



Voting Posters for the Presidential Election

The service-learning project was part of the seventh grade's integrated unit on the 2000 presidential election. Students studied voter apathy and related issues in social studies and science classes. Math classes covered measurements for borders, lettering and artwork. Language arts teachers reviewed the purpose of student service-learning and also provided the time for the creation of the posters.

Best Practice 1 - Students fulfilled a public awareness need by reminding adults to vote on November 7, 2000. Many students mentioned that they knew people who did not participate in the election process. As teachers, we also wanted to emphasize to our students that voting is a civic duty and privilege that is protected by the armed forces of the United States. Both students and the community benefited from this project.

Best Practice 2 - Students practiced basic math skills, writing, brainstorming, and art applications. They also discussed and learned about the social issues related to voting and the election. Some students were able to practice their persuasion skills while calling businesses and talking to possible sponsors of the student posters.

Best Practice 3 - Most of the reflection took place after the posters were delivered to area businesses, but time was devoted to thinking about class discussions in social studies and brainstorming possible slogans that would encourage apathetic or pessimistic adults to vote.

Best Practice 4 - There was a core group of students who listed possible businesses who would hang posters. These students called the businesses to explain the project and ask for permission to hang a poster or posters. They were in charge of conveying the information, getting a contact person at each business and organizing a master list for the poster distribution. Many students were responsible for the delivery of the posters. They were required to obtain a supervisor's signature to verify delivery.

Best Practice 5 - Students called a variety of businesses such as grocery stores, printing companies, newspapers, restaurants, hardware stores, job placement agencies and so on.

Best Practice 6 - Seventh-grade teachers met and discussed the need and execution of the possible project. Each content area teacher agreed to cover skills related to his/her area to ensure success.

Best Practice 7 - Students gained an understanding of their civic duty. They were aware of the issues surrounding the campaign and they were able to have a voice in their community. The core group of students learned how to use the phone book and practice their speaking skills and phone manners. They also learned how to organize and plan for advocacy. They were excited about service-learning and are anxious to participate in future projects.

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