

# Teacher's Pre-Activity Planning Guide

This project involves a great deal of careful planning to insure its success. Provided below are recommendations of steps to follow in preparing for the experiential component of this lesson. Of course, steps may vary, depending upon the local district guidelines.

- Meet with the building principal to obtain permission for the activity.
- Call a local nursing home and speak with the activities director concerning the feasibility of middle school students coming during the day to do volunteer work. If possible, choose a location within a short walk from the school. If the location is quite a distance from your school, make plans for transporting the students.
- Meet with the activities director at the nursing home to discuss the time of day students would be needed, the types of service students could provide, and planned classroom activities that would stem from the nursing home contact. Discuss how students would be supervised and how many students would be needed at any given time. Prepare a rough draft of a weekly schedule including times, type of service needed, and numbers of students needed.
- If students will be out of the building at various times throughout the day, it is important to get the support of their other teachers. Write a letter to the teachers and/or meet with them with the principal. This gives the teachers an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns.
- If necessary, obtain approval of the school board.
- To build enthusiasm for the project among the students, invite the principal and/or activities director from the nursing home to visit the class. Ask the principal to speak about this opportunity to provide service, thus showing support. Introduce the activities director who will explain the work that will be done. Discuss the project with the students, explaining how the schedule and assignments will work.
- Inform the parents by sending home a letter with the schedule of planned service times. Ask parents to discuss the activity with their son or daughter and select the preferred service time.
- Build the schedule based on students' preferences. Send a final copy to parents and to the activities director of the nursing home. Make sure the schedule has been checked for days when students will not be available. Give the teachers a copy of the schedule so they will be aware when students are out of class. Give the principal and school secretary a copy. The school secretary should call the nursing home if a student is absent and will not be coming.

For this set of lessons, students go to the nursing home once a week during a nine-week period. One language arts class a week is devoted to discussion and a writing activity related to this experience.

