

“Beat and Dance in Nature – Exploring the Mangrove Forest” in conjunction with “I Love My Home – Students’ Art Camp 2014”

Section I

Description of Project

“Beat and Dance in Nature – Exploring the Mangrove Forest” was held in conjunction with the 6 days’ “I Love My Home” Students’ Art Camp. This program provided opportunity for children to exploring the nature environment especially the Matang Mangrove Forest where this place are so close to their living area.

The project proposal submitted to apply the fund from Khind Starfish Foundation was a day camp, but after having few discussions with the artists, we had decided to extend the day camp to 6 days’ Arts camp, namely “I Love My Home” Students’ Art Camp. This is because the Arts education are lacking in our formal education system while this is also an important part of quality education. Throughout this camp, children can learn about Arts as well as to promote their understanding and caring on their own community.

The camp began from 20th October 2014 to 25th October 2014. The dance and drum percussion artists were invited to facilitate the camp. The first day was for the children to do mind mapping about their hometown so that they will more understand their living area. On the second day, the children were brought to the Mangrove Forest and they start learning singing, dancing, drum percussion, and theatre rehearsal. Following by the third and fourth day of the camp, children continue learning on singing, dancing, and drum percussion. On the fifth day, children as well as the local community began to rehearsal for the Performing Arts which will happen on 25th October 2014.

On 25th October 2014 which was the last day of the camp, I was one of the performers and join the performance at the SJK(C) Poay Eng, Kuala Sepetang school hall for an hour and then we had Performing Arts on the street which was the very first Arts program in the fishing village. Volunteers were recruited to assist the Performing Arts on the street (selected route only) of Kuala Sepetang. Something to be proud of is that most of the villagers came out to watch the performances by the children and also join the Performing Arts on the street after the performances in the school.

Outcomes and Beneficiaries

Throughout this Students’ Art Camp, the children will be more understanding and caring on their own community. Besides that, it can also strengthen children’s environmental awareness. This is because the DIY installation art was one of the programs during the arts camp. Children used the recycled materials such as posters, papers, plastic paint containers, and so on to make the mask and drum. The children were given time to develop their ideas and then design their own mask and their drum (plastic paint container) for their use during Performing Arts.

Throughout the Performing Arts on the street at Kuala Sepetang, all the participants will be more understanding to the place that they live. This is because when they are performing arts on the selected route; they passed by some of the historical places such as the railway signboard, the jetty, the building, and also the temple.

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This kind of program let the children to involve in nature and arts activities which they hardly get the chance to take part in such program before. The main purpose of the camp is to cultivate children’s sense of rhythm and their body rhythm in response to music. Besides that, it also encourages the children to share and express themselves through the performance.

The Performing Arts on the street at Kuala Sepetang is the very first arts program that happened in Taiping area, hence; this program was largely reported on the Chinese newspapers and also interviewed by NTV7. This project hopefully will be carry on again in another year, and I will try to invite more local societies to join as the committees.

Section II

My Reflection

Kuala Sepetang is a fishing village and it is far from the city, but then the children should have the same opportunity with the children in the city; they should have opportunity to learn about Arts too.

“Art is life. Children are creative by nature! These camps create the enjoyment and enrichment to Kuala Sepetang community.”

I felt very happy and touch when I saw all the children are so enjoyed in the Art Camp. The happiness is clearly reflected on their face.