A Senior's Senior Prom

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The exchange between the elders and the youth are "rich with rewards and the interactions result in personal growth for everyone involved" (Kaye 2004).

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Table of Contents

- Goals and Objectives ……3
- Purpose ……4
- Process ……5
- Timeline ……7
- Example Student Participation ……8
- Example Classroom Activity ……9
- Recommendations ……10
- Set-Up ……10
- Materials ……11
- Handouts ……12
- Teacher Resources ……12
- Students Resources ……12
- Assessment ……13
- Adapting the Project ……14
- Tips ……16
- Overall Value ……17
- Rubrics ……18
- Handouts ……21
- References ……23

Goals and Objectives

The Florida Sunshine State Standards this project addresses are as follows:

(1) Writing Applications LA.1112.4.1.1: The student will write in a variety of expressive and reflective forms that uses a range of appropriate strategies and specific narrative techniques, employs literary devices, and sensory description.

(2) Communication LA.1112.5.2.2: The student will apply oral communication skills in interviews, formal presentations, and impromptu situations according to designed rubric criteria.

The Miami Dade County Gifted Program Goals and Objectives are indicated below:

(3) Leadership 5.6-5.11: The student demonstrates interpersonal abilities allowing for successful leadership.

(4) Decision Making 4.9-4.12: The students demonstrates growth in…decision making…

Purpose

Since the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) asserts that Florida has the nation's largest proportion of residents age 60 and older, the youth had the opportunity to share in the wisdom and experiences of those who contributed most of their lifetime building the community (the great elder population). This crucial exchange between the young and old created an age-integrated society. Such a partnership resulted in the students and seniors benefitting from each other; for example, the students developed life skills like leadership and decision-making while enhancing their writing and communication. On the other hand, elders gained a sense of respect, appreciation, and support from their experience with the students. On the whole, this intergenerational interaction "evoked caring and provided an exchange that matters in society" (Kaye 2004).

Furthermore, this true exchange between generations included the students in the planning, organizing, and implementation of the Senior's Senior Prom. Because of the prom, students developed relationships with elder residents in the nursing home and this led to other visits and activities such as the "Viewing Party" where the students went back to deliver the pictures and hand-made picture frame keepsakes to the senior residents, they showcased the multimedia presentation they put together from the videos and pictures of the prom, and they shared the scrapbook they created of the event with letters of thanks to the senior residents.

Process

1) Contact community partners (nursing home or assisted living facility) to set a date for the prom.
2) Reach out to other community partners that could help with donations or resources (i.e. local church).
3) Introduce project to students explaining their responsibility for the class and the community.
4) Help students form committees they will work in to make their contribution to the prom (i.e. entertainment, decorations, historian-photos, advertising, prep and beauty team, etc.).
5) Helps students arrange meeting schedules and times to prepare for the prom.
6) Contact teachers in the school from various subjects and academies about interdisciplinary plans related to student participation in the event.
7) Keep the communication lines open with community partners, parents, and teachers in the school.

8) Reach out to community businesses for donations and resources.

9) Visit facility before the event with students (if they can attend) to get a feel of the space and they residents.

10) Get as many volunteers as possible to come to the event and interact with the seniors.

11) Arrange transportation for the event.

12) At the event, take pictures, record special events (i.e. prom court), distribute food and refreshments, and dance with residents.

13) After the prom, all students write a reflection following the rubric.

14) Help students get started with multimedia presentation.

15) Print pictures so students can put them in the keepsake frames.

16) Help students with scrapbook by purchasing supplies.

17) Contact nursing home to set-up viewing time and day.

18) Arrange transportation for the viewing day and visit the nursing home.

19) Speak to students individually about their experience to see if they want to continue working with the elderly or if they want to take on a different service learning project (use the book *Kids Guide to Service Projects* with the students).

Timeline

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER	1. Students complete a survey of questions related to their experience with the elderly. 2. Sensitivity Training with Nursing Home Staff – related to what to expect in nursing home an importance of interacting with the elderly.
NOVEMBER - DECEMBER	1. Students participate in their first visit to the nursing home to meet the residents. a. Students write an initial reflection about concerns and happinesses which will be discussed one-on-one with teacher before the next visit. 2. Teacher will meet with students to discuss reflections on first visit.
JANUARY - FEBRUARY	1. Students develop donation letters. 2. Students and volunteers start asking local businesses and community members for donations towards the prom planning.
MARCH	1. Students start with Senior, Senior Prom planning. 2. Students will meet once a week to organize and plan. a. Committees are established. b. Responsibilities are designated. 3. Parent and other staff members' help is solicited.
APRIL	1. Students develop a list of supplies needed for event and items are purchased. 2. Students develop flyers to start advertising event in schools and community.
MAY-JUNE	1. Senior's Senior Prom is held at the nursing home. 2. "Viewing Party" where multimedia presentation of event delivered to nursing home after the prom along with keepsakes. 3. Final Reflection and class discussion about experiences and lessons learned.

Example of Student Participation and Assessment

Students at my high school belong to one of eight academies (or magnet, or area of study). In these academies, students have special skills, talents, and strengths:

(1) Engineering

(2) Visual and Performing Arts, which offers Band (Music for Stage and Screen), Strings, Sound and Recording Engineering, Visual Arts, Drama, Chorus, and Dance;

(3) Information Technology and Business Services, which offers International Business and Computer Electronics Technology;

(4) Design Arts and Entertainment, which offers TV Production, Commercial Art Technology, and Graphic Animation;

(5) Specialty Service Industries, which offers Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, and Early Childhood Education;

(6) Academy of Hospitality and Tourism;

(7) Technical Career Services which offers Automotive Youth Education System (AYES) and Major Appliance Technology ; and

(8) Health Sciences which offers Physical Therapy, Sports Medicine, Dental Aide, Medical Assistant, Nursing and Veterinary Assisting.

Students were able to use their strengths or skills in their academies to make a decision on what to contribute to the Senior's Senior Prom. They also took on the leadership role to recruit other students and people to assist them as they planned for the prom. After the prom, students reflected on their experience by writing letters of appreciation to the senior residents that left a mark on their hearts, and to the nursing home for giving them a priceless memory.

Example of Classroom Activity

Here are a few examples of what students contributed to the prom according to their academy:

- Visual Arts (Photography) – planned for a photo section for residents with cameras, printers, and backdrop. They also helped with the scrapbook.
- Performing Arts (Band and Choir) – had a live Jazz band that played at the event. They met and practiced Jazz and swing songs for the event.
- Information Technology and Business Services – designed a flyer to publicize the event and to recruit volunteers of all ages in the community. They created a facebook informational webpage about the event.
- Design Arts & Entertainment (TV Production) – created a multimedia presentation as a gift to the nursing home and senior residents.
- Specialty Services (Cosmetology) – helped with makeovers (hair and makeup) for the senior residents before the prom.
- Academy of Hospitality and Tourism – met with the administration and staff at the nursing home to come up with Superlative categories and winners in each category.

Although students partook in activities related to their academies, they had one thing in common when it came to Language Arts: they had to write a reflection on the value of their experience and they also got a chance to enhance their communication skills throughout the stages of the project. In addition to that, since my students are a part of the school's gifted population, they developed life skills such as leadership and decision-making during the planning stages of the event.

Recommendations

I have only used this project for one year, but since it was such a success, I plan on making it an annual event. Additionally, it is recommended to have parents or other adults who can oversee some of the meetings the children have and to help the day of the event with final preparations. Also, I had support from the church I attended and they helped with supplies and resources and members of the church attended the event so if a community partner or business can assist with these things, it will save time and money, and eliminate stress. Finally, see what the nursing home can provide (i.e. food, refreshments, furniture, etc.); this too saves on finances.

Set-Up

For this project, a community partner is required. There needs to be a nursing home or assisted living facility that is willing to hold the event at their facility in the cafeteria or on a patio, somewhere with open space for a dance floor, chairs, tables, space for walkers and wheelchairs, and the band. It is best if the event takes place at the elder facility because many of them cannot travel and it will be too hard to get them to a prom in a location outside of where they live.

Materials

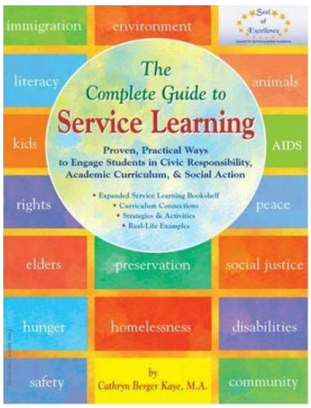
- Furniture (tables and chairs)
- Food for the event (fruits, cake, refreshments)
- Entertainment (Jazz Band, singer, pianist)
- Decorations (balloons, helium tank, hand-made centerpieces, tablecloths)
- Prom Court Supplies (sashes, paint to write the categories for the superlatives [best dressed, funniest, most outgoing, and friendliest] on sashes, foam crowns, foam award ribbons, jeweled tiara and crown [for king and queen])
- Keepsakes or gifts (picture frames made with Popsicle sticks, hot glue, spray paint, sharpies).
- Cameras and camcorders to take pictures and video the event.
- Photo paper and photo printer or funds to print pictures for scrapbook and frames.
- CDs for multimedia presentation copies.
- Scrapbook and scrapbook supplies.

Handouts

- Senior's Senior Prom Flyer
- Senior' Senior Prom Program
- Group Evaluation Rubric
- Socratic Seminar Rubric
- Writing Reflection Rubric

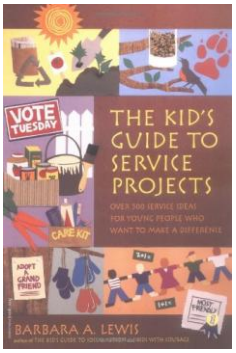
Teacher Resources

Kay, Cathryn Berger. (2004). *The Complete Guide to Service Learning*. Free Spirit Pub.



Students Resources

Lewis, B. A., & Espeland, P. (1995). *The kid's guide to service projects: Over 500 service ideas for young people who want to make a difference*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit.



Assessment

- Formative – Assessing the Process
  - Reflections for nursing home visit(s).
  - Group Evaluations for participation in committees.
- Summative – Assessing the Products
  - Final Reflection and Socratic Seminar Discussion.
  - Letter to Nursing Home and/or Senior Residents.

Adapting the Project

A teacher can adapt this project for the cost of $250. This can include transportation to the event which can range from $150-200 using a school bus; in this scenario, supplies can be donated. If transportation is provided by parents, the $250 can help with supplies for the event. Supplies include balloons, helium tank, and hand-made centerpieces for decorations. Also, for the prom court, sashes and paint to write the categories for the superlatives (best dressed, funniest, most outgoing, and friendliest), and crowns for prom king and queen, can be purchased. Students can also make picture frames as a keepsake for senior residents using Popsicle sticks, hot glue, and spray paint. They may also choose to ask the school's band to perform pro-bono so there is no charge for entertainment. Additionally, they can ask parents and students with cameras to take pictures and video tape the event.

For this project, approximately 50 students in 10th Grade & 11th Grade (ages 15-17) participated in the planning, organizing, and implementation of this project. Students met weekly for about 2 months prior to the event to work on their contribution to the prom. Even though this project was done in high school, students in elementary and middle school can surely take it on. In fact, since the Prom became a community affair, we had volunteers from elementary and middle school who attended the prom and interacted nicely with the elders. Further, students on any academic level can assist in this service learning opportunity.

Finally, this is a project that can be used with many subject areas:

- Reading or Language Arts – students can be a reading buddy with their elder-friend and keep a reflective reading journal

- Social Studies – students can interview their elder-friends about historical events that occurred during their lifetime.
- Science – students can research nutrition and health related to the elderly community they are working closely with.
- Visual Arts (Photography) – arrange a photo section for residents with cameras, printers, and backdrop. Take pictures at prom. Help in making scrapbook.
- Performing Arts (Band and Choir) – practice and perform live at the prom.
- Information Technology and Business Services – design a flyer to publicize the event; create informational webpage about the prom.
- Design Arts & Entertainment (TV Production) – create a multimedia presentation as a gift to the nursing home and senior residents.
- Specialty Services (Cosmetology) – provide makeovers (hair and makeup) for the senior residents before the prom.
- Academy of Hospitality and Tourism – meet with the administration and staff at the nursing home to come up with Superlative categories and winners in each category.

Tips on How to Save Time and Money

- Parents drove their children to the event so no school bus was needed on the day of the prom which saves on transportation costs.
- Students used computers in the media center to make flyers to publicize event.
- Students in the Jazz Band were able to practice in the band room and use the school's instruments for the event. The band director participated in the whole process and the band performed at no cost.
- A few students were able to develop the multimedia presentation for the prom using the computers and resources in the TV production classroom and they earned a grade in that class for their creation.
- A parent and some students donated some scrapbook supplies and a scrapbook.
- Mary Kay Makeup was donated for the makeovers. Also, adult volunteers brought hair tools (blow dryers, curling irons) to use with the senior residents.
- One parent offered photography services for free at the event.
- Other volunteers loaned their cameras, camcorders, and memory cards for the event.
- Another parent donated hair products and free hair cut coupons from Supercuts that the residents received as a gift bag.
- Another parent donated balloons and other decorations for the event. She and her family also helped to make the picture frames we used as keepsakes.
- The nursing home provided food and refreshments for the event. They also rented fold-out chairs for the band and tables and chairs from the cafeteria were used.

Overall Value

This project's most important component is that it is a service learning activity. Students of all ages, in all levels, can participate and gain the rewards of giving with their hearts. Furthermore, the features of this projects relates to Language Arts in the areas of communication and writing, but it also links to life skills such as decision making and leadership; it is also interdisciplinary and can connect with other subject areas such as cosmetology, visual arts, performing arts, business, etc.

The overall outcome of this service learning project was to create a strong sense of community and an appreciation for the contributions of the elders and the youth. Although the young and old fit together (Kaye 2004), there is still a deterioration of social interaction between elders and youth (Florida). This project was a solution to this problem because intergenerational relationships were cultivated. In addition, the youth improved communication, leadership, and decision making skills; and the elders felt respected, appreciated and supported in the community. Both the young and old were encouraged to help each other, and hopefully this experience created a spirit of giving back in the youth for their future.

Rubric – Group Evaluation (Committee Participation)

A group project is a cooperative effort and coordinated endeavor on the part of several individuals, focused on a singular outcome. I also want to consider the contribution each group member made to the successful completion of the project. To do this, I need your honest and objective evaluation of each group member for several factors.

DIRECTIONS: Complete the scoring rubric below for yourself and each of your group members. Assign each group member (including yourself) points based on a 3-point scale. Assign points based upon your assessment of each group member's overall contribution to the project, reflecting on the factors listed below in the scoring rubric criteria section. Allocate points in each category, 3 points for extraordinary work, 2 points for accomplishing the task, 1 point for unsatisfactory participation. Please take your time and be thoughtful about how and to what degree each group member contributed. Use the reverse side of this form to make any comments --if needed-- you think are appropriate concerning group members' contributions to the completion of this project.

SCORING RUBRIC

CRITERIA	EXTRAORDINARY 3 Points	ACCOMPLISHED 2 Points	UNSATISFACTORY 1 Point
ACTIVE ROLE: The group member took an active role in helping to do the work (planning and execution).			
CREATIVITY: The group member contributed good ideas to help the team to do the work.			
DEPENDABILITY: The group member could be relied upon to what he/she was assigned to do or volunteered to do.			
QUALITY OF WORK: The group member contributed high quality work.			
REPEAT PERFORMANCE: You would like to work with this group member on future projects (Of course, you cannot evaluate yourself on this one.			

Rubric – Socratic Seminar (Final Reflection Discussion)

CATEGORY	4 – Above Standards	3 – Meets Standards	2 – Approaching Standards	1 – Below Standards
Gives evidence and makes inferences.	Uses evidence in the text to create a new idea or draw connections among ideas.	Uses evidence in the text to expand on, analyze or critique an idea.	Locates evidence in support of an idea under discussion.	Locates factual evidence with page number.
Asks questions which lead to rich discussion and deeper group understanding.	Asks questions that relate the current discussion to bigger themes or ideas.	Asks questions that connect ideas in the current discussion to previous comments.	Asks questions that evoke deeper responses from others.	Asks a question related to the current discussion.
Acts in ways which contribute to building a group that is collaboratively searching for meaning.	Connects the ideas of several students.	Builds on another person's idea.	Asks questions to clarify what someone has said.	Listens to others.

Adapted from Rubristar.

Rubric – Writing Reflection

CATEGORY	4 – Above Standards	3 – Meets Standards	2 – Approaching Standards	1 – Below Standards
Requirements	All requirements are met and exceeded.	All requirements are met.	One requirement was not completely met.	More than one requirement was not completely met.
Content	Covers topic in-depth with details and examples. Subject knowledge is excellent.	Includes essential knowledge about the topic. Subject knowledge appears to be good.	Includes essential information about the topic but there are 1-2 factual errors.	Content is minimal OR there are several factual errors.
Mechanics	No misspellings or grammatical errors.	Three or fewer misspellings and mechanical errors.	Four misspellings and/or grammatical errors.	More than 4 errors in spelling or grammar.

Adapted from: Debbie Abilock © *Grand Conversations* NoodleTools/NoodleTeach: Socratic Seminar Rubric

Handout – Flyer

A Senior, Senior Prom!

Sunny Hills Assisted Living

25268 SW 134th Avenue

Princeton, FL 33032

Saturday, May 15th, 2010

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Contact Ms. Singh in room T-029

or via email

MichelleSingh@dadeschools.net

for details.

The Senior, Senior Prom is a time of love where the youth support the senior residents in Nursing Homes. With dinner and dancing; crowning of Prom King and Queen; and superlative give-a-ways; this is a memorable event for all participants, young and seasoned. Generations have the wonderful opportunity to interact and learn about each other.

Teenagers & Other Volunteers Needed!

Handout – Program

A Senior, Senior Prom!

Sunny Hills Assisted Living Facility
Saturday, May 15, 2010
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

12:30 - 2:00	Makeovers for Residents (Hair and Makeup) The Beauty & Prep Team, Volunteers
2:00 - 2:45	Robert Morgan Educational Center's Jazz Band Mr. Eugene Timmons, Director
2:45 - 3:00	Special Musical Selections Kristiann Sprang, Pianist & Erika Hinz, Singer
3:00 - 3:10	Crowning of Prom King & Queen and Superlatives Ms. Singh's Students, Robert Morgan Educational Center
3:10 - 3:55	Robert Morgan Educational Center's Jazz Band Mr. Eugene Timmons, Director
3:55 - 4:00	Concluding Remarks and Supercuts Gift Bags Mr. Armando Blackman, Sunny Hills Assisted Living Facility

Special Thanks & Recognition

Pastor Abdy Sellas, Miami Vineyard Community Church
Mr. Armando Blackman, Activities Director of Sunny Hills
Mr. Eugene Timmons and the Jazz Band, Robert Morgan Educational Center
Students in Ms. Singh's Class, Robert Morgan Educational Center
Ms. Michelle Singh, Mary Kay Makeup Donations for Makeovers
Ms. Carmen Zamora (Parent of Sophia Bravo), Supercuts Products & Haircut Donations
Mrs. Stephanie Keime (Parent of Gideon Keime), Decorations
Mr. Calvin Pittman (Parent of Katherine Pittman), Photographer
Volunteers, Miami Vineyard Community Church
Student Volunteers, Various Schools (Elementary, Middle and High)
Adult and Community Volunteers
Administration, Staff, and Residents at Sunny Hills of Homestead

"Forever Young in 2010"

References

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Florida. (1990s). *State of Florida Department of Elder Affairs: An introduction to its mission, programs and resources*. Tallahassee, Fla: The Dept.

Kay, Cathryn Berger. (2004). *The Complete Guide to Service Learning*. Free Spirit Pub.

Rubric Maker: http://rubistar.4teachers.orgRubrics:

http://www.greece.k12.ny.us/instruction/ela/SocraticSeminars/seminarrubrics.htm