

Community Service through Art: Empty Bowls

Instructor: Nancy Ensminger-Sams

Workshop: Cross-Cultural Classroom

Targeted Grade Level(s): Fifth Grade

Content Area(s) Covered: Art, Social Studies

Anticipated Duration: Four 50 minute class periods and two meeting times after school for the committee and the meal

Rationale:

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” Mahatma Gandhi

Global issues and sustainable solutions are what we need our students to become knowledgeable about so that they can be the change. Poverty is a worldwide problem and in some way affects everyone. Providing an opportunity for students to make a difference in their community instills a sense of community service, awareness, and empowers our youth. The majority of the homeless population of Alachua County is ten years old. The students who participate in the service learning through art project are also ten years old.

Objectives:

1. Through activities students will become more aware of the worldwide poverty issues.
2. Through reading books, students can get a feeling for what the daily life of a person who lives in poverty is like.
3. Students are provided an opportunity to make a difference in their own community by making ceramic bowls and host an Empty Bowls Meal (funds are donated to a local organization that will help people in poverty in Alachua County). The lesson starts with knowledge about world issues and solutions of poverty and evolves into an awareness of community issues and solution of poverty.

Sunshine State Standards

VA.A.1.2.1: The student uses and organizes two-dimensional and three-dimensional media, techniques, tools, and processes, to produce works of art that are derived from personal experience, observation, or imagination.

VA.A.1.2.2: The student uses control in handling tools and materials in a safe and responsible manner.

VA.A.1.2.4: The student uses good craftsmanship in a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional media.

SS.D.1.2.2.5.1: The student understands that scarcity of resources requires choices on many levels, from an individual to an entire society.

SS.C.2.2.1.5.1: The student understands economic specialization and how specialization generally affects costs, amount of goods and services produced, and interdependence

Overall Resources/Materials Needed:

Books

1. Bunting, Eve. *Fly Away Home*. (1991). New York: Clarion Books.
2. Testa, Maria. *Somewhere to Go*. (1996). Illinois: Albert Whitman & Co.
3. Face the Future Activity Book

Websites

1. Facing the Future—Global Education website: <http://www.facingthefuture.org>
2. Empty Bowls Project Home Page: <http://www.emptybowls.com>
3. World Food Day Information: <http://www.worldfooddayusa.org/>
4. Information about Crop Walks: <http://churchworldservice.org/CROP/>
5. Information about a non-profit organization dedicated to world hunger: <http://www.freefromhunger.org/>
6. A website for Service and Volunteering: <http://www.servenet.org/>
7. Hunger Web: <http://nutrition.tufts.edu/academic/hungerweb/>
8. <http://www.unitedagainsthunger.org/>
9. Food and Agriculture Organization: <http://www.fao.org/wfd/2005/index.asp?lang=en>
10. http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/world_population.htm
11. Statistics on the human population by continent: http://www.geohive.com/global/pop_w_reg.php
12. Transitional Program for Homeless Women: <http://www.chrysaliscomm.org/>
13. Population Reference Bureau: <http://www.prb.org/>

Procedures:

Day 1

Materials

- Pizza
- pizza cutter
- “Let Them Eat Cake” Activity

Procedures

1. Before class, find the world population by continent. Some information is below

-- <http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/worldcontinents>

Continent Human Beings (millions)

World 6,396

Africa 885 The Americas and the Caribbean 875 Asia 3,875 Europe 727 Oceania 32 To find world population by countries click on the links above.

updated: May 2004 Source: [Population Reference Bureau](#) (World Population Data Sheet)

2. Calculate percentages to be used in the “Let Them Eat Cake” activity from *Facing the Future*.

3. Find world resources consumption by continent-

According to the **World Resources Institute** (2004), the average daily per capita availability (1999) is as follows:

North America: 3,696
Europe: 3,230
South America: 2,845
Asia (excluding the Middle East): 2,710
Sub-Saharan Africa: 2,238

That information is from the 2005 *It's All Connected: A Comprehensive Guide to Global Issues and Sustainable Solutions* book from Facing the Future: People and the Planet.

4. Divide class up using the same percentages of world population for each continent as the number of students assigned to the continent. Then explain to the students what consumption of world resources means. Ask them what percentage of the world resources they think Asia uses. When they get the correct percent, cut that part of the pizza put it on a plate and hand it to the Asia group. Repeat this with each continent. Afterwards ask the students what they think about this. Finally the continents can divide their share and eat!

Day 2-

Materials

- *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting
- *Somewhere to Go* by Maria Testa
- Vocabulary for the “Word Wall”: *poverty, community service, volunteer, donation*

Procedures

1. Ask students, “Do you know what poverty is?”
 - List all comments without judgment.
 - Read Fly Away Home by Eve Bunting and Somewhere to Go by Maria Testa
 - After reading each book, ask students to look at the list of comments and tell how the story describes poverty similar and different than they believed.
2. Ask the students if they have ever participated in activities to help alleviate poverty in our area.
 - Tell the students that there is a way to help alleviate poverty (hunger) in our area by participating in an international program called The Empty Bowls Project locally.
 - Show examples of bowls and explain the project.

Day 3

Materials

- clay
- plastic bowls
- plastic wrap
- masking tape
- permanent markers
- small water dishes.

Vocabulary for “Word Wall”: *clay, ceramic, sphere, slab, smear, evaporation, green ware, fire, kiln, press mold*

Procedures

1. Today students will make a ceramic bowl using the press mold technique.*

Steps to make bowl:

- 1) Put masking tape on the outside bottom of the plastic bowl and write name and class
- 2) Place sheet of plastic wrap on the inside of the plastic bowl
- 3) Pinch of a piece of clay and roll into a golf ball size sphere
- 4) Press the sphere into the bottom inside of bowl
- 5) Repeat step #3 and press sphere into a slab place adjacent to the first slab
- 6) Repeat step #5 until the slabs reach the rim of the plastic bowl and then stop
- 7) Pinch off small amounts of clay to fill in any holes (double check)
- 8) Use fingers to smear the slabs together
- 9) Use a small amount of water on fingers to smooth inside of bowl.
- 10) Clean up.
- 11) Place finish bowls under plastic so that they can dry slowly and not crack. In a few hours the clay will shrink as it dries and the water evaporates.
- 12) Take clay bowl out of plastic form bowl. Use a tool to write students first name and last initial and year on the outside bottom of the clay bowl.
- 13) Return clay bowls under the plastic to dry slowly and reuse plastic form bowls for another class.

**I also offer the staff an opportunity to make a bowl either with a class or at a workshop after school.*

Day 4

Materials

- low fire lead free (dinnerware safe) glazes in a variety of colors

- fired test tiles
- large round brushes #12
- newspaper, sponges.

Vocabulary for the “Word Wall”: *Glaze, bisque ware, silica.*

Procedures

1. First have students discuss the chemical and physical changes they note in the clay bowls.
2. Explain a) what happens to the clay in the firing process b) how glaze and paint are similar and how they are different and c) the procedure for applying glaze to the bowl.
3. When 3 coats of glaze have been applied and the bottoms of the pots have been wiped, let students place the bowl in the kiln. (I usually assign 1 or 2 students the job of loading the kiln.)
4. Clean up.

Additional Procedures

Empty Bowls Planning Committee- This committee is open to any student who is interested and can arrange transportation after school. The committee makes posters that advertise the Empty Bowls Meal and ticket sales, sign up to sell tickets, sign up to set up, serve, and clean up after the meal. A couple of members can create an iMovie from the pictures that were taken while the students made their bowls and will be shown during the Empty Bowls Meal.

Selling Bowls/Meals- I sent letters home with my fifth grade students who made the bowls to give their families first chance to purchase the bowl. All bowls (meals) sell for \$10.00. After a week I opened the sale to our whole school family. Many people wanted to purchase the bowl but couldn't make it to the meal. Their bowl was reserved and they picked it up any time after the meal. Bowls that did not sell before or during the meal were sold afterwards. In the end out of 120 bowls all but 24 were sold. The 24 that were not sold were donated to Chrysalis, a non profit group that also holds an Empty Bowls Meal to raise money for their organization. In the end \$1014.00 was donated to the St. Francis House, a homeless shelter in our community. The director spoke to the students at the Honors and Awards Ceremony and told them that the money would provide meals for 800 people! He also let them know how important it was that they were beginning their community service at such a young age and encouraged them to continue.

Empty Bowls Meal- Ask staff members to volunteer to make a crock pot of soup for the meal. Ask for a couple of vegetarian soups, some cold soups. Arrange with the cafeteria supervisor to borrow ladles and get ice. They can also order small Styrofoam bowls to serve the soup in. In order to serve soup in the ceramic bowls they would need to be washed in the dishwasher. Ask a business partner to donate money or if your business partner is a grocer ask for a donation of bread and water (or soda), cups, spoons and napkins. The meal is supposed to be a simple soup kitchen style meal. We served from tables near the wall so that the crock pots could be plugged in. We planned the meal to run for an hour prior to a scheduled PTA meeting in hope of more attending the event.

Informal/Formal Assessments

Ceramic Bowl Rubric	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Ceramic Bowl	No holes and 1/4 " to 3/8" thick and smooth interior, no seams show and rim finished	1 hole and is paper thin or too thick and bumpy interior and/or rim unfinished	2 holes and paper thin or too thick and rough interior and/or rim unfinished	has more than 3 holes and is paper thin or is thicker than 3/8" and very rough interior
Glaze	Applied evenly	Some areas applied thinly	Most areas applied unevenly	Some areas have no glaze
Participation	Raised hand during class discussion more than 3x and participated in clean up and set up and all activities	Raised hand during class discussion at least 1x and participated in clean up and set up and all activities	Participated in clean up and set up	Never raised hand and did not participate in clean up and set
A = 8-9 points	B = 6-7 points	C = 4-5 points	D = 2-3 points	F = 0-1 points