

# Volunteers Make a Difference

## Teacher Guide

*“Volunteerism is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds.”*

-President Bill Clinton

Welcome to Volunteers Make a Difference. In this module, students will explore what President Clinton has called acts of heroism. Students will delve into the concept of volunteerism as an altruistic endeavor in which peoples’ sense of social responsibility comes shining through.

The activities in this module are intended to open the wide, wonderful world of volunteerism to students and to inspire them to make a difference.

Gandhi said, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” Who better to “be the change” than students? Volunteerism is the means to “be the change.”



## Volunteerism Makes a Difference for your Future

### Lesson 1: Introduction to volunteerism

#### Learning Objective

Students will be able to describe volunteerism as an altruistic endeavor that demonstrates social responsibility. Students will be able to describe the scope of volunteerism in the U.S. and their home state.

#### Materials

- Student Guide – one per student
- YouTube video, Kevin Capuno is Making a Difference <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IfBAPy6Yt6s> (2 minutes)
- Paper
- Chart paper and markers

#### Opener (20 minutes)

Ask students to name well-known altruistic people and how they demonstrate altruism.

- Review the directions for the Thinking Deeply worksheet. You may want students to do all of this activity in pairs.
- Have pairs come to consensus on a word/phrase that reflects the shared meaning of the quotes. Have one student from each pair write the shared meaning on the board or chart paper.
- Conduct a class discussion of the posted words. Ensure students understand that the concept of social responsibility is threaded through the quotes.

**SAMPLE: Thinking Deeply Chart** - Answers will vary:

Quote	Author's Concept or Belief	In My Own Words
<i>"The ocean is made of drops"</i> -Mother Teresa	All effort, regardless of size, is valuable	Small things together make large things
<i>"Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself"</i> -Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy	Change is hard	People want others to change not themselves
<i>"The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit."</i> -Nelson Henderson	Do things for others	Do good things even if you aren't able to enjoy it
<i>"Think that day lost whose descending sun, views from thy hand no noble action done."</i> -Joseph Joubert	Be charitable	Do something good everyday
<i>I wondered why somebody didn't do something. Then I realized, I am somebody.</i> -Author unknown	Act instead of complain	Don't wait for somebody else to do what you can do

#### Activity One (25 minutes)

- Ask students how many people they know who volunteer. Determine the class range of numbers.
- Poll the class to see how they responded as a group. Introduce the Check Your Prediction activity so students can check their predictions.

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### Make a Prediction sample

- Men volunteer more than women in the United States.  True  False
- Volunteers are most likely to volunteer for educational or youth service organizations.  True  False
- Collecting, preparing, distributing, or serving food are the activities volunteers perform most often.  True  False
- More than 60 million people volunteered in the U.S. last year.  True  False
- Teen volunteers contribute about \$35 million a year to the U.S. economy through their voluntary efforts.  True  False
- Retired people are more likely to volunteer than younger adults.  True  False

- As a class, ask students to discuss the surprises in the statistics and the inferences they can draw from the data.
- Give students time to access <http://volunteer-statistics.findthedata.org/> to learn about the data from your state and record it on the worksheet.
- Students conduct a web search for volunteer statistics. As a class, discuss differences in statistics and reasons why they exist.

### Activity Two (25 minutes)

- Reintroduce the concepts of altruism and social responsibility.
- Show the Kevin Capuno is Making a Difference video. Students record specific statements Kevin makes to demonstrate his altruism and social responsibility. NOTE: This is a very short video so you may want to show it a second time. (If you cannot access YouTube at school, there are many free programs you can use to download YouTube videos directly to your desktop.)
- In groups of four, have students discuss statements they recorded then create a visual representation that links volunteerism, altruism, and social responsibility together. Visual representations use numbers, colors, shapes, drawings, etc. to represent words.
- Provide 4 different color markers to each team. The goal is equal participation of group members as indicated by equal amounts of each color on the representations.
- Randomly identify one person from each group to explain the representation to the class.

### Closing Activity (5 minutes)

- Ask students to begin gathering articles from the local newspaper, flyers, Internet information and other print material concerning community needs and volunteer opportunities. In addition, they should keep a running list of radio announcements, TV ads, and bumper stickers they hear and see about volunteering. These will be used in lesson 3.

## Volunteerism Makes a Difference for your Future

### Lesson 2: Me, a volunteer?

#### Learning Objectives

Students will be able to articulate the benefits of volunteering in terms of personal, skill, social, and work success. Students will analyze and identify personal skills and attributes through the lens of volunteering.

#### Materials

- Student Guide – one per student
- You Tube Video, Hands4Hope (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mr8hbjcNQaQ>)
- Meet our 2013 Make a Difference Day Honorees article (<http://www.usaweekend.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2013304190018>)

#### Opener (15 minutes)

- Recall the definition of volunteering as work without financial gain, compensation or reward. Ask pairs to discuss rewards they have received that did not involve money or a tangible object such as a trophy.
- Show the Hands4Hope video. As students watch they should note the rewards and insights the students express. Be certain students understand the concept of insights.
- If you are comfortable letting students move, allow them to circulate around the room to share their list with 2-3 other students. Students add new ideas they hear to their lists.

**SAMPLE: Hands4Hope Chart** - Responses will vary

Rewards	Insights
Feel good about self Making the community better	Realize how fortunate they are Understand the needs of those around them

#### Activity One (20 minutes)

- Give students one minute to individually brainstorm the benefits of volunteering on the worksheet.
  - Pair students to make one list by eliminating duplicates and including all other answers.
  - Partners then list items into categories that they name.
- NOTE: Identifying the categories may be challenging. You want to give them 2-3 headings and let them decide on others.

#### Benefits of Volunteering

1. The volunteers in the video expressed some benefits of volunteering. Name all the others you can think of. Responses will vary.

2. Share your brainstormed ideas with a partner. Make one list. Eliminate duplicates and include all other items. Responses will vary.

3. Together, study the list of items. How can you categorize them?

Decide on category headings and write each list item under one of your headings. Possible categories:



- › Personal satisfaction
- › Communication skills
- › Organizational skills
- › Leadership skills
- › Social competencies (empathy, compassion, etc.)
- › Relationship/friendship building
- › Gain new perspective
- › Future benefit (college applications, work applications, career information etc.)
- › New Insights/Knowledge

## Volunteerism Makes a Difference

### Activity Two (25 minutes)

- Give students background information on USA WEEKEND’s Make a Difference Day.
- Distribute the Meet our 2013 Make a Difference Day Honorees article and review the directions. The first one is completed as a sample.
- Encourage students to add new categories and/or specific skills to the Benefits of Volunteering table.

### Meet our 2013 Make a Difference Day Honorees table

Make a Difference Honorees	Insights
 Opelika, Alabama	<p><b>Communication skills</b> – Volunteers spent the day chatting with and entertaining nursing home residents</p> <p><b>Construction skills</b> – Volunteers repaired homes for individuals in need</p>
 Sun City, Arizona	
 Geneva, Illinois	
 Thurmont, Maryland	
 Rochester, New York	
 Keene, New Hampshire	
 Cranston, Rhode Island	
 Cookeville, Tennessee	
 Ellensburg, Washington	

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## Volunteerism Makes a Difference for your Future

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### Activity Three (20 minutes)

- Ask the class to think of the reasons students might stop volunteering. Possible responses:
  - › Volunteer activity is not meaningful
  - › Not a good match to the volunteer's skills or personality
  - › No longer engaging
  - › Unclear directions
  - › Too busy
- Introduce the Thinking Ahead chart and review the directions. You may want to model how you would fill in the chart for yourself.
- Invite students to share what they learned about themselves from their responses.

**NOTE:** You may want students to do this assignment for homework.

### LESSON 3: Selecting a volunteer opportunity

#### Learning Objective

Students will investigate possible volunteer opportunities in the community.  
Students will plan, conduct and summarize an informational interview with a volunteer coordinator.  
Students will select and plan a volunteer opportunity.

#### Materials

- Student Guide – one per student
- Collected print material
- Paper

#### Opener (15 minutes)

- Divide the print material collected through the ongoing homework into stacks equal to the number of groups of four in the class.
- Give each group a stack to peruse and to record ideas for possible volunteerism.
- Randomly select a recorder for each group who writes all the possibilities on chart paper.
- Post all the charts around the room.

#### Activity One (30 minutes)

- Distribute two pieces of chart paper to each group.
- The previous recorder (from the opener) passes the marker to the person on his/her left. That person is the new recorder. He/she labels one chart Community Projects and records as the group brainstorms other volunteer opportunities. The handout should help them get started.
- The recorder passes the marker to the person on their left again. The brainstorming process continues with ideas about community facilities.
- Combine two groups of four to compile a new list of projects and facilities without duplicates. One of the students who have not recorded becomes the new recorder.
- Post the combined lists and have the whole class look for duplicates to be crossed off. Compile a single list for community needs and facilities.

#### Brainstorming Volunteer Opportunities

##### Community Projects

#### 1. Think about community projects that provide service and support to those in need.

- School-sponsored or a school service club
- Organized by groups that your family, neighbors and friends belong to
- Activities conducted by people at your place of worship
- Reported on the radio and TV
- Environmental organizations such as those working to prevent erosion
- Health organizations conducting blood drives
- Other (x3)

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### Community Facilities

#### 2. Think about the facilities in your community that may need volunteers.

- Daycare centers
- Nursing homes and senior centers
- Homeless shelters
- Hospitals and clinics
- Departments of parks and recreation
- Soup kitchens and food banks
- Animal shelters and veterinarian hospitals
- Local chapters of national organizations such as Habitat for Humanity
- Other(x2)

#### Activity Two (15 minutes)

- Students review the new class charts to narrow volunteer possibilities for themselves to three.
- Review the directions for completing the Volunteer Opportunities Chart. Tell students this chart can help them make a final choice.

#### Activity Three (30 minutes)

- Give students background on interview etiquette.
- Review the directions for conducting an informational interview and ask students to draft a set of questions for an interview with a volunteer coordinator from one of their choices.
- Students share their questions with a partner to get peer feedback.
- Preview the guidelines for the paragraph they will write in the next activity so they can revise and refine the questions.
- Students conduct the interview. If students are conducting the interview in person, make sure arrangements are made for proper supervision.

#### Activity Four (35 minutes)

Provide background information on action planning.

- Review the directions for completing the action plan format.
- Students may have difficulty identifying the actions steps. Model how to complete an action plan with the whole class for a volunteer opportunity you would consider.

### LESSON 4: Reflect on your experience

#### Learning Objective

- Students will share their volunteer experience with their peers.
- Students will reflect in writing on the volunteer experience.

#### Materials

Student Guide – one per student

#### Activity One (20 minutes)

- Place students in groups of two to three. Allow time for groups to discuss the items listed in the student guide.
- If time, invite several groups to share what they learned from their conversations.

#### Activity Two (35 minutes)

- After students have volunteered they write a reflection of the experience.
- Review the directions in the student guide titled Volunteer Reflection.
- Emphasize the importance of including:
  - › Facts about your experience; what took place
  - › What you learned about the community need your service addresses
  - › Your feelings and how they may have changed during volunteering
  - › A story that is particularly memorable to you
  - › What you learned about yourself
  - › What you might do differently

*“Volunteers don’t get paid, not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.”*  
-Sherry Anderson