

SAMPLE HABITAT-IN-THE-CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE  
Simulation of Habitat Construction Project for Teacher's Unit on "Shelter"  
Day 1

Tuesday November 30, 2009 1:45-3:15  
Location: Friends School

Materials:

- 10 18"x24" plastic lids with green laminated squares all over them (symbolizing land/property)
  - 10 kits of 300 LEGO blocks
  - Flat LEGO pieces
  - "Special LEGO pieces"
  - Book: Building Friends
- a.) Introduce myself and Habitat
  - b.) Read Building Friends, passing around pictures of a Habitat house at the same time
  - c.) Read information about the Matiyabo family ( a current homeowner family in Portland).
  - d.) Explain that the kids are Habitat construction managers. Ask them to get into pairs or small groups. Kids should NOT work by themselves unless they are above third grade, have 2 hours to build, or are using DUPLO blocks instead of LEGOs.
  - e.) Explain how long it takes to acquire land and how expensive it is while handing out the "land", and have construction managers give themselves a hand for finally obtaining their land!
  - f.) GRANTS...At the top of a piece of paper, write "EVERYBODY needs a home because" each pair writes a reason on their strip of posterboard, and we stick them up onto the board/wall as a "grant"
  - g.) GREAT NEWS! Home Depot LOVES your grant! They are giving each of you gift cards to come purchase lumber and building materials for the house... pass out LEGO kits.
  - h.) In your Habitat for Humanity bank account, you have a small amount of money that you've set aside to work on the project. 1,000 (10 one hundred dollar bills). Pass out bills.
  - i.) What is a foundation? Explain that in a normal piece of land, it costs a lot of money to dig out a foundation. Each block costs 100 dollars to dig up.
  - j.) Walk around and collect the money for the blocks of land they've chosen to build on.
  - k.) Tell them if they have money left over, they can buy "special pieces" or flat pieces for the roof and floor. Everything costs \$100.00.
  - l.) Get building! Goal is to have the house ready for your family to move in by the end of the day (probably will NOT happen...)

EXTENSION

If kids are building quickly, add the complication of "swampland" and pour water on the board... the kids have to keep the floor dry.

## Day 2

Wednesday December 1, 2009 8:45-10:15

### Materials

- 10 18"x24" plastic lids with green laminated squares all over them (symbolizing land/property)
  - 10 kits of 300 LEGO blocks
  - Flat LEGO pieces
  - Pictures of Mikki and Eli and Green Bean
  - Easel paper/big paper with "Questions for Habitat Field Trip" on it
- a.) Talk about the Green Bean, Mikki and Eli. Discuss upcoming field trip.
  - b.) On easel paper, have kids brainstorm questions that they might ask at the construction site when they have their field trip.
  - c.) Discuss service learning projects and brain-storm what the kids want to do (if they can't think of something realistic, steer kids towards the idea of making midday care packages for volunteers at the site).
  - d.) Have the kids continue to build their houses.
  - e.) Leave 15-20 minutes to break down and have kids discuss the problems they may have had with the project. Was it hard to keep the money straight? How did they feel building on such a small part of their land? (Explain that the real Habitat may build 4 houses on one piece of land to save money and space)... Did everyone's houses look the same? Why or why not? (Habitat houses look the same in some ways because they all have to be small, but different donations mean that they houses will not always be built out of the exact same things).

## DAY THREE

### Field Trip to Green Bean

2 classes: one pre-K, one first-second

45 minutes per class (or shorter, it's freezing)

- 1.) Meet kids and chaperones at vehicles, make sure everyone has waivers, pass out hard hats to kids, explain safety guidelines.
- 2.) Walk group to the house and introduce them to Ben, Site Supervisor.
- 3.) Ben explains current project, what he does, and what the volunteers do.
- 4.) Tour of site
- 5.) For first-second graders, tour ends upstairs where I taped the list of questions that they came up with in class. For pre-k (who I didn't work with prior to field trip day), they can use the list of questions or come up with their own... I'm sure they'll have plenty.
- 6.) Thank the group for coming out to the site, good-byes.