

THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERS

LEVEL

Level 7 – Level 8

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Students Investigate the role of volunteers at Puffing Billy Railway. They explore their connections and involvement with the community and focus on the benefits of volunteering. They consider how individual volunteers contribute to society and how their actions are demonstrative of good citizenship. Students create an advertisement or a short promotional video to encourage people to volunteer at Puffing Billy Railway.

THEME

- Volunteering

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Workbook
- Clipboard
- Paper
- Writing materials
- Art materials to create an advertisement
- Access to computers and the internet
- Virtual Tour # 3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyWq8MEIGeU>
- Access to mobile phone, to take a video
- Arrangements to undertake a volunteer survey, either on the excursion to Puffing Billy Railway, at school or with a local community group.

INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1. INTRODUCTION.

Engage students in the activity by discussing their recent visit to Puffing Billy Railway. Ask students to reflect on the following questions and share their responses with the person next to them.

- Am I currently connected/involved in my community?
- What is giving? What is volunteering? Is there a difference between the two?
- What makes a good citizen?
- What were the roles of the volunteers at Puffing Billy Railway?
- What are the positives of volunteering?
- What am I passionate about? What do I care about?

STEP 2. VIRTUAL TOUR

Then as a whole group, watch Virtual Tour # 3 Meet Robert, one of our volunteer Fireman at Puffing Billy Railway.

STEP 3. CREATING A SURVEY

Either at Puffing Billy Railway, at school or in the local community. Students formulate and carry out a survey to build their knowledge about volunteering. The following are example questions to include in the survey.

1. Name the association, group or event you are volunteering for?
2. How long have you been a volunteer for?
3. What role do you have as a volunteer?
4. Who do you mostly interact with when you are volunteering?
5. Why do you volunteer?
6. How does volunteering make you feel?

7. What new skills have you learnt when volunteering?
8. Would you recommend volunteering to your friends?
9. Did you need any pre-training before you started volunteering?

STEP 4. ADVERTISING

Students explore the ways in which volunteer associations and organisational groups use advertising to promote awareness and gain support. Students analyse the effectiveness of current media/ advertising texts to engage people to volunteer.

Using these as the stimulus material, lead a student discussion by asking questions such as:

- What is advertising?
- What is the purpose of advertising?
- Why do you think volunteer organisations advertise?
- What kinds of volunteer organisation advertising have you seen?
- Do you think the organisations were successful in selling the 'product'?
- Is the advertising suitable for all ages, or do you think that it has a specific target audience?

Students look at the two examples of advertisements for volunteering (see below) and find two examples of their own. They print out and display their advertisements around the classroom.

STEP 5. THE TASK

In small groups, using their knowledge from their excursion, survey results and research, students create their own promotional advertisement or short video on the benefits of volunteering at Puffing Billy Railway. Students are aiming to draw attention to the work of the organisation and try to influence others to volunteer for the organisation. Students promote what the volunteer role will be and focus on ways to engage an audience through advertising.

On completion, students can create an exhibition at school or email their work to info@pbr.org.au. The Puffing Billy Railway team would love to see the advertisements.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

Contribution to class discussions. Formulation of a volunteer survey. Ability to interact with volunteers in a respectful and professional manner, to carry out a successful survey. Working efficiently and in small groups. Successful completion of advertisement or short video on volunteering at Puffing Billy Railway.

CURRICULUM LINKS

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITIES

Perform in a variety of team roles and accept responsibility as a team member and team leader, assessing how well they support other members of the team (VCPSCSO041)

VISUAL ARTS

Experiment with materials, techniques, technologies and processes in a range of art forms to express ideas, concepts and themes in artworks (VCAVAV035)

Analyse how ideas and viewpoints are expressed in artworks and how they are viewed by audiences (VCAVAR038)

Q BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EXAMPLE VOLUNTEER ADVERTISEMENTS



Reference: RSPCA Victoria



Reference: Zoos Victoria

WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING? Many of us would think that we know and can define what it means to volunteer in Australia today. However, as we have started to review the definition of volunteering a number of complexities have emerged. In Australia alone academics, government, the non-profit sector and business sector use different definitions. Globally too, different definitions of volunteering are used.

CURRENT DEFINITION -The current Volunteering Australia (VA) definition of volunteering was developed in 1996 alongside a set of principles which clearly differentiate between volunteering and other unpaid activities (Cordingley, 2000, p82). The current definition does not account for areas like informal volunteering, which is known to be a significant way people give their time, or corporate volunteering. It also separates volunteering from other activities such as work experience, community service orders, student placements, unpaid work trials, emergency work during industrial disputes, work for the dole and caring for a family member.

GLOBAL DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS - Globally there are many definitions of volunteering and the concept of volunteering varies between cultures. Informal volunteering is typically more common amongst collectivist cultures, in Asia, Southern Europe, South America and Africa (Gronlund, 2013), whereas formal volunteering is more common among Anglo cultures and Northern European countries. Given the multicultural nature of Australia today, any definition needs to have meaning to the different communities within which individuals volunteer.

VOLUNTEERING TERMINOLOGY - Terminology associated with volunteering reflects different ideas of what volunteering is. Rochester et al (2010) proposed three broad ways of thinking about volunteering globally. These are: unpaid work or service - the dominant idea in Anglo countries, civil action – the dominant idea in Scandinavian countries and developing countries in the global south - leisure volunteering as a discretionary activity chosen to be undertaken in free time.

TRENDS IN VOLUNTEERING - Some of the trends currently having an impact on the sector include the increasing number of procedures and practices concerning volunteers and volunteering that have provided the sector with a raft of policies such as governance, risk management and workplace controls.

Reference: *Volunteering Australia (VA) Literature*