



DonorsChooseSM Asks Teachers To Write Compelling Proposals

DonorsChoose was pioneered by teachers at a Bronx public high school, Wings Academy, in the spring of 2000. Charles Best, then a social studies teacher, saw first-hand the scarcity of materials in our public school classrooms and the profound impact of this scarcity on kids' education. Looking for a way to address this problem, he sensed an untapped potential in people who were frustrated by their lack of influence over the use of their charitable donations. DonorsChoose, a website connecting classrooms in need with individual who want to help, was born.

At DonorsChoose.org, schoolteachers submit ideas for materials or experiences that their students need to learn. Concerned individuals can make these ideas a classroom reality. Concluding each project donation of \$100 or more at DonorsChoose, donors receive student thank you letters, photographs, and a teacher impact letter showing how their donation has directly benefited public school students. In just four years \$2.2 million in resources has been delivered to hundreds of classrooms.

Teachers are excited to have such a successful tool at their disposal, but getting proposals funded at DonorsChoose can also be a challenge. With more than

2500 teachers currently using the site, teachers have to find creative ways of to get their proposals noticed in a competitive marketplace. Winning proposals have eye-catching titles and imaginative content. Here are some recent favorites:

- ▶ **"Baseball Math"** A field trip to a New York Yankees' game allows students to study geometry by using the baseball diamond and applying algebraic concepts to the players' scores.
- ▶ **"Baby-Think-It-Over Doll for Pregnancy Unit"** Life-size and -weight dolls give students a realistic look at the responsibilities of early parenthood.
- ▶ **"Inviting Moctar Teyeb Runaway Slave from Mauritania to Speak to History Class"** Real-life experiences bring home a unit on slavery and the Civil War.

Imaginative proposals at DonorsChoose mean imaginative lessons in the classroom—a key factor for student learning. Visit www.donorschoose.org to read other teacher proposals and decide which one(s) you find most compelling! ■