

WHAT IS SERVICE LEARNING?

According to the National Service Learning Clearinghouse:

“Service-learning combines service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity change both the recipient and the provider of the service.”

Recently, The National Youth Leadership Council and RMC Research Corporation developed the *K-12 Service Learning Standards for Quality Practice*. These standards were vetted through a series of “reactor panels” convened nationwide. The panels were composed of young people, teachers, school and district administrators, community members, staff from community-based organizations, policy-makers, and others interested in service-learning. For more information, visit www.nylc.org/standards.

How does the **Facing the Lion: A Bridge to Kenya** meet the K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice developed by the National Youth Leadership Council?

The NYLC Learning Standards are:

1. Meaningful Service
2. Link to Curriculum
3. Reflection
4. Diversity
5. Youth Voice
6. Partnerships
7. Progress Monitoring
8. Duration and Intensity

Meaningful Service

Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.

The program is recommended for middle school students who themselves are coming of age. *Facing the Lion* provides a wealth of examples to which a student can relate but also presents these commonalities through experiences that might be uncommon for most children from the US. By raising funds to provide sustainable food sources for the children of the nomadic villages in Northern Kenya, which the author now represents in Kenyan Parliament, students have a direct and personal link to the recipients of their service.

Facing the Lion: A Bridge to Kenya

Interdisciplinary Middle School Curriculum and Service Learning Program

Link to Curriculum

Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.

The Facing Lion Program Curriculum and Service Learning Program offers teacher-developed curriculum materials and links for language arts and social studies middle school teachers. The goal of the curriculum and service learning project is to give students the tools and opportunity to be informed global citizens.

Reflection

Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society.

What is the role of the citizen in a community, in a nation, and in the world community? How can I make a positive difference?" After reading *Facing the Lion*, learners will be ready to ask these questions of themselves. Through participation in a service project to benefit "Cows for Kids" which was established in partnership with Mr. Lekuton, students will have the opportunity to make a meaningful and sustainable difference in the lives of the people whose culture they have come to better understand.

Diversity

Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.

Understanding different cultures is at the core of helping students to become citizens of the world. Participation in the Facing the Lion Curriculum and Service Learning Program, offers students many opportunities to explore cultural and individual diversity and a path to better a understanding of the customs and actions of other cultures.

Youth Voice

Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experiences with guidance from adults.

"Cows for Kids" as the benefiting organization of the Facing the Lion Service Learning Program provides the opportunity for kids to help kids. The Facing the Lion Service Program offers students the opportunity to work together to agree upon a project, plan it and then execute it effectively.

www.cowsforkids.org

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Partnerships

Service-learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.

The Service Learning Project/Event to benefit “Cows for Kids” requires the support and guidance of the school/organization and the larger community. “Cows for Kids” partners with the participating students to complete the circle of global service by connecting students with the people who benefit from their philanthropy.

Progress Monitoring

Service-learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals, and uses results for improvement and sustainability.

Through pictures and stories of the rural villages and communities that “Cows for Kids” works with, school children in the US are able to assess the difference they are making in a rural African child’s life. Students can build upon their global service experience and continue to be involved with Cows for Kids or other pathways of change.

Duration and Intensity

Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.

One cow or goat can make a long-term impact on the well-being of an African child. The cows or goats produce milk and offspring. The future sale of full-grown livestock help pay for school fees and the health-care needs of a family. “Cows for Kids” and The Boma Fund are committed to developing sustainable income sources for the nomadic families of Northern Kenya.

K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice

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