Warm Heads, Warm Hearts

This project enabled students to determine needs they can help others meet through their community service.

Curriculum/State Standards
Washington State Essential Learnings (EALRs) and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs)
The state standards by which the project activities are driven are the Washington State Essential Learnings (EALRs). This project involves five different curriculum/standards areas: the arts, reading, writing, communication, and mathematics. For the arts, students will be demonstrating their thinking skills using artistic processes, such as creating a patterned hat/scarf for the homeless citizens of our community. Students will be reading directions to understand the meaning of what is read and demonstrating comprehension of what is read demonstrated by their work production. The students will be writing letters to go along with their hats and scarves expressing best wishes and thoughts in the cold weather. Through the writing of the letters, students will be understanding and using the writing process, writing for a variety of purposes, and being sure to write clearly and effectively. For math, the students will be determining the pattern of their hats/scarves (math patterning skill) and using math to define and solve problems and using mathematical reasoning to analyze patterns. The students will be using measurement to determine the amount of yarn needed for their hats and scarves and the cost breakdown. My students will understand how math ideas connect within math, to other subject/EALR areas, and to real-life situations. Communication is another area involved. The students will need to use their listening and observation skills/strategies to gain understanding of the processes and directions. They will use their communication skills to interact and work with others, i.e., each other when requesting yarn or assistance, as well as positive encouragement of others.

Overview
Students construct hats/scarves using a round knitting loom, choosing their patterns, sizes of hats/looms, and colors of yarn. Students then write letters to the hat/scarf recipients expressing their best wishes and telling the care they put into constructing the hats/scarves. They also complete daily written reflection journals with culminating final reflection journals with photos.

Objectives
The student will demonstrate knowledge of letter writing skills and use the writing process to write an introductory friendly letter to the hat/scarf recipient expressing warm regards.
The student will demonstrate the ability to follow one-step, two-step, and three-step oral and written directions in construction of knitted hats and scarves for home challenged/homeless individuals residing in the local community.
Students will follow project guidelines, communicating their steps orally, in writing, and through performance, with fewer than two teacher interventions.
The student will demonstrate the ability to use a knitting loom to produce a hat or scarf for an individual of varying age/size (infant to adult), in a student designed pattern/color and size appropriate.
The student will interact appropriately

THIS WINNING PROJECT IDEA SUBMITTED BY:

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with peers, staff, and community
members physically, verbally, and
through body language, using
situation-specific behavior with
minimal teacher assistance.

Materials
sets of round knitting looms;
at least two looming tools per
student (they wear out quickly at
the beginning); yarn in a variety
of textures and colors; scissors
(one per student); rug needles
(plastic without sharp end for
finishing the hat/scarf); paper
and pencils (for written notes
that are included in the hats or
attached to the scarves.

Readiness Activity
The students begin the project
by discussing their background
knowledge of seeing homeless
people on the streets or corners
asking for money or shivering.
Students discuss questions such
as “What does it mean to be
homeless?”; “Why don’t homeless
people have warm clothes
or enough food?” and “What
can students do to make the
homeless people’s lives better?”

Strategies/Activities
Students begin this activity
in their life skills class by
researching homelessness on
the Internet or by interviewing
employees at the local homeless
shelter via phone. They will
research the variety of needs
and wants of the homeless
and present their findings to
the class. Class will brainstorm
ideas of how to help, with hats
or scarves for the homeless in
the winter being one way they
can help. Students will then
determine how much money it
would cost for each student to
make one hat for a homeless
person, taking into account how
many hats can be constructed
from one typical four-ounce skein
of 4-ply yarn. In math, students
will then determine how much
yarn is needed to construct one
hat (using their research from the
hats, having the information that
a scarf takes five times as much
yarn to produce than a hat).
Students will then determine for
what age group level they would
like to make hats and choose
the appropriate color/size looms.
They will then develop patterns
(colors and patterns) they would
like to make their hats as and
draw that on pieces of paper, with
their materials listed on the same
pages. Students then have the
opportunity to choose one to two
different colors of yarn. In their
exploratory class, students will
then be given lessons in groups
of three to four students about
how to wind the yarn onto the
loom and how to go around twice
before looming first row. Students
will then return to their desks and
practice their first rows. When
students have demonstrated that
they are able to wrap the first
rows with the proper tension,
they will then be observed doing
their second and third rows.
When staff feels that the yarn
tension is correct and not too
tight, they will then be asked to
loom 17-20 rows in preparation
for their brim. Students will
then be shown how to construct
the brims of their hats and be
asked to loom 17-30 more rows
(number based on size of hat
being produced) to construct the
rest of the hats. Staff will then
show students how to “loom off”
or “needle off,” placing the needle
through each loop to secure
it and how to tie off the tops.
Students will have the opportunity
to construct pom-poms for their
hats, if desired. Once students
have completed at least one
hat, a lesson of proper friendly
letter writing will be conducted
in class. Students will then write
friendly letters to the recipients of
their hats, following the writing
process. Students will then be
allowed to continuing making
hats, working on them during the
life skills class or during any free
time they may have (including
lunch and passing periods).
Once students are comfortable
making hats, they will be allowed
to construct tubular scarves,
following the same process for
hats, excluding the brims, until
of the desired length (standard
was the length from their head to
their toes or from tips of fingers
to tips of fingers).

Culminating Activity
The students complete this
activity by sorting their hats
into the different sizes: infant;
toddler/youth; teen or small
adult; adult. They will also sort
their scarves by length. They will
then pin their letters to their hats/
scarves and place them in a box
in preparation for delivery to the
local homeless shelter. Students
will contact the homeless shelter
via email, letter, or phone to
notify them that the hats/scarves
are ready for pick-up or drop-off.

The students produced 80 hats of
varying sizes, weights, and colors,
along with four scarves (they
found it took the same time to
produce one scarf that it took to
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produce six to seven hats).

**Evaluation Method**
The students were observed on a daily basis through staff observation as well as product produced. Writing samples, including their drafts and final letters, will be collected. Student self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and a final evaluation done by self (student) were also utilized. Each day students were required to complete daily self reflections on what they learned, what went well for them, and what types of feelings they experienced as they worked that day. At the end of the activity, students used their daily reflections to complete final reflections for the entire project. They then took them home to share and pictures of their hats/scarves to share with their parents and families.