











# What is Service-Learning?

Learn and Serve America's
National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
<a href="https://www.servicelearning.org">www.servicelearning.org</a>



## National Commission on Service-Learning

"...a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities."



## **Corporation for National and Community Service**

- Promotes learning through active participation
- Provides structured time for students to reflect
- Provides an opportunity to use skills and knowledge in real-life situations
- Extends learning beyond the classroom
- Fosters a sense of caring for others



#### What's in a name?

- Volunteerism
- Service-Learning
- Youth Service
- Community Service
- Peer Helping
- Experiential Education
- Community-Based Learning



### **Community service example**

If students remove trash from a streambed: they are providing a service to the community as volunteers



### Service-learning example

- When students remove trash from a streambed,
- analyze what they found,
- share the results and offer suggestions for the neighborhood to reduce pollution,
- and then reflect on their experience

THAT is service-learning!



#### Not just academic

Service-learning can also be organized and offered by **community organizations** with learning objectives or structured reflection activities for their participants



#### Many roads to service-learning

#### Different

- Interpretations
- Objectives
- Contexts

#### All seek

- Combination of service objectives with intentional learning objectives
- Changes in both the recipient and the provider of the service



#### **Service-learning is not:**

- An episodic volunteer program
- An add-on to an existing school or college curriculum
- Completing minimum service hours in order to graduate
- Service assigned as a form of punishment
- Only for high school or college students
- One-sided: benefiting only students or only the community



## Common characteristics of authentic service-learning

- positive, meaningful and real to the participants
- cooperative rather than competitive experiences;
   promotes teamwork and citizenship
- addresses complex problems in complex settings rather than simplified problems in isolation
- engages problem-solving in the specific context of service activities and community challenges, rather than generalized or abstract concepts from a textbook



## Common characteristics of authentic service-learning

- students are able to identify the most important issues within a real-world situation through critical thinking
- promotes deeper learning; there are no "right answers" in the back of the book
- generates emotional consequences, which challenge values and ideas
- supports social, emotional and cognitive learning and development



### Added benefits of service-learning

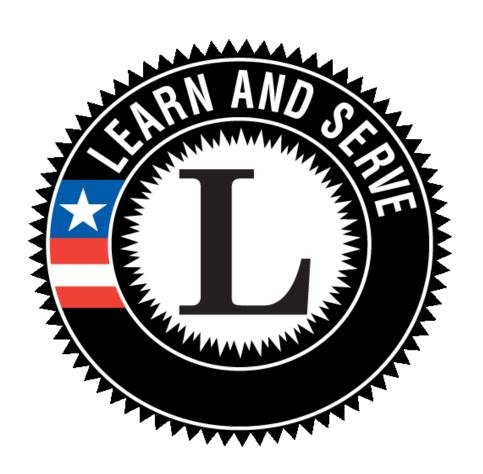
National studies suggest that students in effective service-learning programs:

- improve academic grades
- increase attendance in school
- develop personal and social responsibility

## Learn more about service-learning www.servicelearning.org

■ K-12

- Higher Ed
- Community-based
- Tribal nations





### NSLC resources www.servicelearning.org

#### Website

- □ Site-wide search to find resources on your topic
- □ Hot Topics, Fact Sheets & Quick Guides
- □ Service-Learning Lesson Plans, Syllabi & Curricula
- □ 1600+ service-learning examples from LSA grantees
- Service-learning links to related Web sites
- Publications offered for purchase



### NSLC resources www.servicelearning.org

#### Library

- □ Books, journals, videos for LSA grantees
- Online library catalog available to anyone for identifying service-learning publications
- □ Research & reference service
- □ Downloadable documents & bibliographies



#### **Feedback**

Share your ideas with us!

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