Teaching into the Community

Source: Errol Alger, Art

Materials needed: Project-specific

Goals: Students will connect with community members and show or teach class-relevant knowledge/skill/activity.

Assessment: Graded on completion and quality of final product.

Graded? Yes

Method: Select a relevant concept, skill or activity from a unit that you feel would benefit the community at large and that would benefit the student to demonstrate. After beginning the unit and students are gaining confidence in their learning, offer this activity as a chance to share their new knowledge in a larger setting.

Explain that teaching another person can improve one's own mastery of a concept. Have the student select at least one person of their choosing they would like to teach; this should be anyone not currently in the class but you can target this more specifically based on your goals.

Describe how a student can enact this lesson (interviewing, demonstrating, collaborating to create a new product). As you design this activity, decide what you'd like the student to produce as a final product. It may be a report or a product or a presentation.

You can also build in community participation through a feedback form: a simple form that asks the community member what they did with the student and what they learned might give the student some concrete feedback and give you indication of completion of the activity.

Examples of community-contact projects:

- Oral history: the student interviews a person about their experience connected to a unit-relevant topic and then reflects on this experience in the context of current events or practice.
- Collaborative design: the student and community member mutually design a new product (a work of art, a poem or writing, a simple machine or schematic) based on the relevant concept.
- Demonstration: the student demonstrates a skill or activity relevant to the unit and the community member gives feedback.
- Field class: the student teaches a short lesson about the topic and the community member gives feedback to show what they've learned.