Planning for Service Learning: *Example*
Elementary, The Environment

Grade level: **3**

CONTENT—LEARNING ABOUT:

- Ecology
- Composting
- Waste reduction
- Recycling

SERVICE NEED: There is too much waste in our community that could be recycled. If the students and community are informed on options about composting, they can choose to participate.

SERVICE IDEA: Give It to the Worms
Promote composting at school and in the community.

PREPARATION: Study ecosystems, hear guest speaker from Integrative Waste Management Board, create school map and chart to record waste quantities and reduction, prepare video presentation and talk on ecology and school waste management.

ACTION: Install compost and worm bins, monitor school food waste, donate soil from compost to school garden and nearby senior living community (gardening by elder residents), host parent information night with site tour and composting lesson.

REFLECTION: Make journals out of recycled paper at school with regular entries, weekly meetings to discuss and review project success, annual discussion and review of progress with partners at IWMB (Integrative Waste Management Board).

DEMONSTRATION: Distribute monthly copies of newsletter "Warm Ways" to school community, participate in Chinese New Year parade as a giant worm while handing out informational pamphlets on worm bins and composting called "Give It to the Worms!"

YOUTH VOICE and CHOICE: Since the project is ongoing, each year students add a new component based on their ideas (for example, making journals, being worm in parade).

NOTES: This activity started on a small scale with one teacher and grew to involve more. This plan shows what evolved over four years.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS:

- *English/Language Arts:* Design a campaign to promote use of school composting and reduce waste at school, write video script, write letter to parents describing project, write "Warm Ways" newsletter, plan and write "Give It to the Worms" brochure
- *Social Studies/History:* Study Rachel Carson
- *Mathematics:* Graph waste quantities
- *Science:* Study life cycles; review ecosystems, waste reduction, and composting; maintain compost and worm bin with signage written by children
- *Languages:* Spanish-language signs by compost and worm bin
- *Art and Music:* Design poster campaign
- *Other:* Video and computer technology

SKILL DEVELOPMENT:

- Paragraph construction
- Graphing
- Time management

BOOKS:

Compost Critters

I Want to Be an Environmentalist

Compost! Growing Gardens from Your Garbage

You Are the Earth: Know the Planet So You Can Make It Better

Rachel Carson

COMMUNITY CONTACTS:

Integrative Waste Management Board

Chinese New Year Planning Committee