



Service-Learning Unit

Animals in World Cultures

Primary Subject: Language Arts

Grade Level: 7th

Additional Subject Area Connections: Social Studies & Art

Unit Title: Animals in World Cultures

Type(s) of Service: Indirect and Advocacy

Unit Description: Animals and animal symbols are highly prevalent in cultures around the world. They are depicted in art, written into myths and stories, and revered and abhorred in religions. However, the cultural significance of animals is often underrepresented and the animals themselves are abused or neglected. This project will ask seventh graders to advocate for animal rights and raise awareness of cruelty to animals through an indirect service-learning experience (and a potential advocacy project).

Potential Service-Learning Action Experiences:

- Support charities that care for animals such as [Rescue Animals in Need](http://www.arkrain.org/), (<http://www.arkrain.org/>) (*indirect action*)
- Conduct a silent auction fundraiser for animals in need with created art ([Square 1 Art](http://www.Square1Art.com), www.Square1Art.com) (*indirect action*)
- Participate in and/or support a SPCA Walk (*indirect action*)
- Collect donations for animal shelters (*indirect action*)
- Design and implement an advocacy campaign to educate the community about animal cruelty and neglect and what they can do to help (*advocacy*)

Maryland Curriculum Standards Met

Reading - Literacy:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Reading – Informational Text

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7.2

Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

Writing

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Alignment with Maryland's Best Practices of Service-Learning: *Animals in World Cultures*

1. Meet a recognized community need

Students will create an awareness of the importance of animals throughout world history in world cultures in order to advocate and raise funds for animal rights in their local communities.

2. Achieve curricular objectives through service-learning

Students will advocate and raise funds for animal rights through the use of persuasive writing, poetry, and art work.

3. Reflect throughout the service-learning experience

Students will use the persuasive writing, poetry, art work, and sketch books to continually reflect throughout the process. The culminating reflection piece will ask students to write a letter as a class to a charity the class chooses and donate the funds raised to them.



4. Develop student responsibility (Students have opportunities to make decisions about the service-learning project.)

Students will work in committees to complete the silent auction. The **Planning Committee** will make floor plans, list materials, create duty lists, assign students to each duty, and create lists of the artwork to be auctioned. The **Outreach Committee** will send invitations to parents, senior citizens, local animal shelters, pet stores, etc. and hang posters advertising the silent auction around the community. The **Entertainment Committee** will request items for a raffle or door prizes, additional items to bid on, and packaged food and drinks for light refreshment. These activities may involve creation of persuasive letters to local businesses.

5. Establish community partnerships

Partnerships will be established with the SPCA, local animal shelters, local pet stores and other businesses to raise funds and collect donations for the silent auction.

6. Plan ahead for service-learning

Students will create timelines for their committees and the silent auction and work together to meet timelines and complete the project.

7. Equip students with knowledge and skills needed for service

Students will learn about animal symbolism in world mythology, folklore, and in poetry. They will visit the SPCA website and other sources to gain insight into animal cruelty and neglect issues. The ability to write a business letter, persuasive letter, thank you letter, and to use animal symbolism in poetry and art is also essential.



Maryland Curriculum Standards Met

Social Studies:

2.A.1.a Apply understandings of the elements of culture to the studies of modern world regions, such as art, music, religion, government, social structures, education, values, beliefs and customs.

D4.3.6-8 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

D4.6.6-8

Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

Visual Arts:

2.2.b Plan artworks that use symbolic images and forms to convey selected beliefs, customs, or values.

Procedures with Resources:

Animals in World Cultures

These procedures represent an example of a service-learning lesson on this specific topic, but can be changed to meet individual classroom interests or varying community needs. You are encouraged to adapt this unit to fit your unique classroom and community and to solicit student input in planning and decision making.

1. Introduce the service-learning project by discussing service-learning and citizenship with students and engaging in activities to explore those themes. A resource to support this topic can be found at [Bringing Learning To Life](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2-eoEi6FCo) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2-eoEi6FCo>).
2. Introduce Culture – Values and Animals.
 - a. Analyze animal symbolism in mythology/world folklore.
 - i. African folklore – Anasazi and others
 - ii. China – Bats, dragons, tigers, animals on calendars
 - iii. Japan – Koi and others
 - iv. United States of America – dogs, cats, horses, wolves, and Native American connections
 - v. India – cows, pigs
3. Analyze animal symbolism in poetry.
 - a. Look to see if the symbolism is similar to the mythology/folklore.
4. Introduce Animal Cruelty/ Neglect.
 - a. [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](https://www.asPCA.org/), (<https://www.asPCA.org/>)
 - b. "Oscar the Cat Predicts Patients' Deaths" by Ray Henry
5. Choose an organization as a class to partner with and who will be the recipient of donated funds or items.
6. Create artwork and poetry that reflect cultural values and animal symbolism to sell at auction. Create posters to advertise the silent auction.
7. Create committee with chairs and co-chairs: Planning Committee, Outreach Committee, and Entertainment Committee.
8. The Planning Committee organizes a silent auction night. They make floor plans, list materials, create duty lists, and create an artwork list.
9. The Outreach Committee sends invitations and hangs posters. Material should be sent to parents, senior citizens, local animal shelters, pet stores, etc. Hang posters to advertise for the silent auction around the community.
10. The Entertainment Committee requests donations. Request items for the raffle and/or door prizes, more items to bid on, and packaged food and drinks for light refreshment. This may involve persuasive letters to local businesses.

11. Hold a student facilitated silent auction.
12. Write class letters to organizations that support animals.
13. Upon completion, analyze the plan to evaluate the successful completion of the objective and overall success of the project. Also, reflect on the project using various reflection activities and evaluate the effectiveness of the project by completing the [Rubric for Assessing the Use of the Maryland's Seven Best Practices of Service-Learning](http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Service-Learning/rubric_best.pdf)
(http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Documents/Service-Learning/rubric_best.pdf).

Additional Interdisciplinary Connections



Math – Create a budget for the silent auction. Estimate the amount of money that will be generated.

Health/Science – Study the dietary needs of healthy domesticated animals versus that of neglected domesticated animals.

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[Maryland Public Schools Service-Learning Website](http://www.mdservice-learning.org) (www.mdservice-learning.org)
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