FORMALIZING AND FINALIZING THE ACTION PLAN

AGENDA

- Parts of the Plan

- Getting Approval

- Creating a Time Line

Objectives

Students will identify the information that should be included in a formal action plan.

Students will determine whose approval is needed in order for them to complete their project.

Students will create a time line for the completion of their service learning project.

Materials Needed

- Magazine pictures that you have cut into puzzle pieces, enough for each group of four to five students to have a puzzle (Part I)

- Calendar pages for each month of your project (Part I)

Part I   Parts of the Plan

Purpose: Students explore the information that should be included in an action plan.

1. STUDENTS REVIEW THE USEFULNESS OF AN ACTION PLAN.

Review with students why an action plan is useful:

- It outlines what resources are available and what needs to be acquired.
- It outlines a schedule and a time line for completing the project.

2. STUDENTS COMPLETE A PUZZLE.

Have students form small groups of four or five. Distribute a puzzle piece to each group member, without explaining what the pieces are. Then, ask students to tell you what is depicted in the pictures you've given them. If the groups do not begin to put the puzzles together, explain that they each have five minutes to assemble the pieces they've been given into a complete picture.

After students have assembled their puzzles, ask questions such as the following:

- What did you start with in this activity?
- What did you finish the activity with?

Elicit from students that when they correctly assembled the puzzle pieces they started with, they were able to finish the activity with a clear picture. Ask students to take out the information they collected while presenting their collages during Lesson 2. Also, ensure that they have the information they collected from their research. Explain to students that they will be using all of this information to create a formal action plan—a clear picture of what their project will involve.

3. STUDENTS EXPLORE THE SECTIONS THAT WILL BE INCLUDED IN THEIR ACTION PLAN.

Write the following sections of an action plan on the board in a single column:

- Introduction
- Materials
- Human Resources
- Jobs and Responsibilities
- Schedules and Contracts
- Time Line
- Appendix

Explain each section. As you speak, write notes next to each heading indicating what should be covered in that section of the plan. When each section has been described, suggest to students that, just as they have divided their work on the project, they might consider dividing the writing according to their work group's tasks.

4. STUDENTS REVIEW THE WRITING PROCESS.

Explain to students that there is an established process for writing that helps to ensure that the work will be complete, clear, and free of mistakes. Explain the five steps of the writing process:

- Prewriting: Use techniques such as word association, brainstorming, and outlines to generate ideas for your work.

- Writing: Use the prewriting information to write a first draft of the work.

- Revising: Read and reread your own work, and have peers review your work to make sure it is clear.

- Proofreading: Read your work again to find grammatical and spelling errors. Correct any problems.

- Publishing: After a final proofread, format the work in a way that makes it easy to read. Put it in a folder or notebook.

5. STUDENTS DETERMINE A SCHEDULE FOR CREATING THEIR ACTION PLAN.

Work with students to determine deadlines for each stage of the writing process and for each section of the action plan. Also, identify a final deadline by which the action plan will be published. Give each group a set of calendar pages. Encourage students to complete their calendars by detailing each deadline and the work expected on each date.

Part II   Getting Approval

Purpose: Students determine what approvals they will need in order to complete their project.

1. STUDENTS CONSIDER SITUATIONS IN WHICH THEY NEED TO GET APPROVAL.

Ask students to name activities for which they need their parents' permission. (Students might respond: going out with friends, staying out late, etc.) Ask them to name activities for which they need their teachers' permission. (Students might respond: leaving the classroom to go to the restroom.)

Elicit from students that approval is usually needed when someone wants to do something atypical or out of the ordinary. Since the service learning project is not something that happens every day, it will require the approval of certain people.

2. STUDENTS DETERMINE WHOSE APPROVAL WILL BE NEEDED.

Have students brainstorm whose approval might be needed for their project. Ask questions such as the following:

- Who at school might need to approve the project?

- Will your project take place somewhere else? Who might need to approve use of that space?

- Will your project take place in a public facility? Who needs to give approval for you to use that facility?

- Will the project take place during school hours? Who might need to give approval for you to be somewhere else during the school day?

Have students write their answers. Explain that this information will also be included in their action plan.

Part III   Creating a Time Line

Purpose: Students create a time line and a schedule for completing their project.

1. STUDENTS EVALUATE THE USEFULNESS OF CREATING A STEP-BY-STEP OUTLINE.

Write the following on the board:

- Melt one cup of butter.

- Form into small balls on a cookie sheet.

- Add eggs and flour.

- Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes.

- Add one cup of sugar.

- Gather ingredients.

- Mix.

Ask students what would happen if they completed these steps as they are written. (Students should mention that they'd make a big mess.) Now, ask students if there is a different way that they could arrange these steps in order to achieve the desired result. Students should arrange the steps as follows:

- Gather ingredients.

- Melt one cup of butter.

- Add one cup of sugar.

- Add eggs and flour.

- Mix.

- Form into small balls on a cookie sheet.

- Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes.

Ask students what would happen if they did step five before step two, or step four before step one. Elicit that without following the right order, the latter steps cannot be completed properly. Explain to students that this same idea applies to a service learning project. To get the results they want, students will need to create and follow a step-by-step plan outlining what needs to be done and when.

2. STUDENTS IDENTIFY AND ORDER THE STEPS OF A PROJECT TIME LINE.

Encourage students to work in their teams to brainstorm the steps that need to be taken for the different parts of the project. Suggest that groups focus on topics such as getting materials, contacting people, getting approvals, etc.

When the groups have completed their brainstorming, have each group present its ideas about the steps that need to be followed in order to complete the project. Help students to place the steps in order, just as they ordered the steps to make cookies. Ensure that the final step of their time lines is completing the project.

3. STUDENTS ATTACH DATES TO THEIR PROJECT TIME LINES.

When students have ordered the steps, write the date on which the project is scheduled to be completed next to the final step. Discuss with students how much time there is between now and that date. Then, facilitate students' work to attach a date to each step they have written. Encourage them to consider both the date on which a step must be completed and how long it will take to complete that step.

Conclude the activity by explaining to students that they have created a schedule, or time line, to follow as they complete their project, with time frames and deadlines that detail when each step should be accomplished. Explain that this information should be included in their action plan, and should therefore be written neatly and clearly.