



# Service-Learning Project Examples High School

*The possibilities for service-learning projects are endless. The following are examples of real projects. Though successful service-learning requires projects that are tailored to the specific needs of the participants, these examples can be a wonderful tool to help practitioners and young people jumpstart the brainstorming process and dream up their own service-learning projects. Though these projects are targeted at high school students, they can be easily adapted for other ages.*

## **Senior Partnerships**

*Grade 11*

Subject: U.S. History

An intergenerational project helped history students discover interesting, but often overlooked, historical resources in their newfound friends from a local senior center. The class partnered with the center, and students were paired with senior “buddies” for the duration of the school year. The youths met periodically with the seniors to document the elders’ life histories, a process that included formal, recorded interviews. Students did additional research into the events that shaped their buddies’ lives, including the Great Depression, World War II, and the Holocaust.

Journaling, group discussions, and other reflective activities helped students gain a broader understanding of history and the ideas and opinions of the community’s elderly population. The interviews became the source material for student essays, which were combined into a bound text and donated to a number of community agencies, including the senior center, the public library, and the school.

## **Youth-Run Internet Service**

*Grades 9 through 12*

Subjects: Accounting and Computers

When the Internet service provider in a rural town decided to leave the community, students at the local high school stepped in and took over its operations. The project was incorporated into the school’s computer programming and accounting curricula. Students provided service to 450 members of the community, including a senior center where they also assisted the seniors with their computer needs.

Students also assessed the resources needed to provide wireless broadband service, including the financial, hardware, and labor needs. Through their hard work and planning, the students were able to offer wireless services to local businesses.

## **Historic Graveyard Preservation Project**

*Grades 9 through 12*

Subjects: English and History

While assessing community needs, students noticed that a local historic graveyard was in a state of decay and decided to do something about it. They developed a plan to restore 166 headstones of which 50 were vandalized and 116 were destroyed by age and weathering. The headstones were photographed, identified and assigned a replacement value. Students wrote letters to area businesses, churches, and civic organizations requesting that they adopt a headstone. Students also researched and placed a marker at the grave of the city’s first African-American physician.

**Water Quality Improvement**

*Grades 9 through 12*

Subject: Biology

A high school biology class decided to test the water in their local lake and found it was polluted. After researching water pollution and ways to reverse it, the students developed a five-year plan to clean up the lake. In the first year of the plan, they partnered with the Chamber of Commerce and the state Department of Natural Resources to develop a pamphlet that was distributed to residents at an annual town celebration. Students made videos of the lake, kept water-quality journals, and tracked the pollution sources. They worked with the town council to implement pollution reduction plans and developed a presentation to train residents to test water quality. After two years of hard work, students were able to celebrate cleaner water with town residents.

**Weekly Teen Talk Show**

*Grades 9 through 12*

Classes: Civics, Social Studies, Speech, and Forensics

In response to negative impressions of teenagers among local residents, high school students launched their own radio talk show to address teen issues in a positive way. The students handled all aspects of production, from planning the topics to hosting the show. Using skills from their civics and social studies classes, the students researched the topics, and applied speech and forensics skills to convey messages and sustain the on-air forum.

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