



Teacher Toolkit: Youth Outreach Program



Thank you for your interest in HAF's Youth Outreach Program! We are delighted to share with you the pilot version of the Teacher Toolkit and hope that you and your students will find it useful and inspiring.

This service-learning program is intended to introduce students in grades K-6 to Moroccan geography and culture, environmental conservation, and volunteerism. Our hope is that it also empowers them to make a difference in their own community and the world.

Our vision is for the program to be used by educators of all kinds who are looking for a meaningful way to introduce cross-cultural learning in their classrooms. We especially hope that former Peace Corps Volunteers who served in Morocco and Moroccan-American families will find ways to introduce the program to their local communities.

Since this is a new program, we welcome and encourage your feedback, so that we may continue to adapt and expand it over time. We would like to eventually add other lessons, a comprehensive reference list of books, websites, and multi-media resources, and a "pen-pal" exchange program between US and Moroccan students.

Thank you for sharing this experience with us!

Kate McLetchie
Country Director

Tina Khartami
Resource Council Member

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

About the High Atlas Foundation

The High Atlas Foundation (HAF), a nonprofit organization founded by former Peace Corps Volunteers, works to establish socio-economic development and environmental projects in rural Morocco that local communities design and manage, and that are in partnership with government and non-government agencies. HAF uses a participatory approach to development that aims to include all members in a community in the project cycle – from initially identifying the group’s priority needs, to design, implementation, management, and evaluation.

Current projects include:

- Fruit tree agriculture
- Clean drinking water
- Irrigation
- Women’s cooperatives
- Training university students in facilitation and consensus-building skills



HAF’s signature initiative is its One Million Tree Campaign. The organization’s goal is to plant one million fruit trees throughout Morocco to change the quality of life for rural families by breaking the cycle of extreme poverty. Since 2003, nearly 150,000 trees have been planted, benefitting over 23,000 people.

Providing communities with fruit trees enables families to on average double their household income in as little as four years. The fruit is sold at local markets and HAF is also beginning to work with communities to create cooperatives, so that the fruit can be made into jams etc. with the goal of selling at domestic and international markets.

One beneficiary stated:

“Fruit trees help our families because we can eventually harvest the fruit and sell it at the souk (local market). We can use the money from the sale of fruit to feed our families, and buy warm clothes and books for our children to go to school. Our main source of income is from fruit trees – this is our way of life.”

Learn more about the High Atlas Foundation: www.hihatlasfoundation.org

Youth Outreach Program

The Youth Outreach Program is designed to leverage the One Million Tree Campaign to raise awareness for:

- *Self-sufficiency*: giving families the ability to support themselves and their children through the simple act of tree planting;
- *Environmental conservation*: how trees benefit the environment;
- *Water*: the importance of clean drinking water (potable water and irrigation projects are often done in conjunction with tree planting in rural Morocco);
- *Cross-cultural awareness*: understanding how are the lives of people in other countries the same and different than our own; and
- *Volunteering*: instill in children the idea of volunteerism as a life’s vocation, and global responsibility at an early age. Every child holds the power to change the world!

The program is intended for children in grades K-6, and can be delivered in a traditional academic setting or with any type of community group (i.e. after school program, environmental club, Girl or Boy Scouts, religious group, etc.).

You may wish to do the program in conjunction with Earth Day (April 22nd), Arbor Day (April 24th), International Volunteer Day (December 5th), or Morocco's Youth Day (August 21st). Since a component of the program includes planting a tree in your own community, it is best to implement the program during the planting season in your geographic region.

The Program includes three main components:

1. *Grassroots Fundraising*: students work together to collect small change – starting with just a penny – to fund the planting of fruit trees with rural Moroccan families.
2. *Tree Planting Ceremony*: to symbolize and show solidarity for their efforts abroad, students plant a “sister” tree in their own community.
3. *Lessons*: four different lesson plans offer students experiential learning opportunities and meet science and social studies standards.

Ten Easy Steps to Getting Started

1. Download the registration form and email or fax to us. The form can be downloaded at: <http://www.highatlasfoundation.org/about/get-involved/teacher-toolkit>
2. Read through the Teacher Toolkit to decide what activities and lessons you want to do with your students.
3. Decide when you will begin and end the program (including dates you will collect change).
4. Determine if you want to set a tree planting goal (\$5 plants one tree in Morocco) and if you want to undertake any grassroots fundraising activities to collect change or if students will simply bring in extra change (ideas are given in the toolkit below).
5. Request necessary permission and procure any supplies you will need to plant a tree on your school or community grounds.
6. Notify parents of the program (sample letter can be found at the end of the toolkit).
7. Collect change, plant “sister” tree, and implement lessons!
8. Download the completion form and email or fax to us with your check/money order. The form can be downloaded at: <http://www.highatlasfoundation.org/about/get-involved/teacher-toolkit>
9. Receive an acknowledgment letter from HAF.
10. Help spread the word – let others know about the program and how they can get involved!

TEACHER TOOLKIT For Grades K-6

The lesson plans outlined below are intended to be delivered over the course of one week, with the fifth day culminating in the “sister” tree planting ceremony and pooling together the funds they raised for tree planting in Morocco. Alternatively, the lessons can be discussed in a condensed version in one afternoon along with the tree planting activity. Each lesson can be delivered as a standalone activity. You may choose to do one, three, or all four of them.

As you plan your tree planting ceremony and other lessons/activities, we recommend that you:

- Inform your students that they will be participating in a fundraising and tree planting ceremony to raise awareness and benefit children and families in rural Morocco.
- Notify parents of the program and seek their involvement and support. We have created a sample letter, which can be found at the end of the toolkit.
- Have your students create and design change jars for your classroom so that they take full ownership in raising the funds.
- Let them know that at the end of the campaign, they will plant a tree similar to the trees that are planted in Morocco.
- Have fun and we hope this is a memorable experience for all of you!

Grassroots Fundraising

Every child holds the power to change the world – starting with just a penny. As you approach the fundraising component of the program, we encourage you to think creatively and focus on collecting pennies and other small change, so that every child feels that he or she has the ability to make a difference (some parents may wish to send in larger donations to add to the change the students collect).

Since every school has their own rules and regulations concerning fundraising, we won't go into too much detail. You may choose something as simple as placing change jars throughout the school with flyers describing the program, or your students may wish to undertake a specific activity such as a bake sale (could be fun if you have Moroccan families in your school who could donate Moroccan sweets).

Although we did not create a specific lesson related to math standards, you could certainly create your own math lessons around the fundraising component of the program. For example, you may wish to decide together as a group how many trees you want to plant in Morocco and from here determine your fundraising goal (it costs \$5 to plant a tree and ensure its proper care and maintenance). It is important to remind students that even just planting a few trees makes a big difference!

Tree Planting Ceremony



If you have limited time, the tree planting ceremony can be the only activity that you do along with the grassroots fundraising, otherwise it is best to do the tree planting ceremony at the end of your week of activities. We recommend that you plant a tree sapling on your school or community grounds and allow as many students as possible to participate in the planting. If it is not practical to plant a fruit tree in your geographic climate then any tree, shrub, or cactus will do – it is most important to select a tree that will thrive!

The website www.ecokidsonline.com has a great section devoted to planting trees. They recommend the following essentials for successful tree planting:

- Shovels to dig holes and buckets to carry trees and water.

- Proper footwear (avoid sandals) and clothing (long pants, short-sleeved shirt, sweater and raincoat, hat and work gloves) and sunscreen.
- Nourishment (a snack and cold water).
- Shelter to protect people and equipment from rain or hot sun.
- Washroom facilities

HOW TO PLANT TREES

- Dig a hole wide and deep enough to cover the root system.
- Remove carefully from container/packaging (cutting down the sides of the container can aid in removal).
- Handle saplings by the base of the stem, taking care not to bruise the bark.
- Place the tree at the proper height – if the tree is planted too deeply new roots will have trouble developing due to lack of oxygen.
- Make sure the tree is straight in the hole before filling in with soil.
- Fill the hole about one-third full and gently (but firmly) pack soil around the roots; then fill in the rest of the hole with soil, alternating every few inches with water.
- Stake the tree if needed.
- Add organic mulch (i.e., leaf litter, pine straw, peat moss, or wood chips) around base of tree to help retain moisture.



Detailed information on best practices related to tree planting can be found at:
http://www.treesaregood.com/treecare/tree_planting.aspx

CARING FOR YOUR TREE

Baby trees need to be looked after for three to five years after planting. Growing trees require nutrients, water, sunlight and room to grow. You can help by watering, weeding, adding compost to the soil and mulch to the tree bases, and by protecting the trees from animals and the weather. In general, trees need to be watered once a week during warm weather months (less if there is a lot of rain). Create a schedule of maintenance tasks (schools especially need to make sure someone will care for the tree during summer months).

BENEFITS OF TREES

- Filter pollution from the air
- Help recycle water
- Prevent soil loss
- Create shade
- Give shelter from wind and rain
- Provide homes for animals
- Make food for humans and wildlife

Lessons

Science Standards (listed by subject) that can be supported by the HAF Teacher Toolkit

Below are a number of science standards of learning taken from various sources and that are used across the board by school systems K-6. These standards tie in the tree planting ceremony in addition to the three activities listed under lesson 1.

- Living systems (habitats)
- Plants' connection with the environment
- Life cycle
- Human effects on environment
- Resource renewal
- Resources from plants
- Relationships between people and plants

Lesson Plan 1: The Environment and the Importance of Clean Drinking Water

Estimated time 30 to 45 minutes for each activity



Activity 1: Clean Drinking Water and Water Conservation

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a wonderful website dedicated to teachers and students. You may download activities and lesson plans directly from www.epa.gov/teachers. We highly recommend using the "All the Water in the World" lesson plan to discuss the importance of clean drinkable water: www.epa.gov/region01/students/pdfs/ww_intro.pdf.

From the "All the Water in the World":

Because water covers three-quarters of the earth's surface, it might appear that there is plenty to go around and that we will never run out of this valuable resource. In reality, however, we have a limited amount of usable fresh water. Over 97 percent of the earth's water is found in the oceans as salt water. Two percent of the earth's water is stored as fresh water in glaciers, ice caps, and snowy mountain ranges. That leaves only one percent of the earth's water available to us for our daily water supply needs.

Try the activities with your students and tie the lesson back to the importance of conserving water and keeping it clean in their daily lives. Remind them that in countries like Morocco, water is even scarcer than in the United States.

You can learn more about HAF's project to bring clean drinking water to Moroccan villages at: <http://www.globalgiving.com/pr/2100/proj2015a.html>.

Activity 2: Happy Earth Day Activity Book

The "Happy Earth Day Activity Book" offers fun activities for students and they take home their own book: www.epa.gov/region5/publications/happy/happy.pdf

Activity 3: Online Exploration of Environmental Games and Activities

Eco Kids Online is also a wonderful website for students and teachers. They offer online games and activities as well as resources specifically for teachers. We recommend that you take your students to www.ecokidsonline.com and explore!

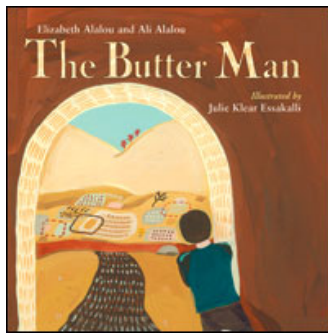
Social Studies Standards (listed by subject) that can be supported by the HAF Teacher Toolkit

Below are a number of social studies standards of learning (geography, economics, and civics) taken from various sources and that are used across the board by school systems K-6. Lessons 2-4 address the social studies standards.

- Being a good citizen
- Using resources wisely
- Responsibilities as a citizen
- Map skills
- Making good economic choices
- Production of goods and services
- Citizens' rights and responsibilities

Lesson Plan 2: Children's Book

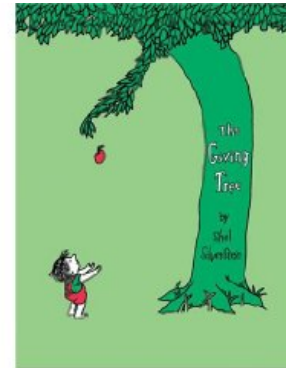
Estimated time 25-45 minutes per book (includes discussion time if you choose)



Read a children's book followed by discussion/reflection. We recommend you choose from one of two books: *The Butter Man*, by Elizabeth Letts Alalou and Ali Alalou, or *The Giving Tree*, by Shel Silverstein.

In *The Butter Man* – a story set in Morocco's High Atlas Mountains – a father discusses his Moroccan childhood with his American born daughter. *The Butter Man* may be purchased via the High Atlas Foundation website. It is a wonderful addition to any school or public library and a great companion for the Youth Outreach Program. This story ties in geography and world studies.

The Giving Tree, by Shel Silverstein, is a children's classic expounding the many ways a single tree can give shelter and goods and services to humans, using resources wisely. The simple story also brings home the ideas of selflessness and giving to others (being a good citizen). *The Giving Tree* can be found in school and public libraries.



After reading one of the stories, ask your students to reflect on what they have read and assign the following as an in-class activity or homework:

The Butter Man:

Ask students what was their favorite parts of the story? What would they like to do if they ever visited Morocco? Have them draw a picture illustrating the activity.

Some ideas to get them started:

- Ride a camel
- Eat couscous
- Ride a donkey cart instead of riding in a car
- Sleep in the Sahara Desert in a nomadic tent
- Hike in the High Atlas Mountains
- Shop in an open market

The Giving Tree:

Ask students to reflect on the story. The following discussion questions were taken from www.familyeducation.com:

1. At the end of the story, are you happy or sad? Why?
2. If you could change one part of the story, what part would you change? Why?
3. How is the tree like a real person?
4. Can you think of people you know who are like the tree?
5. Every time the boy returns, the tree asks him to play; but the boy always has an excuse not to. Why do you think the boy does this?
6. Why does the tree do so much for the boy?
7. Do you think the tree does *too* much for the boy?
8. Each time the boy accepts the tree's help, the narrator tells us, "And the tree was happy." How does this make you feel?
9. When you read it again at the end of the story, how do you feel?

How do the sacrifices of the tree in the book tie into planting trees and collecting money to help children and families in rural Morocco? Students can draw pictures or write a short composition about how trees benefit our lives.

Lesson Plan 3: Morocco and the High Atlas Mountains

Estimated time 30-45 minutes.

If you choose not to incorporate *The Butter Man* book into your activities, or if your students are beyond its reading level, we suggest that you have them research Morocco on the Internet. There are a number of websites that provide information on Morocco.

After conducting their research, have students create a poster collage of pictures about Morocco downloaded from the Internet or their own drawings that then can be presented and discussed as a group.

Suggested websites:

www.hihatlasfoundation.org

www.geographia.com/morocco/index.html

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morocco>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Morocco>

www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mo.html

We know that there are many websites with information about Morocco. Please let us know what your favorites are and we will update this list periodically!

Also doing a "Google Image" search for "Morocco" will yield some great photographs and maps (<http://images.google.com/>)

Following is a beautifully written Author's Note taken from *The Butter Man*, written by Elizabeth Letts Alalou and Ali Alalou. You may wish to read this to your students at the beginning of the lesson and have them identify Morocco and the High Atlas Mountains on a world map.

Morocco is located in the northwest tip of Africa directly across the Mediterranean Sea from Spain. Its western coast is the Atlantic Ocean and its southern borders become the Sahara Desert. The country's national languages are Arabic and French, and several regional dialects of the Amazigh (Berber) language are spoken. Most Moroccans are Muslims, but there are old established communities of Christians and Jews.

The High Atlas Mountains span the central part of the country. The Amazigh people are the native people of North Africa. The language they speak is called Tamazight (tama-ZEEK) or Berber. This language is spoken by an estimated 40 to 60 percent of all Moroccans, including almost all inhabitants of Morocco's mountainous regions.

In the High Atlas Mountains, people live in small villages that are clustered along river valleys. The primary occupation is farming. People grow wheat, barley, and potatoes, and they raise chickens, sheep,

goats, and cows for their butter. Nowadays some villages have electricity and some roads are paved, but many still appear without lights or roads.

The mountain roads are difficult and often impassable in winter. Very few people have cars, so there are many peddlers who travel from village to village carrying their wares in packs on the backs of their mules. One day you might find a teapot repairman, or a traveling healer who treats illnesses. Another day a peddler might arrive who sells goods from the big town, like chewing gum and straight pins, or staple food items, like olive oil and butter. Since the peddlers walk from village to village, you never know exactly what day they might pass through.

Traditional Berbers wear distinctive clothing. The women and girls wear colorful striped blankets called *tahendirt* (ta-hen-DEERT) tied around their shoulders. The blankets are made out of wool because winters in the mountains are cold and snowy. The blankets have distinctive patterns of stripes that identify which tribe the women belong to. They also wear bright head scarves that are often embroidered with sequins. Men wear heavy woolen robes with hoods called *tajellebit* (tah-jah-LAH-bit) in the winter, or lighter cotton robes called *fokias* (foh-KEE-yaz) in the summer. Some men wear long bands of cloth wrapped around their head like a turban to protect them from the hot sun.

Everyone in the village has a lot of work to do. Men go to the fields to plow and plant. They harvest crops and take goods to the weekly souk, or market, to be sold. At the weekly souk you can also buy almost anything you need – anything from kerosene for lanterns to plastic buckets; from fragrant spices to fruits and vegetables brought in from neighboring towns. Women walk far into the mountains to gather sticks for kindling. They carry the sticks piled onto their backs in bundles almost as big as they are. They use these sticks to light their cooking fires. There are lots of jobs for children to do, but they still have time to play soccer and other games and attend the village school, where they learn to read and write Arabic, the official language in Morocco.

Lesson Plan 4: Volunteerism and the Peace Corps

Estimated time 30-45 minutes

Children can and do volunteer! Giving service to others enriches their lives, as well as those they are serving. Children can seek out volunteer projects on their own or participate in an activity with their families. Some school systems also require students to conduct community service hours. This lesson will help students discover ways to fulfill these hours. We have outlined a number of activities to tie into the themes of volunteering, world peace, and community service. Please choose the activity or activities that you deem age appropriate for your students.

Activities:

- The Family Cares website (www.familycares.org) sponsored by the Points of Light Institute gives ideas of how families can volunteer. They also have a list of “fun stuff” to teach volunteerism through coloring pages etc.
- Ask students what types of volunteer activities they already do or would like to do with their own families and how it makes them feel to participate in these kinds of activities. Is there a community service project they want to do together as a class?
- Ask about ways they think they could do more in their communities:
 - Make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the homeless.
 - Participate in walk-a-thons or other activities that raise money for charities.
 - Donate old clothes, coats and toys to such organizations as the Salvation Army or Goodwill.
 - Participate in recycling programs.
 - Visit a homeless shelter, elderly home, or animal shelter.
 - Invite a nonprofit organization that provides services for those in need to your school to give a hands-on presentation.
 - Help cook a holiday meal at a shelter.

- Collect pennies in change jars to donate to the HAF one million tree campaign or another worthy community project they determine together as a group.
- ✿ Ask students if they know about the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, Teach For America, City Year, and other service oriented agencies (may be more appropriate for older students). The High Atlas Foundation was founded by former Peace Corps Volunteers. If you are interested in inviting a former Peace Corps Volunteer to your classroom, you can contact HAF Country Director, Kate McLetchie, at kate@highatlasfoundation.org. She will help connect you to a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer in your area.

If you are interested in expanding this lesson, please visit the Peace Corps World Wide Schools website (www.peacecorps.gov/wws) where you can search for lesson plans, connect with a current or returned Peace Corps Volunteer, read volunteer stories, watch videos and podcasts and much more!

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents:

[School or Community Group Name] is excited to share with you that your child's class will participate in the High Atlas Foundation's Youth Outreach Program between [date – date]. The High Atlas Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded by former Peace Corps Volunteers, works to establish development projects in rural Morocco that local communities design and manage, and that are in partnership with government and non-government agencies. Its signature initiative is a campaign to plant one million trees with communities throughout Morocco, and to date they have planted nearly 150,000 – we are eager to help add to this number!

This service-learning program will introduce your child to Moroccan geography and culture, environmental conservation, and volunteerism through interactive activities. We will collect money as a class – pennies and other small change – to plant fruit trees in rural Morocco (just \$5 plants one tree and ensures its adequate care for many years). We will also plant a “sister” tree on our grounds to serve as a symbol for the trees being planted with Moroccan families. Our goal is to plant [number] fruit trees in Morocco and in so doing help lift families out of poverty (rural families sell fruit at local markets).

We think this will be a wonderful experience for your child to learn about another culture and feel empowered to make a difference in the world!

If you have any questions or would like to get involved with the program please do not hesitate to contact me at [contact information].

Thank you,

[your name]

P.S. You can learn more about the High Atlas Foundation at www.hihatlasfoundation.org