



Everybody Can Serve

by Belinda Cisneros

“Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve,” said Martin Luther King, Jr. According to Dr. King, greatness is not inside a person. Greatness lies in what a person does for other people. Dr. King and many others like him spent their lives making the world a better place. He challenged all people to do the same. Think about your skills and the things you enjoy doing. Is there a way that you can share these skills and interests with another person? A community service project is a great way to learn how to be a leader and to help other people. It will also help you make new friends. Choose an adult to be your advisor. Then invite some friends or family members to plan a project together. Here are a few steps to follow for creating a community service project.

Step 1 Choose the Project

- Create a list of community issues that matter to you. Do you want to help younger students who are not doing well in school? Are you interested in working with the Special Olympics? Does your community have a recycling program?



- ➔ Look over your lists. Are there already community groups that do the same thing? Are there families or schools that might be interested in helping? What materials will you need to do the project?
- ➔ Choose the project that you think will help your community the most and inspire the most interest.

Step 2 Plan the Project

- ➔ Create a schedule to help you manage the project. How long will it take to finish the project? How many days each week will you work on it? Where will the team meet?
- ➔ Decide what jobs need to be done. Assign each person to a specific job. Make sure that each person knows when his or her job needs to be completed. Mark these dates on your schedule.
- ➔ Contact any people or groups that might be able to help you. Local librarians can help you with your research.

Answer Questions

Step 3 Begin the Project

- ➔ After the planning is done, it is time to get to work. No matter what precautions you take, problems may still occur. Don't get upset. Let the team members solve the problems as they happen. Make sure everyone feels that his or her ideas are respected. Most importantly, have fun!

Step 4 Document the Project

- ➔ As you work on the project, take photographs. Ask someone to put the pictures in order from beginning to end. Each member of the group can choose one picture and write a journal entry about it. Tell members to describe what is going on in the picture and to tell about their thoughts and feelings at the time.

Step 5 It's Time to Celebrate!

- ➔ Celebrate the completion of your project. Display the pictures and journal entries. Invite everyone who helped with the project. Your local newspaper or TV station may be interested in covering the event. This is a time to celebrate what makes people "great."



Tip

Connect the clues or ideas from the selection to choose the best answer.

Directions: Answer the questions.

- 1. Which of the following would Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., approve of the MOST?**
 - A meeting new friends
 - B helping members of the community
 - C visiting Washington, D.C.
 - D participating in a sports event
- 2. Which of these activities could BEST be added to the diagram on page 389?**
 - A selling lemonade at a baseball game
 - B studying for a test
 - C volunteering at a nursing home
 - D cleaning your bedroom
- 3. On page 390, what does the word *precaution* mean?**
 - A being in a dangerous situation
 - B not being afraid to take risks
 - C avoiding problems after something happens
 - D taking steps to prevent problems
- 4. A group is choosing between two projects: bringing meals to the elderly and raising money for a new baseball field. Which project do you think the group should choose? Explain your choice.**
- 5. Choose a community service project that you would like to do. Explain what the project is and how you would organize it. Use information from the selection to help you plan your project.**

Writing Prompt

Think about a time when you helped someone. Tell what happened and how you helped. Write a journal entry that is at least three paragraphs and include details.

