

## Ideas for Educators by Discipline for Promoting the Multi-Media Youth Arts Contest

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### Ideas for Youth Ministry Programs

As part of a “Faith in Action” outreach night or mini-retreat for your students, start out by introducing students to the themes of [Catholic social teaching](#) using the *In the Footsteps of Jesus* [video](#), an activity from the [resource manual](#), or another [activity](#). Invite a speaker from a CCHD-funded group to give a talk about the group’s work. Help students make the connection that the group is a living, local example of Catholic social teaching in action. (Contact your [diocesan director](#) to identify a group in your area who could present to your students.) The speaker should be instructed to discuss specific needs in the local community and to mention ways in which low-income people are responding to these needs and working for social change. [Lesson 5](#) from Ending Poverty in Community (EPIC) provides suggestions for a small group discussion and brainstorming that can occur around community needs and the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus. [Lesson 6](#) guides students to create a covenant of action in response to what they have learned and discussed. Use these lessons to help students identify ways in which they, as the youth of the church, will collectively commit to joining the CCHD-funded group to advocate about the community needs they identified.

Students can then create one or several of the following to encourage adults and other youth in their parish to get involved in the campaign:

A skit or drama that theatrically conveys the community issues and encourages viewers to get involved

Posters to illustrate the community issues and the response of the CCHD-funded group and to encourage parishioners to take part in the response

A mural to illustrate the work of the CCHD-funded group

Poetry or short prose about the CCHD-funded group and the issues it works to address for a “poetry jam” or open-mike night

A Power Point about the community issues identified and the CCHD-group response

Any and all of these artistic expressions can be entered in the Multi-Media Youth Arts Contest.

### Ideas for Theology and Religious Education Classes

For Theology and Religious Education Classes, the Multi-Media Arts Contest is easy to tie in to your lessons on living out one’s faith and to lessons on Catholic social teaching.

For example, as part of a unit on Catholic social teaching, have students learn about a CCHD-funded group by listening to a speaker, watching one of the videos (listed in the Leader’s Guide), or reading [Portraits of Hope](#) or one of the chapters from [Credible Signs of Christ Alive Case Studies from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development](#). Ask students to write an essay or to illustrate in some creative way how the group is living out the themes of [Catholic social teaching](#).

[Lesson 4](#) of Ending Poverty in Community (EPIC) on the “Two Feet of Social Action” is based on the story of the Good Samaritan and includes small group activities to help students consider solutions to poverty that exemplify both direct service and social change, or work for justice. Groups are also asked to consider how their solutions compare to the real-world responses offered by CCHD (Catholic Campaign for Human Development)-funded community groups. After completing this lesson, students can be challenged to illustrate these real world examples of faith in action (through a Power Point presentation, a collage, or some other form of art) for entry in the arts contest.

### Ideas for Service and Service Learning Programs

Service coordinators can connect students to inspiring examples of low-income persons working for change

in their communities by using CCHD-funded groups as service sites. (Contact your [diocesan director](#) to identify groups in your area and for advice on which groups might be interested in hosting students for service.)

Before students engage in their service, introduce them to the seven themes of Catholic social teaching using the *In the Footsteps of Jesus* [video](#), an activity from the [resource manual](#), or another [activity](#). Also help them to understand that not only are they offering their time and work to the place they are visiting, they also have something to learn or gain from the groups they visit. Help students brainstorm questions that they might try to ask while they are visiting. For example: What issues do low-income persons in the community face? What long-term solutions are needed for these issues to be resolved? How did the organization's leaders get involved? What are their stories? How does the organization promote the involvement and empowerment of low-income persons in working for change?

Use the arts contest as part of the reflection component of service. First, after service is completed, ask students to think about what they have learned. How did their exposure to the organization challenge their views of low-income persons or help them to see these persons differently? What is the role of low-income persons in working for change? What do they think would be needed for permanent, long-term solutions to the issues the organization is addressing (as opposed to short-term or "band-aid" solutions)? Why is it important for low-income people to be empowered to help themselves?

Use the [Two Feet of Social Action](#) handout to illustrate the difference between charity and justice. Discuss the seven themes of [Catholic social teaching](#) (CST) and have students consider how the CCHD-funded group is an example of CST in action. Students should also consider how Catholic social teaching challenges them as individuals to work for justice.

Finally, ask students to artistically illustrate what they have learned through their reflection and their interaction with the CCHD-funded group: they can create a Power Point, a collage or drawing, a poem, or any other form of art, any of which can be entered in the arts contest.

### **Ideas for Art Classes**

Use the ["Wall of Poverty" art activity](#) from the EPIC lesson plans to help students explore the root causes of poverty while engaging their artistic skills. In the activity, students read short summary sheets about the root causes of poverty in the U.S. and then create "bricks" in a "wall of poverty" to illustrate the causes. This activity could be done as part of a lesson on collage-making, drawing, painting, or another art technique.

Another possibility is to integrate the arts contest within a unit about the historic importance of art in social movements. After a lesson on the importance of art in social movements in history and in the present, introduce students to a local CCHD-funded group by inviting a speaker from that group (contact your [diocesan director](#) to arrange this), or watch one of the CCHD-videos (listed in the Leader's Guide). Ask students to create their own piece of "social art" that makes a statement about one of the issues about which the CCHD-funded group is advocating and the work of low-income persons to create change. They could also artistically represent how the work of the group is an example of living out [Catholic social teaching](#).

### **Ideas for English, Journalism, or Writing Classes**

The Multi-Media arts contest is an easy tie-in for lessons on writing poetry, short stories, essays, or even research papers.

For *poetry or short story projects*, students can be asked to read excerpts from "[Credible Signs of Christ Alive](#)" and then to write a piece of creative fiction from the perspective of a person in one of the CCHD-funded groups highlighted in the book. They could be asked to write about:

What it was like to face the unjust conditions experienced by the real persons in the chapter--what did they feel, see, smell, and hear?

How did the person or community become empowered?

What was their experience of working for change? What difficulties or obstacles did they face?

What successes did they achieve and how did it feel?

For lessons on *conducting interviews*, students can be asked to contact a CCHD-funded group in their area (contact your [diocesan director](#) for groups in your area) to conduct an interview. Afterwards, students can

write an essay or article about the group, or use the quotes from the interviews in a creative poetry or another writing project.

For a lesson on *writing research papers*, students can find out from a local CCHD-funded group what issues low-income persons are facing in their area (e.g. violence, unemployment, lack of affordable housing, etc.). They can interview primary sources from the groups about the issues while also engaging in secondary source research to explore the root causes of these issues. They can also research what other communities around the country are doing to address these situations. Excerpts from the research papers can be entered in the arts contest as essays.

### **Ideas for Government, Social Studies, and Sociology Classes**

Use [Lesson 3](#) of Ending Poverty in Community (EPIC) to help students wrestle with the question, “Whose responsibility is it to address the problem of poverty?” This lesson uses excerpts from the bishops’ document, *A Place at the Table*, to introduce students to four “legs” of society which share this responsibility.

Students should also be asked to try to find actual examples of each “leg” playing its role. For the second “leg” (community and religious organizations), they should be directed to the CCHD website ([www.usccb.org/cchd](http://www.usccb.org/cchd)) to find out about what CCHD-funded groups are doing, and about the domestic legislative advocacy efforts of the USCCB Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development (<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/>).

Students can then be asked to write an essay, create a Power Point, or represent in some other way the way the four “legs” interact in order to address the problem of poverty. Or, they can be instructed to base their project on the art contest’s 2009 theme, focusing on what empowered low-income persons are doing to address poverty, the limitations they face, and why the other legs of the table are also needed.

An activity to encourage civic engagement is to have students find out more about CCHD-funded groups in their area who are doing advocacy work. (Contact your [diocesan director](#) to locate groups in your area.) Groups of students can visit or contact CCHD-funded groups to find out about their issues of concern and what they are doing about those issues. Students can also be asked to interview local officials to find out how they are responding to the issues of concern to CCHD-funded groups and how they have been impacted by the citizen advocacy of the groups. Students can write an essay or create a Power Point about what they have discovered.

A third idea is from p. 48 of the [Student Action Project](#), the “Poverty Action Bill” activity, in which students learn about the root causes of poverty and ultimately write a “bill” addressing one of those causes. Have students learn about a CCHD-funded group that is working to address one of the root causes mentioned. Students can create a Power Point about the cause, how the funded group is responding, and why their suggested bill would be a good idea.

### **Ideas for Music Classes**

Focus some class time on the importance of music in social movements in history and in the present. Introduce students to a local CCHD-funded group by inviting a speaker from that group (contact your [diocesan director](#) to arrange this), or watch one of the CCHD-videos (listed in the Leader’s Guide). Ask students to create their own musical expression, writing lyrics or expressive music that makes a statement about the work of low-income persons in a CCHD-funded group to create change around an issue and how those persons are living out [Catholic social teaching](#).