



generationOn™

Learning to Give

# Learning TO GIVE

January

*Moments of Service*

Toolkit

<b>January <i>Moments of Service</i> Overview</b>	Page 2
<b>Tips for Teachers</b> <b>“Blue Sky” Activity</b>	Page 3
<b>Ideas for Service Projects</b>	Page 6
<b>Service Stories from Schools</b>	Page 9
<b>Role of Volunteers</b>	Page 11
<b>Quotations</b>	Page 12
<b>Reproducible Form</b>	Page 14

## *JANUARY MOMENTS OF SERVICE OVERVIEW*

### **New Year's Day**

January 1

Each year more than half of all people living in the U.S. (more than 150,000,000 people) make New Year Resolutions. Encourage students to include service and volunteerism on their list of New Year Resolutions.

### **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

January 18

Raise student's awareness of the concepts of "caring, respect and fairness" and encourage students to demonstrate these character qualities to honor the legacy of Dr. King.

<http://www.mlkday.gov/>



### **Moments of Service lessons** (<http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/genOn/January>)

introduce the topic, develop awareness, stimulate investigation, and promote problem solving, team building, and action. For New Year's Day or Martin Luther King, Jr. Day lessons raise students' awareness of the concepts of caring, respect, and fairness and encourages students to demonstrate these character qualities with no expectations in return. The grade-specific lessons include "Learning Links" that reinforce the lesson concepts using 10 five-minute mini-lessons, and a selection of "Post Service Reflection Activities" to facilitate student reflection on the personal and community impact of their service event.

Participation in January activities not only honors Dr. King's legacy, but also builds social capital and empowers students to practice acts of kindness and advocacy. Students experience promoting justice and kindness as a means to effect change in the community and the world.

## TIPS FOR TEACHERS

- Teach an Introduction to Philanthropy unit ([http://learningtogive.org/resources/Introduction%20to%20Philanthropy%20\(2\).pdf](http://learningtogive.org/resources/Introduction%20to%20Philanthropy%20(2).pdf)) to introduce the concept of giving time, talent, and treasure and taking action for the common good.
- Determine student interests, giving passions and community needs through the “Blue Sky” activity (included in this toolkit).
- Once student interest has been established, access additional [generationOn curriculum](#) that addresses those interests. Use the [Find Lesson Plans search function](#) (search on keywords words such as environment, homelessness, recycle, education) or by using the Google Search option.
- Student voice is essential when planning service projects. To guide students in determining how they will plan their service, ask questions such as the following: *How would you do that? What kind of tools and materials would you need to do that? Who could we ask to help us? How much do you think it would cost?*
- In addition to providing a service, such as volunteering, advocating, performing acts of kindness, collecting and donating needed items, students may choose to raise funds by collecting pledges for their service. Some forms are provided at the end of this toolkit for use with a fundraiser.
- Teach a January *Moments of Service* lesson (<http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/genOn/January>) to introduce the focus of the event and to help students begin to determine areas of interest, investigate needs, and brainstorm projects.
- Inspire student thinking by sharing some of the project ideas listed in this toolkit.
- If any projects involve local service agencies, the teacher, adult volunteers, or the students should contact those organizations regarding plans and needs.
- Remember to obtain permission for students to leave the school campus if the service project is held offsite.
- Ask several volunteers (students, family or community members) to collect data and take pictures of the projects for inclusion on a class web page or for submission to the media.
- Use reflection tools at the beginning of the planning, during the process, and after the service project is complete in order to assess student growth in attitudes and learning.
- Involve your students in the *Kids for King* initiative to explain the importance of building a lasting memorial to honor this legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and inspire youth from grades 3-12 to write an essay, create a piece of art or produce a short video about the lasting legacy of his ideals of democracy, justice, hope and love. Lesson plans, resources and activities are available at no charge on the web site [www.kidsforking.org](http://www.kidsforking.org).
- GenerationOn offers free monthly webinars. You will be notified of these opportunities if you [join generationOn](#) and request the e-newsletter.
- After your students complete a service-learning project, track their service using the generationOn “[Service Tracker](#)” where teachers can tell the story of what their students do.



## "BLUE SKY" ACTIVITY

**This activity focuses students on identifying and responding to community needs.**

Blue Sky is a visioning exercise that guides students in imagining a better world. Students are asked to take a look at their class, school neighborhood, community, state, nation, and/or the world. They reflect on the way it is and then imagine the way they would like it to be. Service coaches are encouraged to use this strategy at the beginning of the first service event and to revisit it before planning each service experience with the students.

Blue Sky serves as a launch pad for the school year of service. The service coach may refer to the students' Blue Sky thoughts throughout the year as a form of evaluation (how are we doing on the issues we identified) and review (what issues are still important to us that need to be addressed).

This activity encourages empathy, compassion, and self expression. It also helps students learn to react to a negative situation with a positive action.

The activity can be on a small or large scale. On a smaller scale, Blue Sky serves as a classroom activity. A service coach may lead a personalized visioning activity with one class, facilitating brainstorming of real issues that students have passion for, and then guiding the students to use those results as the main focus for their future service projects.

On a large scale, the activity may be conducted with the whole school and include family and community members. Hold a breakfast or town hall in the school gym. Organize the group into smaller groups for brainstorming. Having the community participate shows the students that they have community support, and it gives a better understanding of how they can impact their community.

Encourage students to organize much of the community Blue Sky event because they will be setting the tone for the year's service goals. They may create the invitation list, organize the breakfast and activity, and select topics for discussion.



## "BLUE SKY" ACTIVITY (CONTINUED)

**Materials:**

8½ x 11 paper (blue if possible), enough for each student

Crayons/markers/colored pencils (old magazines, scissors, and glue/paste, if doing a collage)

**Activity:**

1. Discuss the meaning of community as it relates to the student's experience: home, school, friends, neighborhood, city, state, country, and world.
2. Ask students to identify what is good about their community and what they would like to see improved or changed. Create a chart to fill-in as the students discuss:

Good	Improve or Change

3. Give each student a piece of blue paper.
4. Invite students to portray their ideal world or what they would like their world to look like in 10 years--what the world/community could look like if everyone worked together. Students can draw, color, paint, or create collages on their blue paper.
5. When the students are finished, allow each student time to share their creation with the class.
6. Record students' thoughts and ideas on a display board, and identify and reflect on some of the recurring themes. This can be helpful in identifying student interests for planning of service projects.
7. As a class, briefly brainstorm ideas on how to achieve the ideals and what challenges they might face in achieving "the ideal?"
8. Create a "permanent display" of the students' illustrations. It is recommended that these illustrations remain available for display for the school year as a reference to for future reflection, planning, and for the Awards Celebration. The student papers can be combined into a collage, quilt, or bulletin board display. A paper "quilt" may be rolled up and stored and brought out for appropriate discussions.

## IDEAS FOR SERVICE PROJECTS

Ideas to present and discuss with the students:

- Write kind notes to people who provide a regular service. Be specific and respectful in the letters and let the persons know they are appreciated for what they do. This may include a crossing guard, a school volunteer, a letter carrier, the receptionist at the orthodontist office, a choir or youth leader, or the principal at your school. See the Learning to Give units:
  - Volunteering as Good Work (K-2) ([www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit164/](http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit164/))
  - Philanthropy, You, and Your World (6-8) ([www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit82/](http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit82/))
- Teach a game to younger students as an after-school program. Help them play fairly and teach them to use problem-solving to settle disputes. See the Learning to Give unit:
  - It's All in the Cards (3-5) ([www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit394/](http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit394/))
- Challenge the students to line the halls with acts of kindness. Set a linear length for a class or school goal, and for each act of kindness completed, fill out a heart-shaped paper with a sentence description. Hang the hearts on the wall in a line.
- Create cards of support for children or families in a homeless shelter or for service men and women.
- Give flowers (real or artistic models) to residents in a retirement community.
- Organize an event to give gifts to a group of people who utilize a shelter or food pantry. For example, collect donations of personal items for women. Fill shoeboxes for individuals, with items like moisturizer, shampoo, toothpaste, treats, deodorant, razors, etc. Pass out the boxes on a given day.
- Students read aloud to preschool-age children at an at-risk school or shelter to help the children develop a love of reading. See the Learning to Give unit:
  - Each One, Teach One (3-5) ([www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit24/](http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit24/)).
- Students play games with children from a local at-risk school. (Invite students from a school that doesn't have an adequate playground to play at your school for a long recess several times a year.)
- Arrange regular class visits to residents at a retirement home. Read to them, talk to them, present a short program about Dr. King, and learn about them.
- Learn to knit, and donate homemade hats.
- Make and give out buttons with kindness slogans on them.



## IDEAS FOR SERVICE PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

- Create a gift basket for a family who has experienced a loss.
- Create bookmarks with kindness slogans and random acts of kindness ideas. Ask the local library if you may put the bookmarks on the library checkout desk for patrons to take as they leave the library.
- Smile at people you pass in the school hallways and on the sidewalk or in the store.
- Wash the dishes or unload the dishwasher without being asked.
- Randomly hand out chocolate kisses or lollipops to people for no reason and say, “Have a nice day.”
- Cook dinner for your family without being asked.
- Give a compliment to someone.
- Write a personal note to someone, but don’t sign your name. The note should include a compliment or words of encouragement. Attach a candy bar and the note on the person’s locker or desk. Keep it anonymous.
- Help a family member or neighbor with babysitting, pet care, or house or yard work.
- Invite a fellow student, who appears to be isolated from the group, to join in an activity.
- Make a simple craft (bracelets, lapel pin, tiny beaded doll/angel) and including an inspirational message or quote. Give the homemade items with message attached to a designated group as a symbol of empathy and caring. This may be a group in a foreign country, a disaster area, or anyone who needs support.
- Advocate for fairness and justice by writing a letter, calling or emailing a public official, or speaking at a public meeting. See the Learning to Give unit:
  - Advocacy—Getting the Job Done (9-12) ([www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit432](http://www.learningtogive.org/lessons/unit432)).
- Get involved with Special Olympics to advocate for fair and respectful treatment of people with intellectual disabilities. ([www.specialolympics.org/Get\\_Involved.aspx](http://www.specialolympics.org/Get_Involved.aspx))



## IDEAS FOR SERVICE PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

- Check out these websites for more ideas!
  - <http://www.actsofkindness.org/>
  - <http://schools.hpedsb.on.ca/smood/kindness/ideas.htm>
  - <http://www.helpothers.org/ideas.php>
  - <http://www.mlkday.gov/>
  - <http://www.goodcharacter.com/SERVICE/primer-10.html>
  - <http://www.goodcharacter.com/SERVICE/primer-1.html>
  - <http://www.daretobeanangel.com/tasklist.php>
- Use small-group activities (<http://learningtogive.org/youthworkers/02activities.asp>) that motivate students and teach the concepts of philanthropy, service, and good character for use in service project meetings.
- Celebrate student participation and success throughout the service project and call attention to outstanding student initiative and effort.
- Recognize student participation and effort. Ask several volunteers (students, family or community members) to collect data and take pictures of the projects for inclusion on the class web page or for submission to the media. Collect data and evidence, document activities through video and student writing, and monitor student progress throughout the service project.
- Invite parents and community members to a final celebration or awards ceremony during which students share a demonstration of what they did and how it impacted the environment and themselves.

## SERVICE STORIES FROM SCHOOLS

*"This was a great opportunity to teach character education through social studies, reading, writing and mathematics."*

Maria , 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher  
Newark, NJ



**Grand Rapids, MI** -- Frost Elementary School celebrated Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with a display of warmth. The students made pictures of themselves and then placed them on and around a giant globe, symbolizing their efforts to reach out and help others everywhere. Beginning on one side of the globe and making its way around the entire school is a chain of colorful mittens. Recorded on each mitten is a good deed performed by one of the students. By month's end, the mittens met on the other side of the globe.

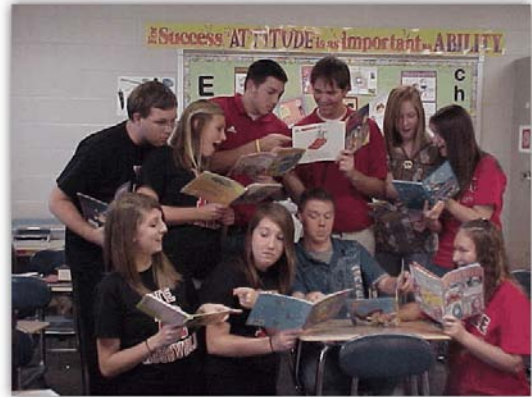
**Austin, TX** -- Ms. Virginia Torres' sixth grade at Webb Middle School made Haiku cards for children at the Children's Hospital. Not only did they spread good cheer, but the cards fit in beautifully with Ms. Torres' lesson on Japan.

*"There are many benefits to service-learning that are way beyond the thank you gifts our kids await for their efforts. The true gift here, according to Valentin, a sixth grader in a special needs class, is that 'I made a difference! I can't believe it. When can we do this again?' It is this heartfelt feeling, the one you get when you are able to help others, that is truly the best gift of all."*

--Olga, Teacher,  
Wilson Avenue School, NJ

## SERVICE STORIES FROM SCHOOLS (CONTINUED)

**Rushville, IN** -- Discovering children's books all over again was fun for Lisa Bare's homeroom class. They were named "The Biggest Givers" in Rushville Consolidated High School's book collection. RCHS donated 1,321 books and \$200, to local preschools, head start classes, and the local hospital "Reach Out and Read" program.



**Austin, TX** -- At the Forest Trail School, Ms. Ashley Schneider's first grade created a whole batch of cards and decided to distribute them to other students in their school.

The students enjoyed hand delivering the cards and were pleasantly surprised with how it made them feel. When asked how it felt to give the cards to the other children, here's some of what they had to say: "I got a tingly feeling!" "I felt like there was a fire in my body." "I felt sort of like a flower blooming." "It was like some sort of spark or firework inside." "I felt as happy as a pink marker that will never run out of ink!" "It felt better than eating an ice cream sundae!" Better than ice cream, you say? You bet!

**Newark, NJ** -- For the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day activity at McKinley Elementary, students spent the week designing beaded bracelets, spelling out words that represented Dr. King's dream. The bracelets were sold to fellow students and teachers, and worn on January 15th (Dr. King's birthday).

*"Children were able to describe the different aspects of treating one another fairly. I really enjoyed the story as much as the children. I could not get the children to stop talking about what was going on. I explained to them the meaning of diversity and one child commented that "it's not fair! Excellent lesson on teaching children about being nice to one another.*

K. Calloway, Kindergarten Teacher,  
Newark, NJ

**Shelby, MI.** "Have you filled a bucket today?" First and second grade students asked this question of each other during their January service-learning event. To celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King's principles of kindness, respect, and equality, students at Thomas Read Elementary School in Shelby decided to see how many buckets they could fill. To fill a bucket, they performed loving, caring, and nice things for others to make them feel special. Every time a student "filled someone's bucket," they were able to put their name on a paper star and deposit it into a bucket that was located in their classrooms. At the end of the week, the classroom with the most stars in their bucket received a prize.

These students, although young, kept one another accountable and enthused in the pursuit of filling their buckets. After the week of bucket filling was over, a total of 28.8 hours was spent on acts of kindness and making others feel special. It was definitely a bucket-filled week for these elementary students.

## ROLES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Community members can help:

- ✓ Place posters around the school/community advertising the upcoming service project(s).
- ✓ Work alongside students as they serve in the community.
- ✓ Help students brainstorm ideas for acts of kindness and justice.
- ✓ Help students conduct investigations and needs assessments of the community.
- ✓ Connect with media for press releases before, during, and after the service.
- ✓ Assist with tabulation of results from the service-learning project.
- ✓ Take pictures of the service projects for inclusion on the class website or for submission to the media.
- ✓ Help plan a recognition ceremony at the conclusion of the service project.
- ✓ Secure funding to support the recognition ceremony.
- ✓ Network with school families to discover needs, such as people who are busy with a crisis or illness and need help with yard work, house work, pet care, or babysitting.
- ✓ Make and maintain a bulletin board featuring photos and descriptions of students' acts of caring.
- ✓ Teach groups of students about the volunteer's area of expertise related to the focus issues.
- ✓ Help students gather necessary supplies for the projects they plan.
- ✓ Arrange transportation for students whose projects require it.
- ✓ Assist younger students with formatting and design of print materials.
- ✓ Act as chaperones on offsite visits.
- ✓ Assist younger students with reflection writing assignments.



## QUOTATIONS

**Use these quotes for reflection, as journal prompts, or as discussion starters before, during, or after a service project.**

### Kindness & Compassion

*"No act of kindness, no matter how small is ever wasted."*

Aesop Greek fabulist (c.500 B.C.)

*"The point is not to pay back kindness but to pass it on."*

Alvarez, Julia

*"A kind heart is a fountain of gladness, making everything in its vicinity freshen into smiles."*

Irving, Washington Author (1783-1859)

*"I prefer you to make mistakes in kindness than work miracles in unkindness."*

Mother Teresa Roman Catholic missionary in India (1910-1997)

*"What if the healing of the world utterly depends on the ten-thousand invisible kindnesses we offer simply and quietly throughout the pilgrimage of each human life?"*

Muller, Wayne Author

### Justice and Fairness

*"Discrimination is the act of treating differently two persons or things, under like circumstances."*

Broch, Hermann Writer (1886-1951)

*"There is always time to make right what is wrong."*

Griffin, Susan

*"Justice is the firm and continuous desire to render to everyone that which is his due."*

Justinian

*"Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."*

Niebuhr, Reinhold American religious and social thinker (1892-1971)

*"We must remember that any oppression, any injustice, any hatred, is a wedge designed to attack our civilization."*

Roosevelt, Franklin Delano 32nd President of the United States (1933-1945)

### Tolerance and Respect

*"If men would consider not so much where they differ, as wherein they agree, there would be far less of uncharitableness and angry feeling in the world."*

Addison, Joseph English essayist, poet, and statesman (1672–1719)

## QUOTATIONS (CONTINUED)

*"We should acknowledge differences, we should greet differences, until difference makes no difference anymore."*

Allen, Dr. Adela A. Educator

*"If we are to live together in peace, we must come to know each other better."*

Johnson, Lyndon Baines 36th President of the United States (1908–1973)

*"When you meet a man, you judge him by his clothes; when you leave, you judge him by his heart."*

Proverb-Russian

*"We are a nation of many nationalities, many races, many religions—bound together by a single unity, the unity of freedom and equality. Whoever seeks to set one nationality against another, seeks to degrade all nationalities."*

Roosevelt, Franklin Delano 32nd President of the United States (1933-1945)

*"Tolerance is the oil which takes the friction out of life."*

Scheer, Wilbert E.

*"Whoever kindles the flames of intolerance in America is lighting a fire underneath his own home."*

Stassen, Harold E. American public official (1907-2001)

### Diversity

*"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."*

King, Jr., Martin Luther Minister and Campaigner for Social Justice through Nonviolent Voluntary Action (1929-1968)

*"We really are fifteen different countries and it's really remarkable that each of us thinks we represent the real America. The midwesterner in Kansas, the black American in Durham—both are certain they are the real American."*

Angelou, Maya Novelist and Poet (1928-)

*"America is woven of many strands. I would recognize them and let it so remain. Our fate is to become one, and yet many. This is not prophecy, but description."*

Ellison, Ralph Novelist (1914-1994)

*"When we lose the right to be different, we lose the privilege to be free."*

Hughes, Charles Evans Chief justice of the US Supreme Court (1862-1948)

*"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. If [people] can learn to hate they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."*

Mandela, Nelson South African statesman (1918- )

