

Sample Service Learning Projects for the Arts

The following examples are provided to inspire ways for arts organizations to participate in SLANT, Service Learning Adventures in North Texas. These are merely examples, as the best service learning projects are those that are child-led; the role of the adult coach is to encourage children as they identify a need they would like to address in their community, guide them in researching and learning about the challenge, and support them in finding a creative way they can make a difference.



<p>Dance</p>	<p><u>Culture Exploration and Sharing</u> Research cultures represented in your community, and learn dances associated with one or more of them, perhaps for a holiday or special occasion; share the knowledge gained through a dance performance at a school or community international festival.</p> <p><u>Pay It Forward with Dance</u> Encourage younger children to dance by planning lessons to teach them a dance. After teaching the lessons, encourage them to perform for their peers or hold a competition for the young dancers with small prizes for everyone.</p> <p><u>Learning Through Movement</u> Ask teachers at your school if you can create a dance to help teach a concept to younger children, such as how different animals move or how the planets move around the sun. Choreograph the dance to accurately demonstrate the concept, and perform it for the younger students.</p> <p><u>Universal Language through Dance</u> Learn how to communicate through movement by creating a dance that tells a story (perhaps one studied in school). Perform it for English Language Learners and/or parents at your school.</p>
<p>Music</p>	<p><u>Share the Gift of a Special Song</u> Learn about the Great American Songbook (American music from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s); survey residents at a retirement center about their favorite song(s); learn to sing or play some selections; and then perform the music for the seniors.</p> <p><u>Pay It Forward with Music</u> Encourage younger children to explore music. Plan a lesson to teach a younger child to sing a new song, hold a violin, or play a simple tune on the piano; teach the lesson to younger students in your school or neighborhood.</p> <p><u>Recycled Music</u> Collect items which might become trash, such as cans and bottles. Learn how to make simple musical instruments from the items, such as shakers, rubber band guitars, and coke bottle flutes. Create a musical work performing on your handmade instruments and perform it for others. The instruments can be donated to children at a shelter or auctioned off at a PTA meeting to benefit a local charity.</p> <p><u>Benefit Concert</u> Research charities that do good work in your community, select one, and plan a performance to support it. Songs and music have been used historically to inspire social change, so look for music that compliments the work of your charity, or write a new song to perform. People attending your concert can make a small donation to the charity, or bring toys, cans of food, or other items that the charity can accept.</p>

Theatre	<p><u>Bring Smiles to Others</u> Select a favorite fairy tale or fable, learn how to build simple puppets of the characters, and create a puppet show of the story. Perform the puppet show at a children’s hospital; after the show give the puppets to the patients.</p> <p><u>Benefit Show</u> Research charities that do good work in your community, selecting one to support with a benefit performance. Pick a play to perform, perhaps one that has a connection to your charity. Ask people attending the performance to bring a donation in cash or in kind which will be give to the charity.</p> <p><u>Social Action Theatre</u> Research issues/concerns in your community while learning how theatre has historically played a role in social change. Write a play about a local issue and its possible solutions; perform it at school or church to educate others. The play can be performed as a readers’ theater or with props and sets.</p> <p><u>Universal Language through Mime</u> Study how a mime communicates through movement and create a wordless play that that tells a story (perhaps one studied in school). Perform it for English Language Learners at your school and/or for parents at a PTA meeting.</p>
Visual Arts	<p><u>Brighten a Bare Wall</u> Learn about one of the charities that provide housing for formerly homeless people moving out of shelters. Working with the charity, create artwork that can go into apartments or houses to welcome people moving into their new home.</p> <p><u>Sharing Art from Nature</u> Collect plant specimens from nature such as flowers, leaves, twigs; research what they are; and report your findings to your group. Then, use the specimens to create a beautiful and useful item, such as pressing the flowers to mount on a card or laminating the leaves and/or twigs to create a unique bookmark. Donate the items to a senior center or shelter.</p> <p><u>Benefit Exhibition</u> Research charities that do good work in your community, selecting one to support with a benefit exhibition. Decide what type of artwork to create for your exhibit (perhaps learn a new skill, such as ceramics or photography), or collect work from past art projects to exhibit. If creating new artwork, consider how the art might have a connection to your charity. Ask people attending the exhibition to bring a donation in cash or in kind which will be given to the charity; artwork at the exhibition can be sold or auctioned to raise additional funds for the charity.</p> <p><u>Recycled Art</u> Collect a wide range of items which might become trash, including materials which can be recycled. Learn how and why such items are discarded, and how they could be reused or recycled. Using the items, create artwork such as flowers from plastic bottles or sculpture from wood and metal pieces. Plan an exhibit of your recycled art with posters explaining how items can be reused and recycled.</p>