

FACILITATOR GUIDE: The Pledge Tree GRADE: 6th - 8th

CONCEPTS & SKILLS:

Social Studies

Behavioral Sciences

- **SS.6-8.BS.3 Understand the influences on individual and group behavior and group decision making.**
 - Understand that various factors affect decisions that individuals make.

21st Century Skills

Civic Literacy

- **SS.6-8.PSCL.5 Understand strategies for effective political action that impacts local, state and national governance.**
 - Understand the concept of civic responsibility.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

- Long branches (willow or other available)
- Bucket of sand
- Acrylic paints
- Brushes
- Empty toilet paper rolls
- Masking tape
- Small white paper
- Black fine line markers
- Things collected from nature—shells, small rocks, feathers, pods, etc.
- Large piece of paper
- Thick marker
- Scissors
- Embroidery thread or ribbon
- Old phone wire

PRESENTATION:

This activity is recommended as a culmination activity for the service-learning project. Explain what you mean by [civic responsibility](#), and ask what the group learned about civic responsibility.

Why is civic responsibility is important?

How can individual and group pledges help us be accountable to do what we think is right?¹

¹ University of Minnesota, It All Adds Up, <http://www1.umn.edu/italladdsup/>
 KeepIowaBeautiful.com & Teachers-Going-Green.com
 6th-8th grade, Social Studies & 21st Century Skills
 Facilitator Guide: Pledge Tree

Explain that we will be creating an art piece that will help us to fulfill some of our goals to be civilly responsible, and will also help people who come to our school become more aware of theirs. We'll be making a pledge tree with our individual pledges on it to display in public.

DIRECTIONS:

1. As a class, brainstorm ways that students can do their part to help the environment. List these ideas on large piece of paper to be used later.
2. Give each student one branch, tape, and recycled toilet paper or towel roll, which they tape onto leg of his or her table or chair to hold branch while painting it.
3. Using acrylic paint, students paint their branch from tip down, using colors of the rainbow in order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. Leave lower part of branches unpainted.
4. Store branches in buckets of sand to dry.
5. On small pieces of paper, have students write their personal pledges, roll into a scroll, and tie with embroidery thread or ribbon.
6. Have students attach their pledge to their branch, along with any stones, shells, etc. they wish to add (that can be done with the recycled phone wire).
7. Arrange the class's branches together in a bucket of sand and display in a public place.
8. Before displaying tree, brainstorm ideas for a poster to accompany the pledge tree. Several students whose work is finished may want to work on this poster.

TIME:

150-180 min.
plus display set up