



Food from the Hood

Tammy Bird
Los Angeles

☀ Values

- Compassion
- Commitment
- Ability to rebuild
- Creativity
- Resourcefulness
- Social Emotional Learning

☀ Reflection Questions

Did you see the LA riots on TV? How would you feel if they were in your community?

Have you ever thought of creating a garden as a way to feed homeless people?

What kind of a product could your class develop to create a scholarship fund for students?

Would you be nervous about speaking to a Prince or other world leader?

☀ Lessons Learned

Good things can come out of bad situations.

When we take time to nurture the environment around us, everyone benefits.

Grow where you are planted. Hard work pays off.

Creative ideas joined with business savvy equal success.

Tammy Bird was deeply upset about how her Crenshaw High School students had suffered during the 1992 LA riots. She wanted to find a way to renew their spirit and bring out the best in them. She started with a cluttered, weed-filled, vacant lot right outside her classroom window and -worked with students to turn it into a garden. This is the story of how a garden flourished, students blossomed and a business was born - giving these young people hope for their future. Thanks to their “Food from the Hood” salad dressing, sold in 2000 grocery stores across the country, each student has a college scholarship. As one student put it, “We all fell in love with the garden because we were growing happiness.”

☀ Language Arts: SEL & Diversity

Invite an entrepreneur to speak with students about creating/marketing a product. Read “From Street Kids to Wall Street” (p.) and discuss how they created small business. Have them brainstorm possible products they could develop and sell to the community. Develop a simple business plan with a budget, timetable, marketing and distribution plan. Investigate the cost of a year of college. Estimate how many of your products you will have to sell to provide funds for a four-year scholarship.

☀ Social Studies: Diversity

Start a school store with student-made products to benefit a good cause. Design flyers to promote the store to the community. Create buttons, bumper stickers and tee shirts to sell. Study how federal funding FEMA helps communities rebuild after a disaster.

☀ Community Service: Service Learning

Develop school-business partnerships: ask people in the community to share their knowledge, skills, experience, as well as their offices, equipment, resources with students. Promote student responsibility and confidence through cooperative gardening. If there is a community garden, invite students to manage a plot if not, find a way to create one. At harvest time, sell the vegetables; make baked goods; give some to the soup kitchen. Provide a community service for the elderly or infirm people in your community by weeding gardens, mowing lawns, walking pets or doing errands.

