



OBJECTIVES

Student groups will:

- ▶ use USA TODAY to identify and research an individual, group, action, etc. that is having a positive impact on a community.
- ▶ write a poem about their topic that includes both facts and personal feelings.
- ▶ use creative and critical thinking, while working within given limits to develop art that represents the person/group/action.
- ▶ present both their poem and art to classmates in a dramatic and visually appealing way.

WEEK 1: Communitarianism is a philosophy that embraces social responsibility. Communitarians believe that our sense of community has deteriorated because too much emphasis has been placed on individual freedoms. President Bush has touted many of the principles of communitarianism and has vowed to nurture the “seedbeds of virtue” – institutions that help people improve. This project will celebrate those institutions. Look through recent USA TODAYs and identify a person, organization, action, etc. that is improving the local or global community. After finding a topic for your project, research it thoroughly by gathering detailed notes from USA TODAY and three other sources.

WEEK 2: Last week, you identified a topic and gathered information about it. This week, your assignment is to write a free-verse poem (*NOT* a paragraph or an essay) about your subject. Your poem must be at least 25 lines long and include detailed information on five ways that the person/group/thing is acting as a positive force in the world. The challenge is to include these details in a poetic, dramatic way. Of course, your poem should also express your own views.

WEEK 3: You have written a detailed poem that explains how your topic has improved a particular community. This week, you will create a piece of non-traditional art that corresponds to your poem. Here are the rules: 1.) You can only use materials that are circular or spherical in shape. Why? The circle is a symbol of perfect unity and unity is the root of *community*. 2.) Your art must be three-dimensional and interactive. In other words, when you deliver your poem to classmates, you will be using your art to illustrate your message. While reciting your poem, you may want to dismantle your work of art, toss it, use it as an instrument, etc.

WEEK 4: Last week, you created a non-traditional work of art that corresponds to your poem. This week, you are going to incorporate your poem and art into a performance for your peers. Keep in mind that your presentation should be an experience (e.g., performance *art*) *NOT* a speech or stiff recitation. Therefore, use movement, sounds, dance, music, etc. to make your performance innovative. (And don't forget, you *must* use your art as an interactive prop during your presentation.) First, memorize your poem. Next, figure out how you are going to move and use your art as you recite your poem. (In other words, choreograph your performance.) Finally, rehearse, rehearse, rehearse! You want to know your presentation so well that even nerves won't prevent you from giving a smooth performance.