the participants networked with community members/organizations and established a reciprocal partnership?
- Are participants working collaboratively and encouraging each other to meet their goals?

ACTION

- Are participants drawing on their academic skills and knowledge to carry out their service-learning project?
- Are participants developing meaningful interactions with the people and environments they encounter?

REFLECTION

- Are the participants able to reflect on the project in a meaningful, engaged manner? Possible examples include plays, open-ended questions, drawing, poetry, music and journals, etc.
- Have the participants been able to react to their experience, elaborate their feelings and contemplate their contributions?
- Are the participants able to make connections between the service project and the big picture?
- Are the participants able to relate how their project has impacted the community?

DEMONSTRATION

- Are the participants able to demonstrate insights gained to the community-at-large? Remember, demonstration can take place in a number of ways, including, public presentations, performances, murals, class lessons, research papers, letters, websites, etc.
- Have the efforts of the students, staff and community members involved with the project been acknowledged?

EVALUATION

- Have the participants (youth and adults) assessed the effectiveness of the project and identified avenues for improvement?
- Has the impact of the service-learning project on the youth and the community been measured? For example, through surveys, feedback forms, interviews, case notes, etc.