



Service Learning Lesson 1: Guiding your Learners into Action!

Essential Questions:

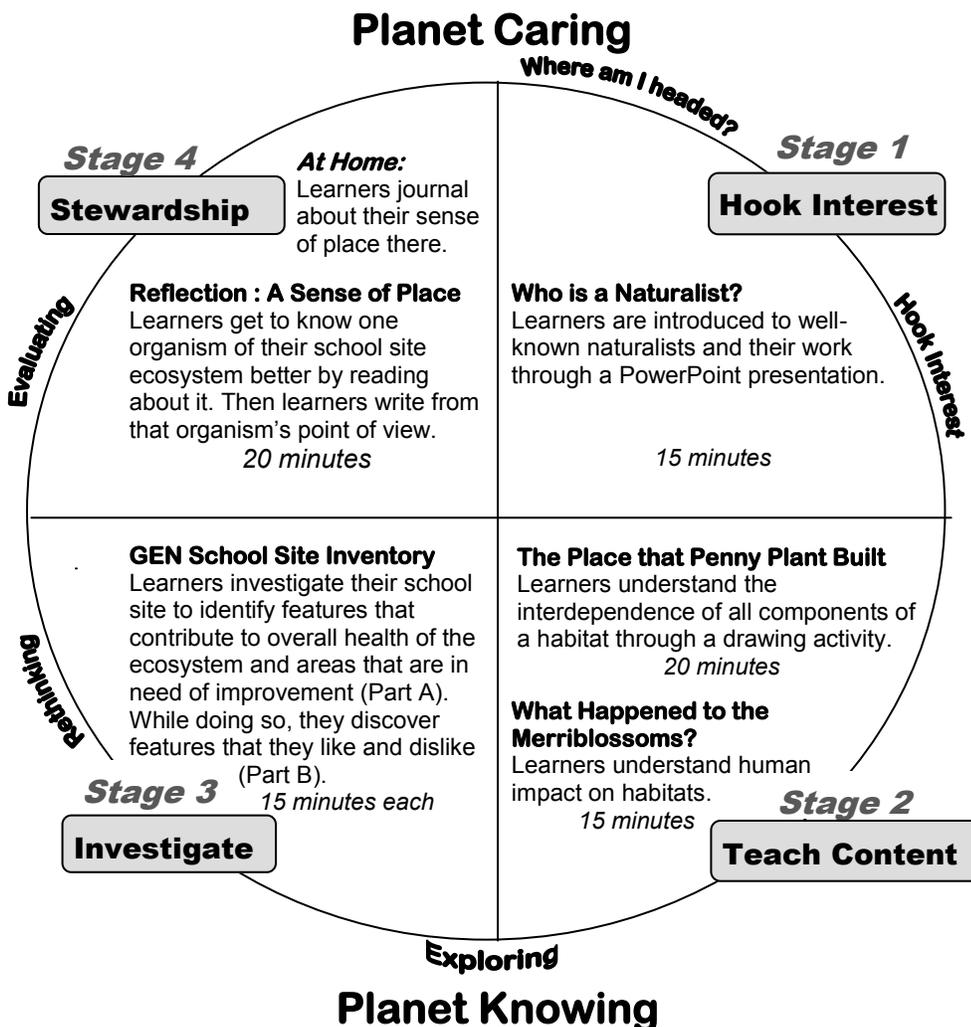
*What relationships exist within an ecosystem?
What relationship do I have with my school site ecosystem?*

At a Glance:

Learners are guided in a series of activities that highlight the interconnected relationships of the plants, animals and nonliving components of their school site ecosystem. Through school site exploration, learners develop an awareness of different features of their school site and thus develop a sense of place. This awareness can lead to actions that have positive impacts on their environment, such as the actions of well-known naturalists.

Concepts:

- An ecosystem is composed of biotic and abiotic factors that are interdependent and interconnected.
- Human actions can have positive and negative impacts on ecosystems.
- Developing a relationship with one's ecosystem, or realizing one's sense of place, can guide humans to make choices and to act in ways that positively impact the natural environment.



Objectives

Learners ...

- 1) define the terms "habitat" and "ecosystem".
- 2) understand the interdependent and interconnected relationships among the components of habitats and ecosystems.
- 3) realize that humans can have both positive and negative impacts on ecosystems.
- 4) develop a sense of place for their school site while discovering details about particular areas.

PROCEDURES IN BRIEF: Service Learning: Guiding Your Learners to Action!

Stage 1. What is a Naturalist? PowerPoint

Procedure:

1. Introduce the term “naturalist” by presenting a PowerPoint presentation that guides learners in discovering the impact that some well-known naturalists have had on their world.
2. Lead learners in a discussion about these naturalists and ways in which they, as GEN Club members can also make a positive impact on their school site and the local environment through their Club’s service learning project.

Supplies

- PowerPoint on CD
- LDC projector
- monitor

Through the PowerPoint presentation and discussion, learners will understand the following major concepts:

- An ecosystem is composed of biotic and abiotic factors that are interdependent and interconnected.
- Human actions can have positive and negative impacts on ecosystems.
- Developing a relationship with one’s ecosystem, or realizing one’s sense of place, can guide humans to make choices and to act in ways that positively impact the natural environment.

Stage 2. The Place that Penny Plant Built

Procedure:

1. Learners draw a flower in the middle of a blank piece of paper or use ‘Penny Plant’s Place’ worksheets.
2. As you read ‘The Place that Penny Plant Built’ story, learners are prompted to draw additions to Penny Plant’s Place.
3. At the end of the story, discuss with learners what they have drawn. Their pictures will have become a forest ecosystem and a habitat for many animals and plants, as well as Penny.

(A PowerPoint is available to be used as a guide. It is recommended that an adult draws on the board during the story as a model for learners.)

Supplies

- ‘Penny Plant’s Place’ worksheets
- Penny Plant Story
- drawing materials
- chalkboard / whiteboard
- PowerPoint on CD
- LCD projector
- monitor

What Happened to the Merriblossoms?

Procedure:

1. Discuss with learners the term “habitat”.
2. Give each learner a ‘What Happened to the Merriblossoms?’ worksheet.
3. Guide learners in completing the worksheet by coloring and counting Merriblossoms in each scenario.
4. Discuss answers and threats to species and habitats.

Supplies

- ‘What Happened to the Merriblossoms?’ worksheets

Stage 3. GEN Site Inventory

Procedure:

Part A

1. Discuss the definitions of ‘habitat’, ‘biodiversity’, ‘ecosystem’, and ‘eco-services’.
2. Give each learner a ‘GEN Site Inventory’ worksheet.
3. Allow learners to explore various areas of the school site for 20 to 25 minutes.

Supplies

- GEN Site Inventory worksheets

Part B

1. Gather learners together and ask them to choose a place to reflect on their observations from Part A.
2. Learners will use the completed chart from Part A to complete Part B.
3. Discuss learner observations, preferences, and ideas for school site improvement. This activity can provide the beginnings for ideas for your Club’s service learning project while strengthening the relationship that learners have with their school site and establishing among them a ‘sense of place’ within their school site ecosystem.

Stage 4. Sense of Place

Procedure:

Part A

1. Pass out an ‘A Sense of Place’ worksheets and pencil to each learner.
2. Ask learners to each choose a Garden Earth Naturalist organism card.
3. Learners will to work as individuals to answer the questions on their worksheet based on the information on their GEN organism card.
4. Allow learners to get a feeling for the outdoor environment by exploring the area within defined boundaries.
5. Ask learners to present some of their discoveries to the group.

Supplies

- Garden Earth Naturalist organism cards
- ‘A Sense of Place’ worksheets
- pencils
- extra paper (journal or scrap paper)

Part B

1. Using the ‘Another Point of View’ example as a guide, instruct learners to write creatively about their organism’s environment from the organism’s point of view.
2. Descriptions of the organism’s senses should be included.
3. Ask learners to trade organism descriptions with other group members and try to guess each other’s organisms.
4. Discuss learners’ discoveries about organisms on their school site and their school site in general as a ‘place’.