



Using Project Management Skills for Your Volunteer Project

This lesson is designed to help students learn a transferrable project management process as they design a plan for their volunteer project.

Essential Question

How can I apply the things I’ve learned to make a difference in my community?

Guiding Question

What new skills will help us successfully plan and manage our volunteer projects?

Objectives

- Students will begin defining and designing their volunteer project.
- Students will collaborate with others to define subtasks and assign individual responsibilities.

Advance Preparation

- Load video
- Prepare student materials

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 5.5 (adapt as needed)
- Post-its, poster boards, scratch paper, markers, color pencils

Student Materials

- Project Definition, Design, and Timeline sheets
- Example planning sheet for park cleanup event

Vocabulary

- Project Management

Do Now

2 min.

Slide 1: Students read and reflect on what is posted on the walls from previous lessons about the project ideas, and write down one question that comes to their mind.

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

3 min.

1. Slide 3: Tell students that projects are not just something people do for school; people often have to complete projects in the workplace, as well as in their personal lives and community involvement. People need good project management skills to do their jobs well and to achieve any sort of group goals. Today students will learn some basic steps and get a chance to practice them. First, students will get an overview by watching a short (90 second) video.
2. Have students watch this video (slide 4):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7yZutiwRso>

Invite students to comment on ideas in the video that are new to them or about which they want to learn more.

Activity 1: Introduction to Project Management

10 min.

3. Show slides 5-9: Summarize the project management process by using the 4 Ds of Problem Solving and Project Management.¹
4. Slide 10: Explain that students will engage in the DEFINE and DESIGN process during class, corresponding to the following required sections of the project proposal (as mentioned in the previous lesson):
 - What is the need?
 - Planned activities and how they will meet the need
 - Steps required for project completion
 - Resources/lifelines needed for project
 - How will we know how well the project was accomplished?

**Direct
Instruction**

(NOTE: This will be necessary for the DEBRIEF process.)

Students will need to work on developing these details as they complete their project proposals over the next couple of days.

5. Distribute the Project Definition and Project Design sheets (slide 11) and Project Timeline guide sheets (slide 12) to students, as well as the example planning guide for a “Neighborhood Clean-Up” project, which students can use as a resource to remind them of potential questions they might raise for their own volunteer project plan. Students go to their team planning stations or work individually.

¹ These 4 Ds are from Ted McCain, *Teaching for Tomorrow*.

Activity 2: Project Management Planning

25 min.

6. Slide 13: Students work in teams to review (and, if necessary, refine) their project goals (DEFINE) and to work on the DESIGN process by creating a list of subtasks, associated roles and responsibilities, materials needed (and how these will be obtained), and a timeline.
7. **Students complete the Project Definition, Project Design, and Project Timelines planning sheets to reflect their own volunteer project proposals.** By the end of this activity, each group (or individual) should be able to outline their project proposal with greater attention to detail and identify key next steps to solve challenges (e.g., include pictures to demonstrate the need).

**Team
Planning**

Closure

5 min.

7. Show slide 14: Ask each group to report briefly on any discoveries or insights they gained by going through this DEFINE and DESIGN process. Ask them to report on what they thought was particularly useful and what was most difficult.
8. Exit ticket – ask students to hand in their planning sheets and DO NOW questions.

Extensions

If you wish to assign homework, have students write a one-paragraph response to the following question: What challenges or barriers might you/your team encounter in accomplishing this project, and how can you plan ahead to address them?

Project Definition

Name(s) _____

Date _____

Project Title _____

Statement of the need and how the proposed project addresses the need

Evaluation Criteria (how will you know how well you accomplished your goals?)

Adapted from McCain, *Teaching for Tomorrow*, p. 56

Project Design

Name _____

Date _____

Project Title _____

Subtasks

Resources Needed

Learning Needed

Adapted from McCain, *Teaching for Tomorrow*, p. 60

Project Timeline (To Monitor the “DO” Phase)

[illegible]

Adapted from McCain, *Teaching for Tomorrow*, p. 62

Example Planning Sheet for a Neighborhood Cleanup Event

What is the need?

Our neighborhood park looks terrible because of all the trash strewn all around.

What are our proposed activities, and how will they address the need?

We are planning a park clean-up event that will (at least temporarily) get rid of all the trash that is currently creating such an eyesore. We will also post signs encouraging people to put their trash in the provided cans and keep their park clean.

Subtasks required for project completion:

Make decisions about the following issues:

- Location for the activity (describe):
- Date and time frame:
- Which adult(s) will you ask to be present for supervision?
- Will you recruit any others to join besides your team?
 - If so, how will you recruit them?
- Will you have any refreshments? If so, add to supplies list below
- What tools and supplies are needed (see Resources needed below)

Make signs/posters to be placed in park.

Gather at park at designated time, with all the resources, and get all the trash into bags to be carried away.

Take photos/videos of before, during, and after.

Post the signs.

If desired, publicize what you have done on social media.

Resources Required for Project Completion

What tools and supplies do you need and who will bring them?

Tools/Supplies	Who will bring

How will you know how well your project was accomplished?

We will consider this to be a success if we can show a significant improvement in how the park looks (through before and after pictures). Another measure of success will be that all team members participated, got along well, and no one got injured.