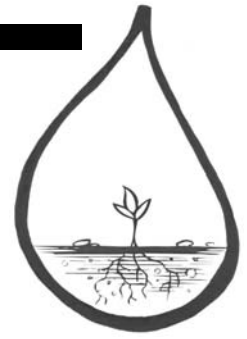


Building Environmental Youth Leadership

A High-School Service-learning Curriculum



TOPIC:

Team-building

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will get acquainted with their co-participants.
- Students will begin cooperating to solve problems.
- Students will explore their common knowledge of water-related terms.

LENGTH:

30 to 45 minutes

ENVIRONMENT:

Indoors—preferably a computer lab with internet access. Need a place for students to pair-off for short discussions.

MATERIALS:

- Index cards.
- Markers and scissors.
- A basket.
- Large pieces of newsprint.
- Internet access or access to other science and water reference materials.

A Watershed Puzzle

Background:

Students should be familiar with certain water-related terms in order to effectively identify and plan an environmental service-learning project in their watershed. They need to speak a common language. This activity provides students with an opportunity to explore and define key terminology, and present results to the entire group. The process allows members to become more familiar working together, pooling knowledge and abilities. It also leads to celebration of a group success.

Activity Outline:

Beforehand:

Select from the *vocabulary list* (Appendix A) appropriate terms for your watershed and project possibilities—the activity requires 1 term per 2 to 3 students. Write the terms on index cards in bold marker. Then, cut the index cards into odd-shaped puzzle-pieces. Each card should be split into 2 to 3 pieces depending on group size. Finally, place all of the pieces into a basket, and mix them thoroughly.

Matching the Pieces:

Students gather around for instructions. Begin by stating the objectives of the activity. Then, describe the process. Each will select a puzzle-piece from the passing basket. When the game begins, students should wander among their cohorts, seeking a match for their piece. Stress that students should maintain civility—walk, avoid shoving groupmates, etc. When all matching puzzle pieces have been located, the resulting group should gather and find a place to sit, preferably by a computer or reference materials. A representative from each group should get a piece of newsprint and a few markers.

Defining the Watershed:

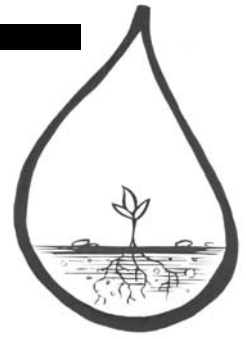
Explain that each puzzle contains a water-related term, an important piece of information for our collective understanding of the upcoming project. Unfortunately, defining scientific terms is not always easy. In this case, however, two or three heads are better than one. Students will have 10 to 15 minutes to search the internet or reference materials for a definition to their term. They should write the definition on their newsprint in bold letters that all will be able to read. Pictures, diagrams, etc. can also be added to better illustrate the definition.

Solving the Puzzle:

Each group should choose a student to present their definition. In turns, these reporters stand in front of the entire group, read their definition, and explain any illustrations. They should also discuss briefly where they found the information.

Building Environmental Youth Leadership

A High-School Service-learning Curriculum



When all have finished presenting, take time to process the group building aspects of the experience. Ask students to consider how they went about solving this problem. How did the work completed in small groups benefit the large group? How did the small groups work together? What lessons are learned? Have students discuss application of these lessons to their service-learning project. Then take time to applaud the group success.

References:

This lesson is adapted from "Match Up" in *Instant Icebreakers*, Sandy Stewart Christian, MSW, and Nancy Loving Tubesing, EdD, editors. © 1997 Whole Person Associates Inc., 210 West Michigan, Duluth, MN 55802.