



2nd Grade Social Studies

1) Introduction: Service-learning is tailor made for teaching Social Studies. The essence of both service-learning and social studies is helping students understand the world around them so they can be effective citizens and leaders. Service-learning brings students into direct contact with real-world community problem-solving. The experience provides a context in which to explore the impact of government, policy, and economics on our every day lives.

2) Definition of service-learning:

Service-learning is a form of teaching and learning that engages students in meaningful service activities in their schools and communities as part of the standard academic curriculum. Integrated into (but not limited to) the school day, service-learning connects young people with structured activities that address human and community issues, and that provide opportunities for increased student academic engagement, civic responsibility, personal and social development and the acquisition of critical thinking skills.

The following concepts are central to good service-learning practice. Evidence of these elements as well as their alignment with Pennsylvania state standards and the School District's promotion/graduation requirements are key to model practices.

- **Student voice in choosing, developing and implementing a project:** Service-learning works best when students are involved in something relevant and meaningful to them. Encourage student participation and sharing of responsibility in all aspects of a project.
- **Identification of genuine need:** The “community” identifying the need can be the class, the school, the neighborhood, a community partner, the city, etc. Goals for addressing problem have the support of designated community and clearly defined goals.
- **Mutual benefit for students and community partner(s):** Students acquire knowledge and skills, and in return contribute a short or long-term solution to the problem. Sensitivity to needs and/or limitations of all parties is important.
- **Sustained student involvement:** Length of project can vary but should span a minimum of 6 weeks. Projects with greater richness and complexity may last a semester or an entire school year.
- **Rigorous, multidisciplinary research:** Projects should meet content standards in at least two academic disciplines and demonstrate writing and research competence. Research can explore root causes/effects, potential solutions or public policy related to the problem.
- **Ongoing reflection:** Reflection activities should occur throughout the project. They reveal cognitive and affective learning and can incorporate speaking, writing and/or multimedia strategies.
- **Assessment of student learning and project impact:** Evaluates academic, personal and social development as well as whether stated community need has been met/addressed. Rubrics and other authentic assessment tools are preferred.
- **Culminating presentation:** Presentations or exhibitions of learning allow students to demonstrate what they have learned for the benefit of others, including community partners.



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- **Final celebration:** Positive change and collaboration is hard work! Acknowledge and celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of all who were involved.

3) Sample Project Description

A sample project description is included for your convenience. This particular project is not required, however, it is designed to fit the core curriculum for this subject and it reflects a common issue or problem in many of Philadelphia's communities. Teachers are encouraged to transform this project and take it in new directions.

Banishing the Bullies

This is a multi-faceted project. Teachers can choose to do all or some of its components as desired. The project meets objectives in each of the six weeks of the Second Grade Social Studies curriculum:

First Six Weeks: Life in My Community

- Focusing on Me (5.2.3 A)
- Building a Classroom Climate (5.1.3 B)
- Cooperation and Working Together (5.2.3 C & G)
- Respecting Others and Ourselves (5.1.3 J)

Second Six Weeks: Exploring Diversity in My Community

- My Neighborhood/Community Leaders and Heroes (5.1.3 C, 5.2.3 D)

Third six weeks: People's Wants and Needs

- The Role of Work and Labor (6.5.3 B)
- Working Together to Get What We Want (5.3.3 H)

Fourth six weeks: Our Country's Natural Resources

- (Natural) Features of our Neighborhood, Community and City (7.1.3 A-B)
- Understand How Humans Change Their Environment (7.4.3 B)

Fifth Six Weeks: History: Past, Present and Future

- Understand the Concept of Time (8.1.3 A, C, D)
- Tracing Our Community's History (8.2.3 D, 8.3.3 D, 8.4.3 D)

Sixth Six Weeks: Civic Responsibility

- Understanding Student Rights and Responsibilities (5.2.3 A-B)
- Taking Action Against Injustice (5.2.3 E, 5.3.3)

While these academic goals are being reached, students will be meeting a real need in their immediate community, as bullying is a pervasive and devastating problem in most schools, and leads to street and domestic violence over time. Second grade students in particular seem to have a



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growing awareness of this problem. This project enables the students to feel they can make a difference on a matter of personal concern to them despite their young age and lack of experience.

4) Suggested Lessons/ Activities

Voice your concerns: Students begin by looking at themselves. What are their strengths and talents? What are their concerns and interests? What do they care about? This leads to a discussion about family and community, and where the students fit into this picture. If students identify bullying or violence as one of their concerns, you can use these lessons as written. If students list other issues, you may be able to adapt the lessons to meet their needs. Often, bullying is a primary issue for students of this age.

Outline the problem: Students begin by conducting a survey at their school to determine the extent of the bullying problem that exists. Students create the questions, collect the information, and analyze the results, which then direct their actions for the rest of the project.

Investigate the issue: At this stage, students conduct a study of where, how, and why bullying occurs in the school. Then, they can draw maps of the school to highlight high-incident locations, and/or graph the number of incidents at various locations and times. Next, students work with community partners (see Local Partners below) to understand why bullies mistreat others, and what can be done about it. These experts can visit the school to discuss the roles of bullies, victims, and witnesses, and to recommend ways that these power dynamics can be changed. Students can also interview adult family members and neighbors to ask about their experiences with bullying, and to learn how childhood violence can disappear, or grow, over time, depending on the way social bonds form. If time allows, students can write and illustrate these oral history findings. The class can also study leaders in the school and community (from current events or local, national, or world history) to define what makes a good leader and a good citizen, and to explore examples of nonviolent conflict resolution.

Conduct meaningful service: Now that students understand some of the primary causes and effects of bullying, they begin working to reduce it in their classroom and in the larger school community. The class works together to draft and implement a pledge about positive ways of resolving conflicts in their own classroom. (The implementation will be a work in progress throughout the school year). They then offer this pledge as a model for other classes to follow. Students also create and install a Bully Box in a central location, where anyone in the school can anonymously report incidents of bullying. Students can also publicize the school district's Bullying Hotline number to their peers.

The final service activity allows students to make a long-term difference to the safety climate in their school. With help from community partners and teachers, students convene a forum on bullying for school officials, parents, and student representatives. At this event, students request the creation of a School Anti-Bullying Committee, made up of members of each of these groups. Then, they make recommendations on the activities for this committee based on the project's survey,



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study of bullying incidents, interviews with adults, and learning from bullying experts. Suggestions might include training staff and students school wide on nonviolent conflict resolution, establishing a peer mediation program, or creating safe spaces within the school that counteract the hard surfaces and loud noise currently found in high-incident areas (i.e. lunchroom, hall, courtyard). This committee would also take on responsibility for responding to the reports placed in the Bully Box.

Evaluate and celebrate: Be sure to give students opportunities for meaningful reflection on the issue, as well as on their work and its effects on the community and themselves. (See PBS Kids in section 7 below for some reflection exercises to get you started.) Also, provide chances for students to celebrate as they progress through this project, and at its completion.

5) Sample Rubric

Rubrics can be used at all steps of the service-learning process. Each activity can have its own rubric, and you can use a cumulative rubric to assess student work at the end of the project. Here are two sample rubrics that assess student learning, one on developmental growth and one on task completion.

See attached

6) Multidisciplinary Connections

Math—Predict, count (tally), compare, graph, and display the number of bullying incidents in various locations at various times. Analyze, draw conclusions from, and form and justify opinions, as well as problem solutions, about this data.

ELA—Write, conduct, analyze, and present findings from school survey on extent of bullying problem. Write a classroom pledge. Write, conduct, analyze, and present findings from interviews with adult family members or neighbors about bullying. Practice listening, contributing to small and large group discussions, and public speaking. You can also provide stories about bullying to practice reading, comprehension, and analysis of fiction and/or nonfiction texts.

Art—Create and use art to publicize a Bully Box, Bully Hotline, and graphic representations of project findings. Study school architecture and its effects on bullying and make recommendations for a more peaceful environment.

7) Where to get more info

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
(303) 492-1032
www.colorado.edu/UCB/Research/cspv

Educators for Social Responsibility
(800) 370.2515
www.esrnational.org/home.htm

National Alliance for Safe Schools



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(304) 496-8100
www.safeschools.org

National Resource Center for Safe Schools
(800) 268-2275
www.safetyzone.org

National School Safety Center
(805) 373-9977
www.nssc1.org

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
(864) 710-4562
www.clemson.edu/olweus/

Operation Respect
(Lessons and audiovisual material)
(212) 904-5243
www.dontlaugh.org/

PBS Kids
(Lessons and interactive activities for grades 3-7)
pbskids.org/itsmylife/friends/bullies/index.html

Seeking Harmony in Neighborhoods Everyday (SHINE)
(212) 228-4505
www.shine.com

Stop Bullying Now
www.stopbullyingnow.com/

8) Local Partners

Center for Schools and Communities (Center for Safe Schools)
www.safeschools.info/
www.center-school.org/bullyingprevention/
(717) 763-1661

Good Shepherd Mediation Program
(215) 843-5413
phillymediators.org

Need in Deed
(Lessons, activities, and ideas on many social issues)



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(215) 242-6333
www.needindeed.org

Parents Against Violence in Schools (PAVIS)
(215) 824-0635

Pennsylvania Masonic Foundation for Children
(717) 872-9070
www.pagrandlodge.org/pmfc/bullying.html

The Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Association for Nonviolence, Inc.
(215) 751-9300
www.philamlk.org/

Philadelphia Physicians for Social Responsibility
(215) 765-8703
www.psrphila.org/

School District of Philadelphia
(215) 644-1277
hrice@state.pa.us (State Safe Schools Advocate)

This curriculum insert was developed by Michelle Loucas, Program Director at Need In Deed, as part of a collaborative effort between the School District of Philadelphia and several local community-based service-learning organizations, designed to integrate service-learning with the new core curriculum.