



# National Farmers Union *“Leading by Serving”*

## Section 4: Grades 9-12

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Lesson 3: NFU’s History of Service ~ 1 hour, 45 minutes

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Optional Activities

*\* Lesson contains a cooperative education component.*

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# Lesson 1: Leading with Service

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- Unit Objective:** Students will explore servant leadership from a personal perspective.
- Grades:** 9-12
- Length:** 1 hour: 5 min. for introductory activity and background, 15 min. for “Scrambled Service Sayings,” 15 min. for “Leading by Serving Discussion” and reporting, 10 min. for “Nkosi’s Challenge” and discussion, 15 min. for “Who Am I?” personal assessments
- Materials Needed:** Pencils, enough copies of “Scrambled Service Sayings” and “Leading by Serving Discussion” for each small group, copies of “Nkosi’s Challenge” and “Who Am I?”
- Preparation Needed:** Cut out the individual words from “Scrambled Service Sayings” and put them in envelopes so that each small group has all of the words from all of the quotes. Make copies of “Leading by Serving Discussion” for small groups. Make copies of “Nkosi’s Challenge” and “Who Am I?” for each individual.

## Background:

There’s no question that there are many needs in the world today. Hunger, poverty, environmental degradation and disease are only a few of the serious challenges facing our world. In order to meet these needs, every citizen – young and old – has the opportunity and a responsibility to serve in our communities.

Through our activities today, we will explore the concepts of **volunteerism** and **servant leadership**. A volunteer is someone who shares their time, talents and treasures to help others without expecting anything in return. A servant-leader is someone who has an eagerness to serve that, as a result, makes them aspire to lead.

Although volunteers do not seek anything for their efforts, there are indirect benefits. The primary benefit volunteers get from serving is the satisfaction of knowing they have made a difference in their community and world. The pride, satisfaction and accomplishment one feels are worthwhile benefits of serving.

True leadership results from a fundamental desire to help others. As a result, those who are servants first, often develop into the most respected leaders. Servant-leaders are often rewarded in their careers, in their educational pursuits and in their personal lives.

Nobel Peace Prize Winner Albert Schweitzer once said, “I don’t know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know. The only ones among you who will be happy will be those who have sought and found how to serve.”

## Teaching Strategy:

1. Divide into three large groups. Announce that each group has only one minute to make sure everyone in the group gets a shoulder massage. At least one of the groups will likely figure out that if everyone rubs someone’s shoulders, a circle will be formed and everyone will be served.
2. After the minute is up, tell them to stop. Have volunteers from each of the groups talk about the process that they went through to make sure everyone in their group got a shoulder massage. When each has had a turn talking about the exercise, ask if there was anyone who did not receive a massage. Ask if there was anyone who did not give a shoulder rub. If so, use them to illustrate the point of the exercise. *When everyone gives, everyone receives.*
3. Introduce background information above.
4. Have teens stay in their small groups. Ask a volunteer to hand out “Leading by Serving Discussion” questions to each of the small groups. Have the groups nominate a leader to read the questions, moderate discussion, listen to the answers, take notes and report results to the larger group.
5. Ask another volunteer to hand out envelopes of word pieces from “Scrambled Service Sayings.” They must **cooperate** to form thought-provoking messages about service. These words come

from five famous quotes about service, which will be shared at the end. However, this exercise is about teens expressing their own creativity and thoughts about service. Assure them that there are no right or wrong answers. Not all words have to be used in the end, but they have to make at least two thought-provoking quotes from the words. They can also use two “give-me” words of their own in the exercise if they need them.

6. As each group shares their quotes, have them write them on the whiteboard or flipchart. Finally read, or reveal on another flipchart page, the original quotes and corresponding authors.
7. Hand out “Nkosi’s Challenge.” Have students take turns reading the paragraphs in the story and discussing the questions as a group.
8. After 10 minutes has elapsed, hand out the “Who Am I?” self-evaluation sheets and have each individual quietly reflect on each question.
9. When finished, ask for volunteers to share their life’s purpose with the group.
10. Close with a few large group discussion questions: *What did you think about this exercise? Did most of the causes you chose come from your personal history, experiences, values or a mixture? Did any service leadership ideas emerge from this exercise? With Nkosi’s challenge in mind, what are some of the needs and opportunities in our communities where we could lead with service?*

**Sources:** Lesson adapted from information on DIYPlanner.com, ChildrensWorld.org, Dec. 1, 2004, transcript of NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, and *Heart of a Volunteer*: a compilation of quotes on volunteerism by Compendium Publishing

# Scrambled Service Sayings

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if love is truly a verb if help is a verb if  
forgiveness is a verb if kindness is a verb  
then you can do something about it

*(Author Betty Eadie)*

the miracle is this the more we share  
the more we have

*(Actor Leonard Nimoy)*

the heart that gives gathers

*(Author and philanthropist Hannah Moore)*

everybody can be great because  
anybody can serve

*(Civil rights activist Martin Luther King, Jr.)*

it takes courage for people to listen to  
their own goodness and act on it

*(Cellist and composer Pablo Casals)*

# Leading by Serving Discussion

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1. Leading by serving: what does this mean to you?
2. Think about people you know who are leaders. They are often in the spotlight. Everyone knows their names. Now think about the people who really get things done and make a difference. Are they the same people? Give examples.
3. Leadership includes using your intelligence, talents, skills and experiences to do something you love, serve others and work for a cause that is greater than yourself. What would the world be like if everyone used their unique talents and skills to do something they love, while serving others and working for a cause or reason greater than themselves? What would the world look like if no one did?
4. What do you think are common reasons people choose not to serve or volunteer?
5. What do you feel are the benefits of service to the volunteer, those served and the world?
6. What are examples of everyday ways of leading by serving?

# Nkosi's Challenge

Nkosi Johnson was born with AIDS in 1989 in rural South Africa. The disease was transmitted through his mother, who died from AIDS when he was very young. The boy was taken to a Johannesburg shelter for children and mothers with AIDS, founded by a South African woman named Gail Johnson.



She later took Nkosi into her own home, caring for him for years as her own son. Together, they crusaded for better care and treatment for the victims of AIDS. In July 2000, Nkosi, then 11, received worldwide attention when he addressed 10,000 people at the International Conference on AIDS held that year in Durban, South Africa.

Nkosi would die within the year at the age of 12, weighing only 20 pounds. In his short life, he fought for the rights of children with HIV and AIDS to go to school. He helped to form the Nkosi Johnson AIDS Foundation and Nkosi's Havens, homes for poor mothers and children with AIDS. Nkosi was nominated posthumously for the 2009 Child Rights Hero of the Decade.

Veteran journalist Jim Wooten, senior correspondent for ABC News Nightline wrote a book about Nkosi entitled, *We Are All the Same*. Proceeds from the book and other donations have funded Nkosi's Havens.

Mr. Wooten said, "I had over the years covered a lot of combat and a lot of wars. I had seen men do heroic things under fire. But Nkosi showed to me and taught me a different kind of courage, and that's the quiet courage to do what has to be done in the face of these absolutely overwhelming odds that he well understood."

Jim Wooten said Nkosi had a mantra that has stuck with him over the years since his death:

"Do all you can with what you have in the time you have in the place you are."

Nkosi's challenge to all world citizens begs the following questions:

1. Am I doing all I can?
2. What can I do?
3. Where am I best equipped to serve?
4. What do I have to offer?
5. What time do I have to devote?
6. What are the needs and opportunities in the place that I am?

# Who Am I ?

What do I **value** most? Circle your top 5:

Creativity

Family

Freedom

Friendships

Good health

Happiness

Honesty

Justice

Learning/knowledge

Love

Problem-Solving

Productivity

Peace

Recognition

Respecting Others

Security

Serving Others

Spirituality

Sustainability

Truth

Wealth

Others:

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What am I **good** at?

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I am **interested** in . . .

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What are some of my **goals** in life?

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What five **causes** resonate with me most?

Abuse victims  
Children  
Community  
Depression  
Disabilities  
Elderly  
Environment  
Farmers

Foreign aid  
Hunger  
Mental disabilities  
Mental illnesses  
Military families  
Natural disasters  
Peer pressure  
Poverty

Public servants or  
those seeking office  
Physical illnesses  
Physical disabilities  
Others:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I will **contribute** to the world by . . .

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I **am** . . . \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

There is not . . .  
has never been . . .  
and will never be . . .  
anyone just like **me!**

To sum it up, I feel my **purpose** in life is to . . .

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# Lesson 2: Feeling Philanthropic?

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- Unit Objective:** Students will explore philanthropy and the causes they care about.
- Grades:** 9-12
- Length:** 1 hour: 5 min. for background information and discussion, 20 min. for YouTube videos activity, 10 min. for Twitter activity, 15 min. for philanthropy activity, 10 min. for wrap-up discussion
- Materials Needed:** Whiteboard or flipchart and a marker, poster board and colored markers, enough blank sheets of paper and pencils for each student
- Preparation Needed:** Assemble poster board, colored markers, blank sheets of paper and pencils.
- Background:**

**Philanthropy** is the intentional and ongoing giving of your time, talents and treasures for the greater good. As servant leaders, we have the opportunity to give of our time, talents and treasures to a variety of causes and organizations.

Since we have a finite amount of time and treasures, it is important to prioritize the areas in which we are most interested in serving. **Philanthropists** generally give to causes that they deeply care about and that match their personal missions.

Personal history with a cause is a common reason for choosing a cause. For example, a person might have had a good experience with the Farmers Union youth group as a teen, so he or she begins supporting the organization as a volunteer or as a **donor** to the Farmers Union Foundation in adulthood.

Personal experience is another reason. If someone has experienced a family illness, such as cancer, they might become a supporter of an organization that fights that disease.

Finally, people support causes because of their values and beliefs. A person might highly value environmental stewardship and, therefore, choose to support organizations that work to protect the environment.

## Teaching Strategy:

1. Introduce background information above.
2. For the first activity, the group will need to prioritize and self-identify themselves as a member of one of four groups: environmental issues, hunger issues, rural issues, and health issues. Each group should work together to choose a charity or cause related to their group's topic area to which people may volunteer their time and talents. For example, the environmental issues group might choose increased recycling as its cause, the hunger issues group might choose a local food bank drive, the rural issues group might choose their local Farmers Union organization and the health issues group might pick blood donation. They should brainstorm and come to a consensus as a group.
3. After the groups pick their causes, challenge them to create a 30-second TV commercial that they will perform to encourage others to volunteer their time and talents to help with their cause or charity. The focus of the commercial should be why it is important to volunteer with the cause and how involvement might benefit the cause as well as the volunteer.
4. At the end of the commercials, gather as an entire group and discuss outcomes.
5. Next, divide each team into two new groups. Each subgroup must identify a new cause to support. It does not have to be within their initial topic group. They may choose to use their "Who Am I" assessments from Lesson 1 for help in identifying a cause that they may have in common. Each team must nominate a team spokesperson to promote the cause.
6. Create a Twitter message about the cause of your choice. In other words, make a 140-character message about why to volunteer for your cause or organization of choice. One character is equal to one letter, one number, one space or one punctuation mark. Students

- will use their short Twitter messages as selling pitches to encourage people to give to their cause in the next exercise. Have them write their final Twitter-sized messages on a poster.
7. Each group should select a spokesperson who will carry the Twitter sign in the next activity. They will seek financial support for their cause and will keep track of donations.
  8. Each individual should receive a pencil and a piece of blank paper, which represents their bank account. Explain that each person in the room will have \$100 in which they can divide as they choose and give away to causes in the room. They should mingle around to read the Twitter messages and decide how they will allocate their money. Each time money is donated, the philanthropist should notify the spokesperson of their donation and subtract the amount from their bank accounts. The spokesperson should keep a running tally of all donations to their cause.
  9. At the end of the activity, all money must be given away to charity. Philanthropists can also work behind the scenes to convince the other donors in the room to give to their cause.
  10. Ask for questions and instruct the group to begin. They will have 10 minutes and will be given a 5-minute warning. Afterward, the spokespeople must total up the amount of money received for their cause and find a seat.
  11. Follow up discussion follows:
    - a. *Did all participants give their charitable dollars away? If not, why not?*
    - b. *Was it easy or difficult to give the money away?*
    - c. *How did you choose which groups to give your money to?*
    - d. *Do you think this is how philanthropists choose in real life?*
    - e. *Would you use the same criteria in real-life charitable giving?*
    - f. *Who do you think was the best fundraiser in the room?*
    - g. Have each spokesperson reveal their totals and record them at the front of the room.
    - h. *How were the top fundraisers able to get funders to support their causes?*
    - i. *What was it like for you to try to convince others to support your cause?*
    - j. *What ideas do you have on how this group might have pooled its financial resources to have more of an impact?*
    - k. *How does this happen in real life?*
    - l. *What have you learned that will help guide you to share your real dollars with causes that you care about?*

**Sources:** Activity adapted from the Learning to Give lesson “Nonprofits Compete,” (<http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit89/lesson5.html>).

# Lesson 3: Farmers Union's History of Service

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- Unit Objective:** Teens will explore community service throughout Farmers Union's history.
- Grades:** 9-12
- Length:** 1 hour, 45 min.: 5 min. for introduction, 10 min. for "Farmers Union: A Century of Service," 45 min. for research and/or interviews, 30 min. for creating, sharing and compiling service leadership reports, 15 min. for "2010 and Beyond"
- Materials Needed:** A binder with plastic page protectors, hole punches, plain white paper, pencils, multi-color Sharpies, three or four 8 ½ X 11 thin magnetic sheets with adhesive backing, three or four metal cookie sheets that would attract magnets, three envelopes, sharp scissors, three or four copies of "Farmers Union: A Century of Service," a copy of "2010 and Beyond" for each person
- Preparation Needed:** Identify and invite someone in your Farmers Union organization who would be able to speak and answer questions about some segment of the local Farmers Union's history and/or make arrangements for the group to visit a local library or another place where community historical records may be available. Make three or four copies of "Farmers Union: A Century of Service" and adhere them to an 8 ½ X 11 magnetic sheet. Use sharp scissors to cut the Farmers Union service actions into strips. Cut off the dates to create separate magnets. Put a full set of magnets into an envelope. Make copies of "2010 and Beyond" for each person.

## Background:

From its inception in 1902, Farmers Union has had a strong history of service to rural America and of progressive social justice internationally. Through legislative advocacy, support for cooperative ventures and educational opportunities, Farmers Union simultaneously serves and leads on the global agricultural stage.

## Teaching Strategy:

1. *You may already know that National Farmers Union was created by a group of Texans in 1902, but what else do you know about Farmers Union's history over the last century?* Introduce background information above. *Today we are going to explore a bit of Farmers Union's history of service at the international, national and local levels. We'll start by exploring the national and international scene.*
2. Divide the group into three or four teams. Provide a cookie sheet and an envelope of "Farmers Union: A Century of Service" magnets for each team. Point out the starting line and the finish line. The teams must huddle behind the line and work together to arrange the magnets in chronological order to create the correct sequence of Farmers Union history. When they are finished, they must send a representative with the cookie sheet to the judge at the finish line to find out how they did. If the sequence is incorrect, they must go back to their groups and try again. Another representative should bring the cookie sheet to the judge each time. If enough time has elapsed, the judge may decide to give hints such as telling each group how many they have correct or which ones are misplaced.
3. The team that reaches the finish line with the correct sequence first is declared the winner and shares the correct sequence with the rest of the groups.
4. Discuss the results of the activity as a group.
  - a. *What did you learn about National Farmers Union's history from this exercise?*
  - b. *What are some of the communities that National Farmers Union has served over the past century?*
5. Assign partners in teams of two or three for the research project. Explain that, as a group, they will be putting together a local Farmers Union community service history book.
6. Take the group to a local library or another place where community archives might be available and have them explore historical records and newspapers to find examples of how

Farmers Union displayed service leadership and community service locally. If this is not feasible, another option is to invite additional people for small groups to interview about certain decades of Farmers Union's local history or provide various local news clippings or past issues of Farmers Union newspapers for them to peruse.

7. Reports on local service leadership could be in the form of graphic depictions or written articles that portray the who, what, when, where, why and how of the community service activity they have chosen.
8. The groups should work together to display the reports in a binder in chronological order. Make a plan together for displaying the report book in the community or at an upcoming Farmers Union event.
9. Ask for volunteers from each of the teams to work together to decide on the title of the book and the cover design. Have them include a page that contains the names of all the people who worked on the book.
10. Combine into small groups of four or five to discuss "2010 and Beyond."
11. Ask a spokesperson from each group to report discussion results to the whole group and another to create an official group sheet of discussion results to include at the end of their Farmers Union history book.

**Sources:** Lesson adapted from information in *Connecting America's Farmers with America's Future: The National Farmers Union 1902-2002* by Lee Egerstrom, Milton Hakel & Bob Denman

# Farmers Union: A Century of Service

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- 1900s:** NFU is formed by 12 Texans interested in working cooperatively to help all farmers get better prices for their products. In its first decade, NFU forms its first marketing cooperative and pushed for federal legislation assuring farmers' rights to form co-ops.
- 1910s:** Farmers Union advocates voting rights for women and direct election of U.S. senators.
- 1920s:** Farmers Union pushes heavily for the passage of the Capper-Volstead Act, which allows agriculture producers to form voluntary cooperatives. NFU then launches several more farm cooperatives (one of which has since developed into the modern-day Fortune 200 energy, grain and food company CHS, Inc.)
- 1930s:** Farmers Union establishes its youth education programs.
- 1940s:** Farmers Union is a founding member of CARE, which was formed to feed the hungry survivors of World War II. (Since that time, CARE has become one of the world's largest private humanitarian organizations.) NFU also successfully lobbies to make the National School Lunch Program a permanent part of all U.S. schools.
- 1950s:** Farmers Union succeeds in getting the School Milk Program in schools.
- 1960s:** NFU wages war on poverty by instituting the Green Thumb program (now called Experience Works), which places low-income, older workers in jobs and volunteer opportunities.
- 1970s:** NFU becomes a founding member of the World Hunger Action Council and promotes the development of rural health cooperatives.
- 1980s:** Farmers Union succeeds in having part of the military budget shifted toward humanitarian food aid using surplus U.S. commodities.
- 1990s:** NFU unifies farm groups, business owners, bankers, church groups and others to show that a farming crisis impacts all parts of a community. NFU's Rural Unity Day events are instrumental in achieving \$8.7 billion in federal farm relief in 1999.
- 2000s:** NFU leads coalitions that successfully advocate for mandatory country-of-origin food labeling and increased usage of renewable fuels from the farm. It also works with anti-hunger organizations on expanding food-aid programs in the 2008 farm bill and supports efforts to extend international food aid programs that send donations of American food to impoverished children around the world.
- 2010...** **Farmers Union will continue to serve communities in rural America and around the globe in the coming decade. What will your role be in Farmers Union's next century of service?**

# 2010 and Beyond

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1. How important is Farmers Union's history to its present and future? What might we learn from our organization's past that would help it most in the future?
2. Knowing what you know now about Farmers Union's past and present, where do you think the Farmers Union organization is headed in the future locally and nationally?
3. Where do you think Farmers Union should be headed in the future? Is the direction you would wish for Farmers Union the same path it seems to be on currently?
4. What roles do each of you see yourself playing in Farmers Union's next century of service?

# Lesson 4: Picture-Perfect Planning

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- Unit Objective:** Teens will explore their surroundings and will plan service ideas for improving their communities.
- Grades:** 9-12
- Length:** 2 hours: 30 min. for photography project, 15 min. for photo download and printing, 45 min. for group collage building and service project planning, 15 min. for presenting collages and plans, 15 min. for voting and discussion
- Materials Needed:** A few disposable cameras, computer with printer or a printer with direct memory card printing, poster board, glue stick, whiteboard or flipchart and markers
- Preparation Needed:** Identify an area in the nearby community that would have ample opportunity for community service projects. Ask students in advance to bring digital cameras or camera phones and cords for downloading, if they have them. If this is not possible, identify the nearest one-hour photo development location.

## Background:

President Obama has asked all Americans to participate in our nation's recovery and renewal by serving in our communities. Our communities have many needs and opportunities for involvement.

America's new foundation will be built one community at a time – and it starts with you. No one knows your community better than you and your friends and neighbors do. What positive changes will you help create in the world around you?

## Teaching Strategy:

1. Ask who has digital cameras or camera phones with them. Divide the teens into teams outfitted with at least one of their personal digital cameras or camera phones. Make sure that each team has the correct cables for downloading pictures that they will take. Have a couple disposable cameras on hand just in case you don't have enough cameras per group.
2. If there are not ample photo opportunities within short walking distance, organize transportation to another area of the community.
3. Challenge them to take pictures of good aspects and not-so-good aspects of the community (or campground if at camp).
4. When they return, have volunteers download pictures. Print pictures and have the groups create a collage of their pictures and present the collage and a plan for a volunteer service project in the community that could improve the not-so-good aspects of the community.
5. At the end of the presentations, have students vote on which service project plan is highest priority or the one in which they are most interested.
6. Ask a few follow-up questions and take notes on a whiteboard or flip chart to help develop the plan they chose:
  - a. *What are our goals for the project?*
  - b. *What resources would we need to accomplish this service project?*
  - c. *How long would this service project take a group this size to do?*
  - d. *What are some of the intermediate steps we need to do before undertaking this service project?*
  - e. *Are there any other details about this service project that we have not discussed?*
  - f. *After this service project is completed, how will we measure our success?*
7. Plan a time in the future for the entire group to follow-through with the service project ideas.
8. Form a plan for using the other photo collages and service ideas. Suggest that they be submitted to the local Farmers Union organization as ideas for future organizational service projects.

**Sources:** Lesson adapted from Serve.gov resources and ideas from North Dakota Farmers Union Member Education Coordinator Josh Norby

# Optional Activities

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*The following activities could be incorporated with the lessons to fill extra time.*

1. Have volunteers work together to write a blog about their service projects to submit to any appropriate local or state blogs, [www.nfu.org](http://www.nfu.org)'s blog and the Serve.gov Stories of Service blog.
2. Read and discuss "I'll Be Shopping with You, Mom" from "Leading by Serving," Section 3, Lesson 1.
3. Have senior youth create visual aides to use in teaching the younger age groups. Have the senior youth teach the lessons to the younger age groups for a leadership component.
4. Have students create posters, jingles, slogans, advertisements or other forms of promotion to convince others to volunteer.
5. Have students write down the names of as many people that they can think of who they consider to be leaders. See how many they can think of and discuss what makes each of them leaders.
6. Lead some Farmers Union songs.