

Repairing the World: Books to Use to Introduce Service Learning Projects

A Selective Annotated Bibliography compiled March, 2006/Revised January, 2011

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Service-Learning

The 11th Commandment. Jewish Lights Publishing, 1995

Children write their thoughts on what the 11th Commandment should be.

Kaye, Cathryn Berger. The Service Learning Bookshelf. ABCD Books, 2000

A small pamphlet that explains the Service-Learning initiative and provides an annotated bibliography of excellent picture books, novels, and nonfiction materials to introduce various types of projects.

“National Service-Learning Clearinghouse.” <http://servicelearning.org> . 1-2-11

A comprehensive website that contains bibliographies, links to lesson plans, sources for funding, and many other websites about service-learning.

"2010-2011 Resources Thematic—Planning to Change the World"

<http://www.justiceplanbook.com/justiceplanbook/2010-2011-resources-thematic> .1-2-11

A comprehensive listing of resources for all grade levels on various service projects.

“Service-Learning Rubric.”

<http://www.peacecorps.gov/wvs/educators/servicelearning/pdf/rubric2010.pdf> . 1-2-11

This rubric helps teachers and students evaluate service-learning projects.

Shusterman, Neal. Kid Heroes. TOR, 1991

A collection of short stories about real children who have overcome challenges and helped to make a difference in the world.

Siegel, Danny . Mitzvah Magic: What Kids Can Do To Change The World. Kar-Ben/Lerner, 2002

Siegel defines mitzvah as "a personal act of goodness" and salutes young people who have become involved in acts of tikkun olam (repairing the world). The true stories he tells are introduced by quotes from the Talmud or from famous people. He highlights a remarkable variety of ways to do mitzvot, and offers valuable suggestions and organizational contacts.

Silver, Linda. “The New Jewish ValuesFinder.” <http://www.ajljewishvalues.org/> 1-2-11

A searchable database of books about Jewish values.

Wheeler, Jill C. Everyday Heroes of the Heart. Abdo & Daughters, 1996

Five children tell about the ways they volunteer to make the world better.

Feeding the Hungry

Arato, Rona. Mrs. Kaputnik’s Matzo ball and pool hall emporium. Tundra Books, 2010

An immigrant family comes to New York and starts a restaurant in order to provide food for themselves and their neighbors.

Ben-Zvi, Hava . Eva's Journey: A Young Girl's True Story. iUniverse, 2004.

Blond, twelve year old Hava survives the Holocaust in Poland on her own and eventually makes her way to Israel where she is reunited with her mother.

Brodman, Aliana . The Gift. Simon and Schuster, 1993.

A child gives her Hanukkah money to a street musician.

Brown, Marcia. Stone Soup. Scribner, 1947

Caldecott medal winner about 3 hungry soldiers who show the townspeople how to make soup from stones when they are told that the town has no food.

Davis, Aubrey Bagels From Benny. Kids Can Press, 2003

A young boy wants to thank God for making the ingredients for his grandfather's delicious bagels, so he leaves a dozen bagels in the Holy Ark every Friday. A hungry man prays for food in front of the ark and finds the bagels that Benny leaves, thinking they are the answer to his prayer.

Eisenberg, Azriel. Feeding the World: a Biography of David Lubin. Abelard-Schuman, 1965.

David Lubin helped found the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Freedman, Florence . Brothers: A Hebrew Legend. HarperCollins, 1985

Retelling of the legend about how Jerusalem came to be located in the spot where it is. In the story, two brothers' love for one another and acts of selflessness cause first confusion and then heavenly rewards. Other retellings of this legend are The Two Brothers: A Legend of Jerusalem by Neal Waldman and The Brothers' Promise by Frances Harber.

Goldin, Barbara Diamond; Peretz, I. L. Magician's Visit, Puffin, 1993

Barbara Diamond Goldin retells an I. L. Peretz story about a magician who visits a poor couple on the first night of Passover. The rabbi advises them that if the magician's tricks produce real items and not just illusion, then his magic is good. They are able to enjoy a real meal on Passover thanks to the magician - who may be Elijah.

Greene, Bette . Summer of My German Soldier. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1973

In this Newbery Award-winning novel, twelve year old Patty Bergen befriends an escaped German soldier during WWII and gives him food, despite her dysfunctional Jewish family,.

Hesse, Karen . Cats In Krasinski Square. Scholastic, 2004

A little Jewish girl who lives with her older sister under false identities outside of the Warsaw Ghetto befriends the many stray cats who come through the cracks in the ghetto wall. She uses them to foil a Gestapo raid on some underground workers who are smuggling food into the ghetto. Not a picture book for younger readers but an illustrated Holocaust story, this will require some setting of historical context for the elementary age children who read it.

Hopkinson, Deborah . Shutting Out The Sky: Life In The Tenements Of New York, 1880-1924. Orchard Books/Scholastic Press, 2003.

An account of the hardships of tenement life on New York's Lower East Side. Documentary photographs and appendix. Other books on this topic are Tenement by Bial, 97 Orchard Street, New York by Granfield, and Suitcase of Dreams by Kale.

Jung, L. Shannon. Hunger and Happiness: Feeding the Hungry, Nourishing Our Souls. Augsburg Books, c2009.

Explores how to provide quality nourishment for the poor.

Kasza, Keiko. The Wolf's Chicken Stew. Putnam, 1987

A hungry wolf's attempts to fatten up a chicken have unexpected results.

Kimmel, Eric A. Horn For Louis. Random House, 2005

A story based on possible fact about the youth of the great musician, Louis Armstrong. Set in New Orleans, it is about the Jewish family who helped seven year old Louis get his first real horn.

Kurtz, Jane . Storyteller's Beads. Harcourt Brace, 1998.

A blind Jewish girl and a Christian girl overcome prejudice and suspicion as they help one another make the dangerous exodus out of war-torn Ethiopia into a refugee camp in the Sudan.

Lee, Chinlun. The Very Kind Rich Lady And Her One Hundred Dogs. Candlewick, 2001

Every day the very kind rich lady feeds, cares for, and plays with her 100 dogs.

Mack, Tracy . Birdland. Scholastic, 2003

Jazz plays an important part in this story about a family who learn to cope with their personal grief by relating to the colorful tapestry of life in New York City.

Matas, Carol . Sparks Fly Upward. Clarion Books, 2002

In this historical novel set in Winnipeg, Canada at the beginning of the last century, a timid adolescent girl is sent to a foster home when her father cannot find work.

McBrier, Page. Beatrice's goat. Atheneum, 2000

Based on a true story about operation "Heifer," a girl is given the opportunity to go to school when her family receives an income-producing goat.

Napoli, Donna Jo. King Of Mulberry Street, Random House, 2005

Set in New York's Five Points in the early twentieth century, an Italian Jewish child named Dom survives on his own, helping others even though he has little of his own to give.

Oswald, Nancy . Nothing Here But Stones. Henry Holt, 2004

Historical fiction based on the Cotopaxi Jewish Colony that lasted only a few years is about an agricultural colony of Jewish immigrants, struggling to eke out a living in Colorado in the late 1800's.

Polacco, Patricia . Trees Of The Dancing Goats, Simon and Schuster, 1996

When a scarlet fever epidemic threatens to ruin their Christian neighbors' Christmas, a Jewish farming family decorates little trees for them, using the carved animals that were meant to be Hanukkah presents.

Sandman, Rochel . Perfect Porridge. Hachai, 2000.

During the war, Zayde Mendel and Bubbe Hinda want to help the hungry people around them. Bubbe goes to collect bread, and Zayde starts a big pot of porridge, despite the fact that he has never cooked.

Wieder, Joy Nelkin. Great Potato Plan. Hachai, 1999

The outbreak of World War I strands a Jewish family in Warsaw. With Papa already in the United States, Simcha, the oldest son, must help his mother in the struggle against starvation and marauding Cossacks.

Caring for the Environment

Avi. Poppy's Return. HarperCollinsPublishers, c2005

Poppy, accompanied by her troublesome son Junior, his skunk friend, and Uncle Ereth the porcupine, responds to a summons to return to her ancestral home, Gray House, to save the mice there from destruction by a bulldozer.

Bang, Molly. Common Ground. Blue Sky Press, c1997

Imagines a village in which there are too many people consuming shared resources and discusses the challenge of handling our world's environment safely.

Behm, Barbara J. and Balouet, Jean-Christophe. Extinct Wildlife. Gareth Stevens, 1997

An overview of some of the species of animals that have become extinct.

Behrens, June. Earth Is Home: The Pollution Story. Elk Grove Press, 1971

Describes causes and effects of air, water, and land pollution and discusses what we can do to improve our environment.

Bodecker, N. M. The Mushroom Center Disaster. Atheneum, 1975
Insects work to save their environment in this allegory.

Cherry, Lynne. A River Ran Wild. Harcourt, 1992
An environmental history of the Nashua River, from its discovery through the Industrial Revolution.

Cone, Molly . Listen To The Trees: Jews And The Earth. UAHC Press, 1995
A diverse collection of quotations expressing Judaism's concern for the environment, a few photographs, stories, comics, cartoon, blessings, and a glossary.

Cooper, Susan. Green boy Margaret K. McElderry Books, c2002.
Twelve-year-old Trey and his seven-year-old brother Lou, who does not speak, cross the barrier between two worlds, that of their island in the Bahamas, and a land called Pangaia, and play a mysterious role in restoring the natural environment in both places.

Dr. Seuss. The Lorax. Random House, c1971
Dr. Seuss's classic tale of the Lorax who speaks for the trees in the hopes that someone will stop them from being cut down.

Earth Works Group. 50 Simple Things You Can Do to Save the Earth. Earthworks Press, 1989.
Many practical projects and ideas for promoting ecological awareness.

Gershator, Phillis . Honi's Circle Of Trees. Jewish Publication Society, 1994
Honi plants carob trees, falls asleep, and wakes many years later to find that although all of the people he knew are long gone, he is privileged to see his trees bear fruit.

Harris, Colin. Protecting the Planet. Thomson Learning, 1993.
Ways that the world is trying to stop the destruction of our environment.

Hiaasen, Carl. Flush . Alfred A. Knopf, c2002.
With their father jailed for sinking a river boat, Noah Underwood and his younger sister, Abbey, must gather evidence that the owner of this floating casino is emptying his bilge tanks into the protected waters around their Florida Keys home.

Hiaasen, Carl. Hoot . Alfred A. Knopf, c2002.
Roy, who is new to his small Florida community, becomes involved in another boy's attempt to save a colony of burrowing owls from a proposed construction site.

Kallen, Stuart. Eco-Games. Abdo & Daughters, 1993
Provides instructions for making and playing games that spotlight environmental protection, recycling, and ecology.

Levine, Arthur . Pearl Moskowitz's Last Stand. Tambourine Books, 1993
An elderly woman decides she will save the last tree on her street from being cut down. She and a group of ethnically diverse friends use their wiles as bubbles to divert an earnest young bureaucrat from his efforts at urban renewal.

Lorbiecki, Marybeth. Planet Patrol : A Kids' Action Guide To Earth Care. Two-Can Pub., c2005
An introduction to ecology that uses examples of real-life human endeavors, action tips and factoids to show how environmental problems can be slowed or reversed.

Miller, Christina G. and Berry, Louise A. Jungle Rescue: Saving the New World Tropical Rain Forest. Atheneum, 1991

Explains the ecology of the Rain Forest and offers suggestions for saving it.

Nagel, Shirley. Tree Boy. Sierra Club Books, 1978

A biography of Andy Lipkis who started Tree People in Los Angeles to provide smog resistant trees.

Sharpe, Susan. Waterman's Boy. Bradbury, 1990

Two boys work to clean-up birds caught in an oil spill.

Shulman, Jeffrey, Gaylord Nelson : a day for the earth. 21st Century Books, 1991

Examines the life and work of the politician who worked on the state and national level to protect the environment and was responsible for the first Earth Day in 1970.

Westrup, Hugh. Maurice Strong : Pulling Together For Planet Earth. Millbrook Press, 1994.

Biography of a man who is working to improve the environment here and around the world.

Wheeler, Jill C. Earth kids. Abdo & Daughters, 1993

Five children explain about the projects they have initiated to help the environment.

Respecting Differences

Anders, Rebecca. A Look at Prejudice and Understanding. Lerner, 1976

Text and photographs show the importance of accepting those who are different.

Babbitt, Lucy Cullyford. Where The Truth Lies. Orchard Books, c1993

Three young people--one from an atheistic city, one from a country that believes in many gods, and one from a land that worships the one "real" God--set out on a mission to end the war that has been perpetuated by these disparate beliefs.

Bell, William Zack. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1999

The son of a Jewish father and black mother, high school senior Zack has never been allowed to meet his mother's family, but after doing a research project on a former slave, he travels from his home in Canada to Natchez, Mississippi to find his grandfather.

Brown, Beverly Swerdlow. Oliver's High Five. Health Press, c1998

Oliver Octopus, who was born with five arms instead of eight, has trouble getting hired for a job because he is physically different from what people expect.

Brown, Tricia. Someone Special, Just Like You. Henry Holt, 1984

Photographs of children who are differently abled and the spare text help show that all children have similar experiences.

Cohn, Janice. The Christmas Menorahs : How A Town Fought Hate. A. Whitman, 1995

Describes how people in Billings, Montana joined together to fight a series of hate crimes against a Jewish family.

Dr. Seuss. The Sneetches and Other Stories. Random House, c1961

Sneetches learn that physical appearance does not make one group better than another.

Hood, Di. The Confused Zebra. Africa World Press, 1999

A baby zebra is confused about whether his true color is white or black but comes to realize that his color is not as important as his ability to get along with others.

Kent, Susan. Learning How To Appreciate Differences. PowerKids Press, 2001
Discusses how to appreciate differences in people, emphasizing the importance of following your interests, deciding what you like, standing up for yourself, and appreciating others.

McConnell, Nancy P. Different and Alike.
Scott, Sharon and Nicholas, the Cocker Spaniel. Not Better-- Not Worse-- Just Different.
Human Resource Development Press, c1992
Respect for those who are different.

Philbrick, Rodman. Freak the Mighty. Blue Sky, 1993
Learning disabled Max & his new friend Freak, whose birth defect has affected his body but not his mind, form an unusual friendship.

Polacco, Patricia. Babushka Baba Yaga. Philomel, c1993
A Russian witch is judged by her appearance and reputation instead of her kind deeds.

Polacco, Patricia. January's Sparrow. Philomel, c2009
Sadie and her family are protected by a community from slave catchers.

Rhue, Morton. The Wave. Delacorte Press, 1981
A class of students try an experiment to understand how prejudice influences people. Based on the famous Blue eye/Brown eye incident.

Smith, Charles R., Jr. I Am America. Scholastic, 2003.
The many faces of children growing up in America today.

Wheeler, Jill. Everyday Heroes at Home. Abdo & Daughters, 1996
Stories of five children who have overcome handicaps to become successful.

Wheeler, Jill. Everyday Heroes Overcome Challenges. Abdo & Daughters, 1996
Children who have overcome physical disabilities.

Respecting the Elderly

Ancona, George. Growing Older. Dutton, c1978
Presents anecdotal remembrance of older people as told to the author.

Blue, Rose. Grandma Didn't Wave Back. Watts, 1972
A ten-year-old slowly realizes her grandmother's memory is getting so bad she may have to go to a nursing home.

Bosse, Malcolm J. The 79 Squares. Dell, c1979
To the bafflement of his parents, gang, and probation officer, visiting an ostracized, cantankerous old man and his garden becomes very important to 14-year-old Eric.

Conly, Jane. Trout Summer. Henry Holt, 1995
A sister and brother spend a largely unsupervised summer in a cabin near a river, where they befriend an elderly man with much to teach them and where they try to come to terms with their parents' failing marriage and make decisions about their own futures.

Dr. Seuss. You're Only Old Once! Random House, 1986
A satiric look at old age from Theodore Geisel when he turned 82.

Fink, Dale Borman. Mr. Silver and Mrs. Gold. Human Sciences Press, 1980
Two old people become friends and share many activities together.

Fox, Mem. Wilfrid Gordon MacDonald Partridge. Kane/Miller, 1985

A small boy helps Miss Cooper remember her childhood when he visits her in an old age home.

Johnston, Tony. Grandpa's Song. Dial, 1991

When a young girl's beloved, exuberant grandfather becomes forgetful, she helps him.

Kantrowitz, Mildred. Maxie. Four Winds Press, c1970

Maxie stays in bed because she thinks her dull routines are of no use to anyone, but she discovers how many people rely on her.

Kavasch, E. Barrie. Zuni Children and Elders Talk Together. PowerKids Press, 1997

Children learn about the culture of their ancestors from the elders in their tribe.

Mills, Claudia. Dinah for President. Macmillan, 1992

Dinah Seabrooke, now in her first year of middle school, struggles to become a big fish in what seems like an ocean--and in the process discovers the value of recycling and of friendship with the elderly.

Polacco, Patricia. Mrs. Katz and Tush. Bantam, 1992

Larnel, an African American boy, develops a friendship with his elderly Jewish neighbor Mrs. Katz when they adopt a kitten together.

Rappaport, Doreen. "But, She's Still My Grandma!" Human Sciences Press, c1982

Jessica comes to terms with her grandmother's failing health and memory.

Shanks, Anne. Old Is What You Get. Viking Press, [1976]

Photos of elderly people with their comments on life.

Skurzynski, Gloria. Dangerous Ground. Bradbury, 1989

Angela fears that her great-aunt is losing her mind in old age, but drugs are the problem.

Smith, Robert Kimmel. The War with Grandpa. Yearling, 1984

Peter is thrilled that his Grandfather is coming to live with him until he finds out that they have to share a room.

Snyder, Carol. The Great Condominium Rebellion. Delacorte, 1981

Two children visit their grandparents in a retirement community in Florida where they encourage the residents to break the rules.

Welcoming Guests

Altman, Linda Jacobs. Legend Of Freedom Hill. Lee and Low, 2000.

California during the Gold Rush is the setting for this story of an inter-racial friendship. Two little girls, one Jewish and one African - American, find enough gold to ransom the runaways that the slave catcher has in his clutches.

Bat-Ami, Miriam . Two Suns In The Sky. Front Street/Cricket Books, 1999.

An intense historical novel set in Oswego, New York during World War II at the refugee camp at Fort Ontario, the only one established on American soil during the war. The story of a romance between a Jewish refugee boy and an Irish-Catholic local girl is handled with sensitivity; the story is told in alternating voices.

Bitton-Jackson, Livia . Hello America. Simon and Schuster, 2005.

The third book in a trilogy that also includes I Have Lived a Thousand Years and My Bridges of Hope. Bitton Jackson continues the saga of teenage Elli and her mother, who emigrate as refugees to New York following World War II. Warmly welcomed by family and friends, mother and daughter cope with the strangeness of a new country and gradually adapt.

Davis, Aubrey . Bone Button Borscht. Kids Can Press, 1995.

A hungry beggar teaches a town full of selfish people how to share by showing them the secret of making delicious borscht. This splendidly illustrated story is excellent for reading aloud. Many children will recognize that it is a version of the tale of "Stone Soup."

Grossblatt, Ruby M. Who's That Sleeping On My Sofabed?. Hachai, 1999.

Welcoming guests is imparted through this appealing story for preschoolers. Yoni is looking forward to sleeping in a bigger bed but his parents' guests keep getting his sofa bed. When grandma comes and Yoni offers the sofa bed to her, his parents realize he is ready for a bigger bed.

Hurwitz, Johanna . Faraway Summer. Morrow Junior Books, 1998

In 1910, orphaned twelve-year-old "Dossi" (Hadassah) Rabinowitz is sent by the Fresh Air Fund for a vacation on a Vermont farm. During her two-week stay her horizons widen while her hosts, a Protestant family, make some discoveries, too. The story emphasizes the hopeful aspects of the immigrant experience and the commonalities among American groups. The sequel is entitled Dear Emma (Morrow 2002).

Matas, Carol . Sparks Fly Upward. Clarion Books, 2002.

A historical novel set in Winnipeg, Canada at the beginning of the last century. A timid adolescent girl is sent to a foster home when her father cannot find work. Her foster family is Ukrainian and while some are kind, several of the men are anti-Semites. How she gains confidence and learns to make her own choices are the main themes.

Rylant, Cynthia. The Relatives Came.

Caldecott Honor Book about a large family that comes to visit.

Schachter, Esty . Anya's Echoes. Fithian Press, 2004

In this novel for adolescent girls, Lea learns about her great aunt's experiences during the Holocaust when Anya comes for a long visit.