

Across the Ages

This project's effectiveness went far beyond my expectations. Having an authentic audience motivated the children. Many received compliments on the quality of their letters and the improvements made over the months. I received several letters thanking me for the program and letting me know how much it meant to the seniors. One wrote to say the only Valentine card she received was from her pen pal. The daughter of another said her mother was discouraged by a long illness last fall. Letters from her pen pal picked up her spirits. The children could see they made a difference in the lives of many senior citizens. Because so many children and seniors wanted to meet each other, we hosted a Pen Pal Social as a closing activity.

Curriculum/State Standard

Global Stewardship: Be concerned for others and interact with the community.

Language Arts: Use a variety of writing forms, including letter writing.

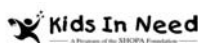
Overview

With senior citizens as an audience, second graders learned to write quality letters. They used the appropriate letter format. Students evaluated their work using a rubric and selected their best letters for their writing portfolio and class book of letters.

Objectives

- Students will connect with local senior citizens who have limited communication with others.
- Students will learn to write letters for an authentic audience.
- Students will develop a writing portfolio and self-assess their work.
- Students will contribute to a class book: Our Book of Letters

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THIS WINNING LESSON PLAN WAS SUBMITTED BY:

Elaine Williams
Russell School
8 Gray Park, Gray, ME 04039

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GRADE LEVEL



ARTS



LANGUAGE



MATH

Misc

MISCELLANEOUS



SCIENCE



HISTORY



SOCIAL STUDIES

6-7

MONTHS

\$375

TOTAL BUDGET

“Across the Ages” project continued...

Materials

A variety of paper goods for letters, cards, class book; envelopes and postage; photos to document portfolios and class book; scanner to scan letters into children's discs.

Readiness Activity

While studying our community we discussed how important it is to be a contributing citizen. We discussed how writing to senior citizens would be a community service. Instruction in letter writing format and content was given and a rubric created. A survey was given to assess students' community involvement and letter writing experience.

Strategies/Activities

October: Students completed the pre- letter writing survey. They worked with the teacher to write a rubric to assess their letter writing. They wrote an introductory letter to their senior citizen. A rough draft was written, followed by revising, editing and final copy writing.

November to May: Children wrote monthly letters.

Twice a year, January and May: They chose samples of their best letters to go into their writing portfolio.

Culminating Activity

Children chose a copy of their best letter of the year to be published in our class book *Our Book of Letters*. This book will be a resource for teachers and students throughout our school. Children took the post-writing survey. We hosted a Pen Pal Social to bring closure to the project.

Evaluation

Pre- and post-surveys assessing students' community involvement and letter writing experience.

Numerically scored rubrics were used by both student and teacher to assess letter writing quality.

Portfolio: included scanned samples of “best” letters and photos documenting this project's activities.

Class book *Our Book of Letters* which included a sample of each child's quality letter writing.