

Investing In Enthusiasm For Charity

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How does developing a community service project in the classroom change the way students interact with one another, the level of student enthusiasm, and class participation?

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Abstract

Being a teacher is not limited to the subjects of math, science, social studies, and language arts. Teaching students how to be respectful, responsible, caring individuals is as equally essential. Through the implementation of a class community service project, raising money for pediatric cancer, I studied changes in classroom dynamic, student enthusiasm, as well as participation.

Description Of Teaching Context:

For the past 8 months I have been working as an intern in a fourth grade classroom at Boalsburg Elementary School. The small school consists of three fourth grade and three fifth grade classrooms. My classroom is full of 19 wonderfully unique nine and ten year olds. The class consists of twelve girls and seven boys, ranging in socio-economic status from lower-middle to upper-middle class. In our room all the students are White, except for one Latina child. Additionally, our class has four Russian students who participate in the English as a Second Language program. We have one

student who receives speech and language services, three students who participate in the Title I program, and four students in learning support.

Throughout the year my students were aware of my involvement with the Penn State Dance Marathon (THON). The Monday after participating in THON, I held a morning meeting to discuss my experience; the students expressed interest in how they could get involved to help the cause. It was at this point that I began to consider the effects of developing a community service project with my students. More specifically, asking the question: **How might developing a community service project in the classroom change the way students interact with one another, the level of student enthusiasm, and class participation?**

What Led Me to This Particular Inquiry and Why is it Important?

As I teacher, I feel strongly about building community among my students. I believe it is important to teach students what it means to be giving, respectful, caring, responsible individuals. I believe that by learning these qualities at a young age, students will mature into adults who are conscious of these traits. It is important for teachers to promote this type of growth and development by creating opportunities for students to interact with one another and work towards a common goal.

The students in my classroom are generally not eager to participate in lessons. The same students raise their hands every time a question is asked. I have a difficult time eliciting response from a variety of students when I teach lessons, no matter the content. I was surprised by the lack of participation because I felt that my class was very social. There were cliques present in the classroom, however students always worked willingly

with one another when asked. I only had one student who continually misbehaved during lessons. He tended to only interact with one other boy in the room and he typically did not cooperate with me, aids, or any other support staff. I wondered if creating a class service project would increase participation in my lessons, minimize cliques present, and engage the student who gave me a particularly difficult time.

I also wondered if students at this age would be enthusiastic about creating their own service project. I wondered about the level of participation and if my fourth graders would be capable of taking on the responsibilities required by such an endeavor.

Community service has been something I have been heavily involved in throughout my collegiate career; because of this, I wanted to determine whether or not I would be able to instill a similar passion in my students.

I knew that it was not going to be possible for me to determine the long-term effects of my inquiry; however, I was still interested in determining the minor changes that might or might not take place as my students planned and executed their own service project.

Executing this inquiry reaffirmed my beliefs that community service-learning in the classroom is essential to developing a class of students that is giving, respectful, caring, and responsible. This inquiry was significant for my current and future career because I believe that teaching is more than just content but also involves community-building and character development. Additionally, this inquiry was important because community service is a passion of mine and I am interested in bringing it into my future classroom.

Literature and/or Experts:

Service learning resides at the crossroads of youth development and community improvement. Because it focuses equally on student growth and community problem solving, service learning steers real-world education toward projects that promotes the public good... As a teaching strategy, service learning motivates students by taking them beyond the classroom to address community problems that they care about. (Richardson, 1)

If teaching is more than just math, science, social studies, reading, and writing, but also includes raising compassionate, responsible, civic-minded adults, then it seems service-learning would be a good place to start.

The Impacts Of Service-Learning On Youth, Schools and Communities: Research on K-12 School-Based Service-Learning, a study from 1990-1999, stated that:

- Service-learning has a positive effect on the personal development of public school youth.
- Students who participate in service-learning are less likely to engage in “risk” behaviors.
- Service-learning has a positive effect on student’s interpersonal development and the ability to relate to culturally diverse groups... students who participate in service-learning are more engaged in their studies and more motivated to learn.
- Students who engaged in service-learning came to class on time more often, completed more classroom tasks and took the initiative to ask questions more often.

Service-learning has a very positive effect on both the students and the community for which the learning is serving, and for this reason we should provide our students with opportunities to take part in service-learning.

“Educators are drawn to service-learning because they believe it produces important educational results for students, schools, and communities...They give many examples of students becoming more

altruistic, and caring, growing more concerned about their community and community issues, and learning more in specific content areas such as social studies, or mathematics, or specific subject matters...” (Learning In Deed, 1).

According to Scott Richardson, the best service-learning projects use, enrich, and enliven the material taught in school. As teachers, we are constantly looking for tools to motivate our students to want to learn. Service learning is a very positive way to actively engage a wide range of students, and a tool that we as teachers should use to our advantage.

Students in service to America Guidebook states that “service is a habit, and like most habits, it is most effectively developed at an early age. Research shows, for example, that young people who were leaders in student government are more likely to be engaged in civic affairs as adults.” It is important to note that there are a variety of ways to incorporate service-learning into your classroom. I found that morning meeting was the ideal time in our classroom because it did not interfere with our math, science, or social studies units. However, in the process of researching, I discovered a variety of other ways to weave service-learning into standard-based lessons. This is especially important because research shows that a minimum of 40 service-learning hours over the course of the school year need to take place in order for the program to be successful (Students in service to America Guidebook).

In today’s society, students have a lot working against them; it is our duty to create classrooms that foster a more positive atmosphere. Research has shown that service learning in the classroom creates a more upbeat environment.

“Where service-learning is practiced school-wide, program experience shows that teachers can feel reinvigorated, dialogue on teaching and learning can be stimulated, and the school climate can improve... .Service

programs have also been associated with reduced negative student behaviors and disciplinary referrals, as well as dropout rates” (Students in Service to America Guidebook).

If this were the case, then why not use service learning and community service projects to our advantage?

Wonderings and Questions:

As stated above, the main question of my inquiry is: **How might developing a community service project in the classroom change the way students interact with one another, the level of student enthusiasm, and class participation?**

My sub-questions covered a variety of areas regarding the main wondering. I discovered that as I continued work on the overarching question I developed more sub-questions.

- How might a service project minimize cliques among my students?
- Would service-learning engage my student who tended not to focus and gave me a particularly difficult time during lessons?
- How would my own preconceptions affect student participation? (Before the project even began I had pinpointed several students I expected to be active participants and several students I assumed would be less involved.)

As I continued to inquire, I began to develop more sub-questions. These questions included:

- How would I define increased levels of enthusiasm?

- Would increased participation be a result of a deeper interest in the content of the lesson or was it due to the fact that when measuring enthusiasm based on our project, I was frequently measuring more “artsy” type projects.

Finally, some sub-questions for which I may never receive answers:

- Can I instill in my students a life-long passion for community service?
- Was a commitment to their community going to be something they would have for the rest of their lives?

These questions began me on my path towards inquiry. I was ready to embark on my teacher research, better understand my curiosities, find answers to my wonderings, test my hypotheses, and collect data on my findings.

Inquiry vs. Project

The main wondering of this project indicated a true inquiry in that it questioned the effects of developing a community service project with my students. I anticipated that students would have increased enthusiasm as we planned and executed our project, but I wondered whether this same increased level of participation would carry into other lessons (such as math and writing) that also focused on service-learning. I was also unsure about how the quality of student work would be affected.

In addition to having developed several hypotheses about the outcome of service-learning there were many questions that were left unanswered, mystery remained a part of my inquiry.

Inquiry Plan Description:

After determining that I was going to complete a community service project with my students in order to gain a better understanding of my wonderings, I first had to decide on the type service project. While I had a few of my own ideas, I also wanted the students to be active in the decision making process. I thought that this would make them feel more personally invested.

From these very beginning stages, I planned my first morning meeting. I used this as an opportunity to discuss community service with my students. I inquired about who would be interested in having a service project as a class and then I had each student anonymously fill out a survey. This first survey (see appendix A) asked students what they typically liked to do on a Saturday afternoon (play with a friend, exercise, read, watch television, spend time with family, or do some form of community service), if they had ever participated in a community service project before, and ended with a few questions about the way students felt they worked with their classmates.

I had to be careful with the data I had collected from this survey because I knew students might have skewed their answers, writing down what they thought I wanted to hear. For this reason, I sent a second, similar survey home with parents (see appendix B). This survey focused slightly more on whether or not parents agreed that learning could occur while their son or daughter took part in a community service project. Sending home this survey also provided me with an opportunity to determine whether or not parents

would be supportive of a service project, volunteer, and provide transportation (without these I would not have been able to continue).

Once I felt as though I had enough parental support, I began making serious plans about what to do next with my students. We sat down for our second morning meeting regarding our service project. I asked students to elaborate on what it meant to help the community. Together the students came up with a list of some potential service project ideas, ranging from: garbage clean-up, volunteering at the SPCA, having a food drive, Jump Rope for Heart, and finally, having a lemonade stand to sell lemonade and donate the money.

This second meeting had taken the direction I had hoped it would. Prior to developing this morning meeting I had brainstormed some ideas about what I wanted to do as a service project. Several weeks earlier I had attended a pediatric cancer benefit that talked about “Alex’s Lemonade Stand,” a national foundation started by a young girl who had suffered from pediatric cancer. The national foundation gave money to cancer research, patient care, and doctors by donating profits made from children’s lemonade stands. Not only is pediatric cancer something that I hold very dear to my heart, after spending the last three years heavily involved with the Penn State Dance Marathon, but I also thought that a lemonade stand was something simple that the students would be able to easily organize.

While my students and I had not formally decided on our lemonade stand, I was able to spend the remainder of the morning meeting discussing how students thought working with their classmates outside of school, would change their friendships in

school. I questioned them about whether or not working on a project such as a lemonade stand with their peers would make them feel frustrated or excited.

Once the class agreed to hold an “Alex’s lemonade stand,” my students and I spent the next few weeks planning and preparing for our community service project. As a class we decided things like location, cost, time, what materials we would need, etc. It was extremely important to me that they all felt as though this was something they were working on together.

It was around this time that I began to think more seriously about forms of data collection most effective for my inquiry. I had been taking a lot of notes here and there about things my students had said regarding their level of enthusiasm. However, in order for it to be a real inquiry I knew I needed to collect data on the sub-questions I was less sure of. I decided to develop lessons focused around the lemonade stand, but that would not take place during morning meeting. For this purpose, I created a math lesson and a persuasive writing lesson. I knew that the lemonade stand was something that got the students excited, now I needed to see if it would increase participation when included in a lesson other than morning meeting.

We had been working at developing our service project for quite some time before I asked the students to complete a second survey. As my inquiry had evolved, I began to focus heavily on student participation. The second survey (see appendix C) addressed student preference regarding our morning meetings, as well as, asking students whether or not they had noticed any changes in peer relationships since working on the lemonade stand. I asked the students to explain something that they did and did not like about creating our own service project, and finally, I asked when the students felt they

participated the most (during a science lesson, social studies lesson, math lesson, or a discussion about our lemonade stand). The purpose of this survey was to gain a deeper understanding of how the students felt about working with their classmates as well as their level of participation.

Finally, it came time to have our lemonade stand. I had been in contact with parents through letters sent home with my students, and I had confirmation that all but about five of my students would be able to work the lemonade stand. The PTA had donated cups, parents had provided lemonade and powder mix, and the students had made and hung signs all around the school. On Saturday April 8, 2006 my students held their lemonade stand at the Penn State Relay for Life and raised \$109.25. I could not have been prouder of their hard work and success.

Monday morning, when my students returned to school, we had another morning meeting focusing on our lemonade stand. I happily announced the total to the students who were obviously very excited. At this point I had them complete the third and final survey (see appendix D) which asked them to rate how much fun the lemonade stand was; if it was worth all the effort; if they felt they worked with people in the class that they would not have normally worked with; if their participation increased when we talked about the lemonade stand; and finally, what some of the benefits to working so hard on the lemonade stand were, besides just raising money for kids with cancer. I was curious to see if the students had noticed any changes in their own behavior and whether or not the relationships they had with their peers had changed at all. I was able to follow up the next day with a second morning meeting in which I shared a local newspaper article (see appendix E) that highlighted the student's success. I also provided an

opportunity for the students to openly discuss the lemonade stand, their likes, dislikes, and things they would have changed. I was certain to make reflection an important part of our final meeting.

Data Collection:

There were three forms of data collection that I utilized throughout my inquiry: surveys, class participation grids, and note-taking/observations. As I have described above, there were several surveys I completed throughout the period of my inquiry. These were used to determine the relationships students had with their peers, previous community service experiences, enthusiasm about community service, and interest in creating and executing a class project. Additionally, the data collected from these surveys allowed me to determine levels of parental support. I used follow-up surveys to gather data so I could compare student reactions from the beginning, to those reactions at the end of the service project. The week following the service project, I sent a second parent survey (see appendix F) home that focused on student enthusiasm. In this survey I asked about the things that the child was saying at home regarding our lemonade stand. I also asked if the students had mentioned that they were hanging out with peers they would not normally interact with. Finally, I asked if parents thought it was a worthwhile experience.

Once my inquiry got underway, I needed a way to determine how participation changed between a typical lesson and one based on the lemonade stand. When I first attempted to collect data about this, I used a chart with every student's name down the left column and down the right column was the number of times that students raised their hand. After a few lessons of this data collection method, I decided that I would rather

know if participation on the whole had changed at all. For this I developed a new chart with the left column having a number (representing a question) and the right column being the number of students who raised their hand to answer the question (see appendix G). I was careful to attempt to be consistent with wait time while my mentor teacher or my advisor collected the data. This gave me a chance to see if participation was higher during lemonade stand lessons as compared to a typical science or social studies lesson. It also provided me with more accurate information about the number of hands raised in general versus the students who I called on.

The final form of data collection, and the one I used most frequently was note-taking. I was sure to have Post-its with me whenever I taught a lesson or completed a morning meeting about our class lemonade stand. This allowed me to jot down various things that students said. I was also very careful to keep track of who said what. Additionally, I took notes on the quality of student work with lessons that involved the lemonade stand. This was often where I uncovered my most valuable information.

Data Analysis

The most effective way for me to analyze the data I had collected over the entire inquiry was to spread it out, and re-read all surveys, notes, and participation sheets. Additionally, I had saved all observations completed by my supervisor that could be related to my inquiry; consequently I reread those as well.

I knew that the notes I had taken in class and the observations completed by my supervisor, were mainly focused on student enthusiasm. Early on I had wondered if any assumptions I had about particular students would carry over into my inquiry. I had pinpointed certain students that I anticipated would not take an active role in the lemonade stand. During my data collection I had taken notes every time I heard a student say something positive about the lemonade stand. I analyzed this data by determining which students tended to make positive comments most frequently. My earlier prediction had been, to my surprise, wrong. The results from this data showed that the student in my class who gave me the hardest time, had the most problems with his peers, and tended to be disgruntled, had actually made the most number of positive remarks.

While there was no way for me to measure enthusiasm in a concrete manner, it was evident that students were eager to participate in what we were doing. My morning meetings were full of energy, students were discussing our lemonade stand in an upbeat, positive tone, students were raising their hands, and the overall aura of the room was electrifying. It was evident that the students were very interested and excited about the lemonade stand. These judgments were reinforced by the note-taking I had done throughout the semester.

After reviewing all of my notes, I then turned to the data collection sheets I used to compare how many students were typically raising their hands during science, social studies, or math lessons, as compared to a lesson about the lemonade stand. I first calculated the average number of questions I asked per lesson. Then I calculated the average number of hands raised per lesson. I determined that I asked an average of 14.6 questions per lesson and I had an average of 5.57 students raise their hands per question. I was then able to compare these averages of typical lessons to a lemonade stand lesson. Analysis showed that the average number of hands raised during a math lemonade stand lesson was lower than the total overall average. However, during some of the morning meeting lessons, number of hands raised was much higher than the average.

I then began to analyze the quality of work. For this I carefully critiqued three pieces of work from each child, paying particular attention to the students in my room who normally produce work that was poor quality (by this I mean sloppy, incomplete work completed by a student who would be capable of producing assignments that were neat and finished). I looked at a math worksheet, a persuasive writing sample, and advertising signs, all of which focused on our lemonade stand. I compared this work to a social studies project, a math assignment, and a science assignment that were not focused on the lemonade stand. I evaluated the grades on these assignments and also observed neatness, and degree of completion for the assignment. From this information I was able to determine if the quality of work was any higher from lessons involving our class lemonade stand, as compared to other lessons. I determined that in most cases the quality had not improved.

Finally, I reviewed all of the surveys I had given. These were probably the most difficult to analyze, but contained some of the most valuable information. During the first survey, students were asked to rate six different activities on a scale of one to ten (one lowest, ten highest). I found the average student rated “some form of community service” a 6.1 on the scale. Out of the nineteen students in my classroom, eleven had previously participated in a community service project. This survey also gave me insight as to how well the students felt they interacted with one another. Fifteen said that they felt they got along well with their peers, three said that they felt they got along well most of the time, but sometimes got frustrated with certain classmates, and finally, only one student said that he did not get along with his classmates.

Out of the nineteen parent surveys I sent home, sixteen were returned. All but one parent agreed that their child would benefit from community service in the classroom. Additionally, six of the sixteen returned surveys said that their child had never before participated in a service project. This number was slightly lower than when I had asked the children directly.

The second student survey I carried out was very helpful in providing insight about student reactions regarding the time we had been investing into our lemonade stand. It asked students to describe how they felt they were getting along with their classmates. This was beneficial as I inquired about how their relationships were changing. Out of the fifteen students who completed the second survey, all but one agreed that they enjoyed the morning meetings about the lemonade stand more than the meetings I had been conducting prior to my inquiry. Four of the fifteen students felt as though they had not noticed any changes in how well they got along with their classmates

since starting the lemonade stand. This survey also asked students to rate four different lessons (science lesson, social studies lesson, math lesson, lemonade stand lesson) on a scale of one to four. One meant they were confident raising their hand in order to contribute to the lesson, and four being that they felt really uncomfortable. The average response was a 1.7, meaning that students felt very comfortable participating.

Following the actual lemonade stand, I asked students to rate how much fun they had if they were able to come to the lemonade stand and help work it. Out of the twelve students that volunteered at the stand, eleven rated the experience a one (they had a ton of fun), and only one student rated it a two (it was fun, but I could and would have rather been doing something else). The other four of the six students who did not come to volunteer rated their experience a two (they were disappointed they couldn't come, but they had a lot of fun doing whatever else they did that day). Only one student rated it a three (that they were glad they didn't go), and one student rated it a one (that they were very disappointed). Additionally, fourteen of the students who completed the survey checked off that they worked with people with whom they would not have worked normally. Finally, fourteen of the students who completed the survey felt as though they participated more when we talked about the lemonade stand compared to other lessons.

Once I had completed my data analysis, I looked for patterns. Did students who had claimed they didn't get along well with classmates at the beginning of my inquiry still feel that way? Were students still interested and enthusiastic about the lemonade stand as compared to other lessons? Was participation still higher during morning meeting, as we discussed the lemonade stand, compared to other lessons? After analyzing these patterns I was able to begin making claims.

Claims and Evidence:

1. *Fourth graders are capable of carrying out their own community service project.*

- One of my initial wonderings was whether or not the fourth graders in my class would actually be able to successfully execute a community service project. It did not take me long to realize that they were in fact going to take the project into their own hands. Evidence of this came directly from the morning meetings I conducted, as well as, the actual success of our lemonade stand. Students were eager to contribute ideas, volunteer themselves to make signs and advertise, offer materials they had at home, such as one student who offered coolers, and another who said he could bring tables and tents, which we could use at our stand. Appendix H is a picture of the poster we used throughout our morning meetings to plan our ideas. This poster provides evidence of students volunteering materials from home, but also demonstrates the plethora of ideas they developed on their own.
- During several of the morning meetings in which we planned, the students thought of aspects I had not considered. For example, they wanted to assign job responsibilities while the lemonade stand was taking place; they decided to make sandwich board signs so that students could advertise the lemonade stand on site; they also took a considerable amount of time deciding on the price of their lemonade, as well as how much they would charge for refills. Again, you may refer to appendix H to see the ideas developed by students.

- The final piece of evidence that proves these fourth graders are capable of carrying out their own community service project was the success of the event. My students raised \$109.25 for the fight against cancer, a total that was well beyond what they ever expected to raise selling lemonade at 50 cents a glass. In fact, this event was so successful, that students were mentioned in the University's newspaper (see appendix E).

2. *The relationships between the students in my classroom did change as we planned our lemonade stand.*

- Part of the data I had collected showed that students felt as though they had worked with people in the class that they would not have normally worked. Out of the fifteen students who had taken the second survey, all but two agreed. Twelve out of fifteen students who took the second survey felt as though they had noticed a change in how well they got along with their classmates since planning our lemonade stand. Students backed up these responses with comments like: "because we are starting to think together," "because some of my classmates had good ideas and I liked them," "because we are working a lot more together since the beginning of the year," and "because I am getting to know them better and I feel happy."
- In addition to surveys, I looked at student writing samples to see if they mentioned working with peers. The students were assigned to write a persuasive letter to a parent, friend, teacher, principal, or whomever they wanted and explain why they should come buy lemonade. As I read

through the letters, I found some interesting data that supported my claim that students in my classroom were working better together. I had one student write to her ESL teacher that, “when we started to make this project we got to know our classmates and even get new friends.” Another student wrote to her family that “planning this has made my classmates and I spend more time together and work together, we have had so much fun planning this project and on Saturday, we can actually do it!”

- Final evidence that demonstrated how the relationships between the students in the classroom had changed, came from my notes. I had noticed on several occasions that different children were playing together at recess. There were three different times when I noted that two of the girls were interacting with three other girls in the class they would not have normally associated with at recess.

3. *The quality of work presented by the students from lessons based on the lemonade stand was not any higher than the quality of work from a typical lesson.*

- When I first began my inquiry, I thought that if students were truly more interested in a community service project, the quality of work produced during my lemonade stand lessons would be higher. I found however, that this was not the case. On a math worksheet based on the lemonade stand, I had the students complete problem solving questions. Out of the 16 students who completed and returned the worksheet to me, four received scores of less than a 50%, including one of the top math students. This negative outcome led me to think more about my instruction. Was it

different than a typical math lesson? Were the problems harder than usual? Was it because we stopped following the unit for a day and “got off course” by doing problem solving? In all honesty, this would be an area that if I had more time I would further explore.

- As I mentioned above, I had the students write a persuasive letter convincing someone to come to our class lemonade stand. While some of the students wrote very convincing letters, other students did not follow the layout I had given them and some did not finish the letters at all.
- Every student was responsible for making and hanging a sign around the school to advertise for our lemonade stand. While these signs were all bright and colorful, there were several children who did not follow directions or spell things correctly, even though all the information was spelled correctly on the chalkboard. This evidence proved to me that although the work might not have been of poorer quality than usual, it was definitely not beyond the normal work my students turn.

4. *Students were very enthusiastic about creating their own service project and were more eager to participate in lessons about their lemonade stand.*

- My students were visibly excited about their lemonade stand throughout the entire process. I found evidence to support this claim throughout all of my data collection methods. Some of the anecdotes I have taken from my notes include: “Oh this is fun, I like this.” One child asked, “Are we actually doing a lemonade stand?” I said, “yes” and she responded with “Oh YAY! Are we the only class ... yes!”

- Another student asked if she could make a donation can at home, stating that she did not mind putting in the extra time. Meanwhile a young boy suggested writing about the lemonade stand in his Friday folder notebook (a communication journal students use to tell their parents what they did that week).
- When one student wrote her letter she begged and begged for me to read it all day. As soon as I made some minor corrections to her letter she made a final draft, which she promptly brought down to show her ESL teacher. (See appendix I).
- One of the students was discussing the lemonade stand the Monday following the event and she stated that: “I wanted to stay, I didn’t want to go!” Meaning, that she did not want to leave the lemonade stand when her mother came to pick her up.
- Several of the students asked if they could spend free time working on their lemonade stand poster advertisements. I had to tell a few of them to finish other work first; because of this, they were very disappointed.
- During a follow-up morning meeting on April 10, 2006, students were asked if there was anything they would have done differently. One student mentioned that he would have had the lemonade stand at a different time so that he could have gone.
- At this same morning meeting, students expressed interest in the community service event because they found it more interesting, they could relate it to their real lives, it was something different from what they

usually did, and because “it took something they were doing and wrapped it up in everything else.” By this, the student meant that we were learning about community service and the lemonade stand, and incorporated it in our math and writing lessons.

- During a March 17, 2006 morning meeting, one student suggested that all the students could contribute their allowance money to purchase the necessary materials.
- In general, I found that students were much more eager to contribute to lessons regarding their lemonade stand. Evidence supporting this can be found in my planning technique. When it came to morning meeting, I almost never had to make very in-depth plans because I knew that students would always keep the conversation going. For example, during the second morning meeting I asked the students: “What are some things we need to take into consideration regarding our lemonade stand.” From there, students were able to come up with a variety of topics, such as cost, materials, jobs, preparation, in order to stimulate conversation. During many of these discussions, I let students popcorn off of each other, so that they did not have to raise hands, but could contribute openly.
- Observations my advisor had done earlier in the year showed that my students were often very quiet and tended not to participate. For example, during a pulley lesson she pointed out that I had to “really work” at getting my students to answer.

- On a March 20, 2006 observation, my advisor wrote; “I notice during morning meeting that students raised their hands a lot when it was totally about brainstorming their own ideas,” referring to a meeting where we had done some planning of our lemonade stand.
- On March 31, 2006 my advisor wrote while observing a morning meeting (again where we planned for our community service project), “Wow! 16 of 16 participated during the first 15 minutes of the day. That’s impressive!”

5. *There were obvious changes in behavior with one student throughout the creation of the lemonade stand.*

- I have one student in my room who has had problems since he moved into our classroom back in October. It is often difficult to get this student focused on completing quality work. Over the last month, I have noticed some serious changes in this student’s behavior, his interaction with his peers, and his overall demeanor.
- On April 4, 2006 I noted that he was in a better mood, I commented to him and patted him on the back. He agreed that he had been happier lately, but didn’t know why.
- Early into the inquiry project, when I had explained to the students what we were going to be doing, the student came to me and said, “Miss Carpenter, I don’t care if there are going to be assigned times to work, I am coming for the WHOLE time and I am selling LOTS of lemonade!” He did.

- While working on the advertising posters this particular student asked one of his classmates to work with him on creating the sign. Then a few days later, when the kids had another chance to finish their signs, he told me that he couldn't work on that sign because he was working on it with his partner and he wanted to make sure that they could both put in equal input. I was very surprised because this student almost never takes anyone else's feelings into consideration.
- This child had been interacting with students in the classroom that he typically did not cooperate. He has even befriended one of the more "popular" students in the classroom. Two weeks ago, during a math jeopardy game, the more "popular" students, encouraged this student when he got a question wrong, by saying, "It's okay buddy, nice try!" demonstrating the new friendship that had developed.
- During my data collection I had taken notes every time I heard a student say something positive about the lemonade stand. I analyzed this data by determining which students tended to make positive comments most frequently. The results from this data showed that the student in my class who gave me the hardest time, had the most problems with his peers, and tended to be disgruntled, had actually made the most number of positive remarks.
- It is important to note that I do not know if having a class community project has been what changed the demeanor of this student completely; however, I do believe that it has played some role in encouraging him to work with his classmates (when he otherwise would not), and to be in an all around better

mood when in school. Although there may have been other factors involved, it is encouraging to know that regardless, this student has had an improved attitude in school.

Conclusion

In order to draw solid conclusions about my inquiry, I would like to refer one last time, to my main wondering: **How might developing a community service project in the classroom change the way students interact with one another, the level of student enthusiasm, and class participation?**

Developing a community service project in the classroom positively changes the way students interact with one another. However, it is not the only way to strengthen the bonds between students. A service project most certainly elicits enthusiasm from students. It is important to make connections between the project and standards, focusing on reflection as a tool for growth. While class participation did increase during the execution of my inquiry, a service-learning project is not the only way to go about engaging students. I am confident that following through with this inquiry gave me a deeper understanding of service-learning and how to effectively utilize it in my classroom. Additionally, I believe that it provided me with a foundation for further growth, grounds for more questioning, and new wonderings surrounding this topic. Inquiry will continue to be a part of my professional development as I seek a variety of ways to best meet the needs of my students.

There is no doubt that inquiry has strongly influenced the implications on my future career. Due to my passion for community service I intend on making service-

learning a part of my classroom, but only as long as it is integrated into the curriculum. I want to use service-learning to motivate my students not only to do good for the community, but also to create learners that are truly invested in their work. In my future classroom, service-learning will be as much about academics as it is about the community.

As a prospective educator, I must also take into consideration the magnitude of parental support I had during my inquiry in the State College Areas School District. With plans to teach in an urban, inner-city environment next year, I have to consider whether or not I would have the same sort of support that I received in State College. I must also take into consideration that I may not be able to devote time to planning an event such as a lemonade stand with my students, if they have to practice math facts in place of morning meeting in order to improve basic academic skills.

It is evident to me that inquiry is an ongoing process that will be part of who I am as a teacher forever. I have been privileged to see first hand the benefits of inquiry early in my teaching career, and will continue on my quest for knowledge and understanding as I develop new wonderings about service-learning in the classroom.

“Education should prepare children for jobs, and it also should prepare our children for life. I join you in wanting our children to not only be rich in skills, but rich in ideals. Teaching character and citizenship to our children is a high calling...” President George W. Bush.

New Wonderings

Entering into my inquiry project I knew that there were going to be some wonderings that I could not answer (e.g. could I instill a lifelong desire to serve the community in my students?), but I had not considered developing entirely new wonderings. Over the course of the last month, some of my new wonderings include:

- Was the change that took place in individual students solely because of the community service projects? Or were there other factors that changed his behavior?
- What types of community service project would have enabled every student in my classroom to attend?
- Would there be adequate time in the school year to complete a service project during every season? Or is one project all that there is time for?
- What are some other ways to teach children the importance of caring for those around them besides community service?
- Research says that students need 40 hours of service learning to really learn from the experience, where can I find 40 hours in the school year to make my project effective?
- How can I make my students life-long servers of their community?
- How do you incorporate service-learning in younger grades? And would singing to people at a retirement home have the same sort of positive outcomes as a more involved project, such as the lemonade stand?

APPENDIX A

NAME : _____

19 of 19 students took this survey.

1. Pretend it is a Saturday afternoon and you can choose any one of the following activities to do. Rate each activity on a scale of 1-10 (1 would not do it, 10 would definitely do it):

* Numbers in red are the average answers.

_____ Play with a friend 7.579

_____ Exercise 7.263

_____ Read 4.211

_____ Watch television 3.263

_____ Spend time with you family 8.632

_____ Some form of community service 6.105

2. Have you ever participated in a community service project?

11 Students saidYes 8 Students saidNo

If you checked "yes" explain what it was and how you got involved:

Answers varied.

3. Everyone learns differently, circle which way you think you learn best:

* Students circled more than one answer.

a. Listening 17 students

b. Speaking 4 students

c. Reading 13 students

d. Acting out 4 students

4. Would you rather work with classmates on a project? Or alone?

(Circle one)

a. With Classmates 10 students circled choice a

b. Alone 9 students circled choice b

5. Explain how well you get along with your classmates.

Answers varied.

APPENDIX B
PARENT SURVEY

16 of 19 students returned this survey.

Has your child ever participated in a service project before?

10 students said yes

6 students said no

*students checked more than one type

If yes, what kind? 4Service projects through Girl/Boy Scouts

5 students said: Food Drive / Food Bank

5 students said: Easter Seals Penny Drive

1 student said: Earth Day Activities

Other - What? Jump Rope for heart, book drives, donating clothes, reading to the elderly, locks of love, etc.

If you answered "yes" to the above questions, on a scale of 1-5 how enthusiastic about the experience was your child? (1 - uninterested, 3-excited but a little disappointed to be sacrificing their time, 5 - Very enthusiastic, would do it again without hesitation!).

10 parents answered this section: the average level of enthusiasm was 4.3

Do you feel as though your child would benefit from community service learning in the classroom? If so, how?

1 parent said "No"

3 parents did not answer the question

12 parents said "Yes"

Are there any specific types of activities you would like to see your child involved in?

Answers varied.

Would you be willing to volunteer with your child at an event?

___ Yes 11 parents checked "Yes"

___ No 3 parents checked "No"

___ Maybe 2 parents checked "Maybe"

Would you be able to provide transportation for your child to an event if it took place after school or on a Saturday?

___ Yes 15 parents checked "Yes"

___ No 1 parent checked "No"

APPENDIX C

15 of 19 students completed this survey.

1. Which do you prefer?

a. Morning meetings like we used to have, with a theme (Respect, Positive attitude, problem solving, etc.)

1 student circled choice "a"

b. Morning meetings about our lemonade stand.

14 students circled choice "b"

Why?

Answers varied.

2. Have you noticed any changes in how well you get along with your classmates since we have begun working on our lemonade stand?

a. Yes - 11 Students

b. No - 4 Students

Why? - Answers varied.

3. When are you more likely to raise your hand in order to contribute to a lesson?
(Rate on a scale of 1-4)

During a science lesson Average of 2.93

During a social studies lesson Average of 3.06

During a math lesson Average of 2.27

During a discussion about our lemonade stand Average of 1.73

4. What do you like about having our class create our own community service project?

Answers varied.

5. What don't you like about having our class create our own community service project?

Answers varied.

APPENDIX D

LEMONADE FOR SALE!

18 of 19 Students completed this survey.

If you came and worked the lemonade stand, rate on a scale of 1-3 how much fun you have? (1- I had a TON of fun, 2- It was fun, but I was cold and would rather have been doing something else, 3- I wish I had not gone)

Rating of 1: 12 students

Rating of 2: 1 student

Rating of 3: 0 Students

Average: 1.08

If you didn't come, were you disappointed you couldn't be there? Rate on a scale of 1-3 how disappointed you were.

(1- Very disappointed, 2- disappointed, but I had a lot of fun doing whatever else I did that day, 3- I am glad I didn't go).

Rating of a 1: 1 student

Rating of a 2: 4 students

Rating of a 3: 1 student

Average: 2

Was the lemonade stand worth all the hard work you put in? Yes or No and explain.

100% of the students said YES.

Did you work with people in the class you wouldn't normally work with?

___yes ___no

11 Students checked "yes"

3 Students checked "no"

4 Students said "both" (even though this was not an option)

Do you think you participated more when we talked about the lemonade stand compared to other lessons?

___yes ___no

15 Students checked "yes"

2 Students checked "no"

1 Student said "both"

What were some of the benefits to working so hard on the lemonade stand besides raising money for kids with cancer?

[Variety of answers here.](#)

APPENDIX E

Daily Collegian Article April 10, 2006

APPENDIX F

Data collected from 10 surveys

Dear Parent(s),
April 12, 2006

I first wanted to thank you for your help with our class lemonade stand! In case your son or daughter has not yet told you, we raised a total of \$109.25 for the fight against cancer! I have attached the article that was in the Daily Collegian on Monday. I am so proud of all of the students for their hard work, both in and out of the classroom, it really paid off!

I have also attached a final survey I am hoping you could fill out and return to school with your child tomorrow. I will be using the data collected from this survey as part of my final student-teaching project. I appreciate your feedback tremendously!

Thank you again for your help,
Miss. Carpenter

1. What sort of things did your child mention about the lemonade stand?
Answers varied.
2. Did you notice your child mentioning if they were spending time with different students in class than they normally would?
4 parents said, "Yes"
1 parent said "Somewhat"
5 parents said "No"
3. How eager was your son or daughter to discuss the lessons we were doing in class that involved the lemonade stand, as compared to how much they talked about other lessons?
7 parents expressed excitement and enthusiasm
1 parent said that their child is excited about most lessons so there was no difference
2 parents stated that their child did not really talk about the lessons.
4. Did they share with you the class total prior to this letter home?
5 parents said "yes"
1 parent did not answer the question
3 parents said "no"
1 parent said "no, but she doesn't share much, she is a one-word kind of kid."
5. If your child came, what was their reaction when they got home? Please explain.
8 parents expressed that their child was in some way excited, eager, or enthusiastic.
6. If your child could not make it, was he or she disappointed? Or did they not seem to mind that they couldn't come?
2 parents expressed that their child was disappointed
1 parent stated that their child "did not mind"
7. Do you believe this was a worthwhile experience for your child? Please explain. (Whether he/she was able to attend the actual lemonade stand or not, ALL students worked to plan the event during our morning meetings.)
9 parents said "yes"
1 parent did not answer the question

APPENDIX G

LESSON:

Question	Number of students with hands raised:
#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	
#5	
#6	
#7	
#8	
#9	
#10	
#11	
#12	

DATE:

APPENDIX H

Lemonade for SALE

- ▶ How much lemonade do we need?
(yellow)
- ▶ How much do we want to sell it for?
75¢, 50¢, * we need to bring change*
- ▶ How big are the glasses?
- ▶ How do we plan to get our materials?
• Donate: cups, lemonade, coolers, ice coolers

Manage our stand

- collecting money
- some people could make lemonade
- Advertise
- * Jake has tables
- * Emily has coolers

Jobs

- Make Lemonade
- Brings tables → signs downtown
- Make signs / Wear signs → Posters w/ details
- Set-up

Possible locations:

- Mall, downtown State College or downtown Boalsburg
- Shopping Plaza (Hills)
- Relay for life

What time?

2-5 hours
set up at 11 am (sell at 11:30)
3 end (tear down by 3:30)

APPENDIX I

Student letter to ESL teacher.

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