

**Service Learning 2012**

**Awladi Orphanage**

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**Reflection Essay**

Abdullah Sobhy, Abdullah Naiman, Ashraf, Habiba, Imed, Mahmoud, Mariam, Naser, Sayd, Seif, Sherif, and Sobhy are kids our service-learning group is teaching. This is our third year of working with these kids. I was always surprised with these kids’ growth and developments. During this project, I could realize and learn many things. Because these kids are in an orphanage, little difference among kids will create problem. Our group brought colored pencils for drawing and writing. I can see each of the kids wants to get more colored pencils than others. There was at least once fight because of the colored pencil. In the beginning, it seemed like kids do not want to share anything with others because they all held the colored pencils on their hands. But now, they changed a little bit. In some tables, kids put all the colored pencil on the desk and share it all together. Our group always took closer look to make everything equal.

In addition, teaching English was not an easy task because it was hard for us to communicate with these kids. Because of the fight or just because of their naughtiness, learning environment was distracted. Also some kids did not have an interest on learning. However, when I personally encouraged kids and took care of them, they started to see everything differently and started to work with a lot of effort. Our service-learning group decided to divide the kids into groups so that we can take care of them more closely. This helped us to look closer what the individual kids need and also made the kids to be more focused. Even though I am not fluent with speaking Arabic, it was surprising to observe how kids and I can communicate and actually make them to learn another language.

As I continuously worked with these kids for three years, I could observe changes within myself. First, when I see balloons or other equipment that looks enjoyable to kids, I always think about kids in the orphanage. I was concentrated with the fun activities after teaching English to kids. Also when I walk down the streets and see street kids, I really feel I need to gather them all and teach them something, for example English or mathematics, so that they can have a basic education. However, it seems like parents cannot either afford to send their kids to school or do not know the importance of primary education. I think this is because the parents are also not educated and consider education is not an important issue. This is the problem of Egypt. People should have a better quality of life so that they can seek for education and improve their life. There should be improved policies over the education.

Another problem I observed in the orphanage was hygiene. People in Cairo claim that the Awladi Orphanage is in good condition. This is true. Awladi Orphanage is in good condition compared to other orphanages. However, I can observe serious problems with the hygiene. Kids’ teeth are always yellow or even black in serious situations and stuffy. Boys have a lot of wounds but it is either not treated or cleaned. I personally think this is because of unconsciousness of the guardians. The guardians are either do not care about these kids or do not have medicine to care them or do not know they need treatments. I think this again arises problem of education. People do know what is detrimental to their health and how important hygiene is. The challenge to the Egypt is that how they can improve the consciousness of education and health to the citizens.

Since our group worked on the Awladi Orphanage for three years, kids and guardians recognize us and I feel that kids feel comfortable working with us. I can also observe a lot of improvements. Sometimes, teachers were invited to the orphanage and teachers taught karate to the kids. Also I met another service learning group from other schools who wanted to work with this orphanage. I could see Awladi Orphanage is becoming more known to other people and other people are now becoming aware of helping others.

I frequently ask this question to myself. Did I really make a difference? Learning alphabets, words, and conversations will not change kids’ life immediately but this will be their start and beginning of learning other language, English. As we progress more and also other people continue with this project, kids will be able to learn more advanced English. They now can easily write their names and words in English. I remember when I first met this kids. They had hard time writing alphabets but now they can use these alphabets to form words. I really hope all these efforts by them and us can help their future.

Lastly, the problem of education in Egypt is serious problem that needs an action to improve. Because parents of the street kids do now know why education is important for their life or they cannot afford education for their kids, they leave their kids. When they are educated, they will start to think differently and improve themselves for the future. This will also resolve the problem of health and hygiene. With the education, people will have more awareness toward the health issues and can live healthier life. Education in Egypt is essential and solution to this problem is urgent.

**SMART GOAL**

**Specific**

My goal is to teach English to 15 kids in Awladi Orphanage.

Enhance studying skills and broaden kids’ interest in study.

Measurable

I will know when I have achieved my goal if kids started to recognize the English words that I have taught. Also they will start to speak and write the words learned comfortably. All these words they have learned will impact their future and be the start of mastering English.

Achievable

This is my third year of working on this project. The challenging part of this project will be communicating with kids and also managing these kids well. This is manageable because I am continuously learning Arabic so that I can communicate with kids and teachers better. Also since these kids knew me for a while, they recognize me and I will comfortably manage them well.

Realistic

Every week, what I need to plan before I go to the orphanage is the worksheet and activities after the English class. This process requires time for preparation and ideas. With our group’s devotion of ideas, we will be able to come up with the good plans for kids.

Timely

Every Saturday, I will visit the center and follow the requirements of the service learning class.

ACTION PLAN

Education of Egypt – especially the less fortunate kids

15 orphans in Awladi Orphanage

Awladi Orphanage kids learning English

Teach English to 15 kids in Awladi Orphanage.

Enhance studying skills and broaden kids’ interest in studying

1. Teach new words every day with the theme (shapes, body parts, foods, etc.)

2. Promote kids to speak the words fluently and memorize it well

3. Entertain kids with art projects and sports

1. Language – difficult to communicate with the teachers in the orphanage and kids

2. Controlling kids – kids sometimes do not want to study English and also they sometimes do not listen to the instructions

Prepare worksheets every week for new words and revisions.

Make flash cards to memorize the words and promote kids to speak

Plan fun activities to broaden kids’ interest in studying

Journals

Seif always listens to the directions well and very courteous. He is a meticulous hard working boy.

Because of his desire for perfection, he tends to work slower compared to other kids but after he finishes studying, he always cleans his seats and helps me to clean the room.

**Seif**



Three years ago, Sobhy used to be a kid who always cry and told me that he has stomachache.

Now, he has grown up and always very quiet but bold. He is mature for an eight-year-old.

He works with effort and consistency.



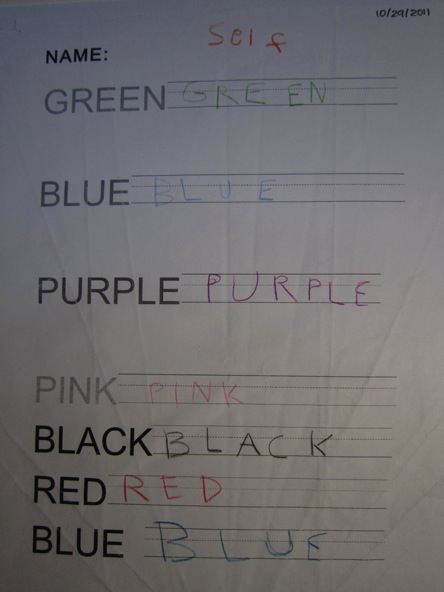
Abdullah is always bright and cheerful.

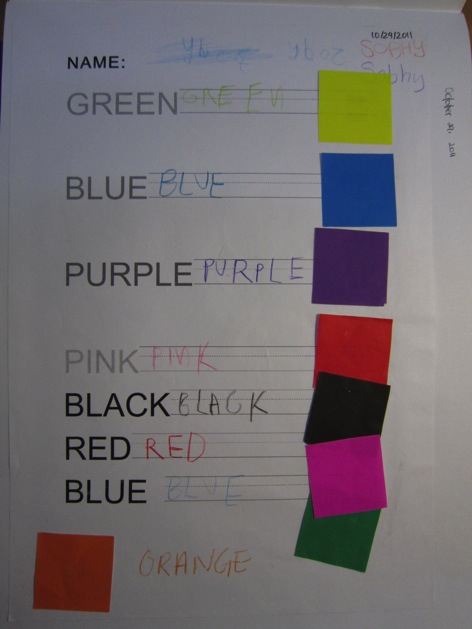
He works hard with consistency.

He tries to listen to the instructions and follow the rules.

October 29, 2011

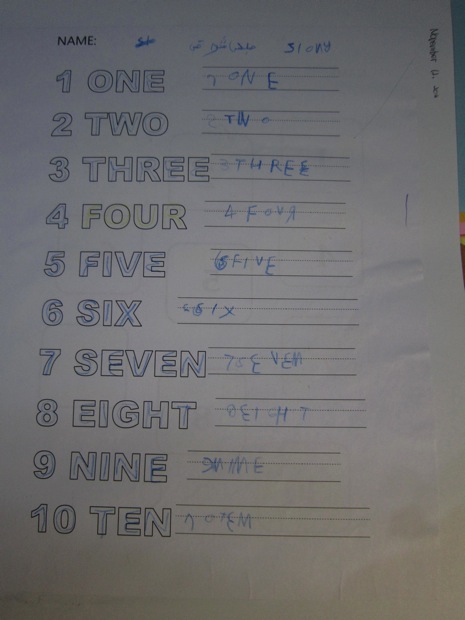
Today, our group decided to teach colors. Since we have taught them how to write alphabets, they had no problem writing words on the trace paper. Our group repeatedly spoke these words and also asked them to read out loud. Even though they had difficulty memorizing all of these words, I was sure that after repeating writing and speaking these words out loud, they will memorize these words.





Our group prepared colored paper for fun activities. We asked them to glue the colored paper next to the right word. But Sobhy has made mistake!

November 12, 2011

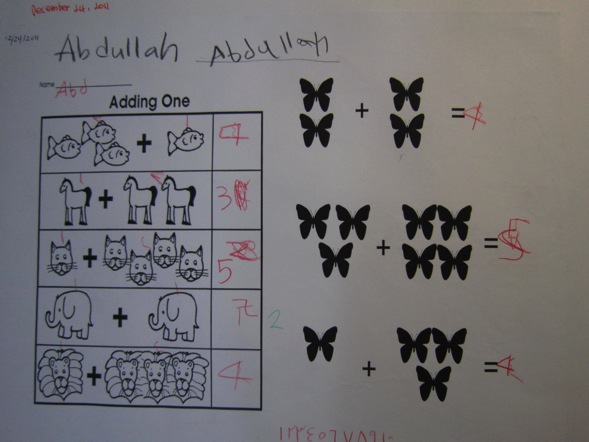


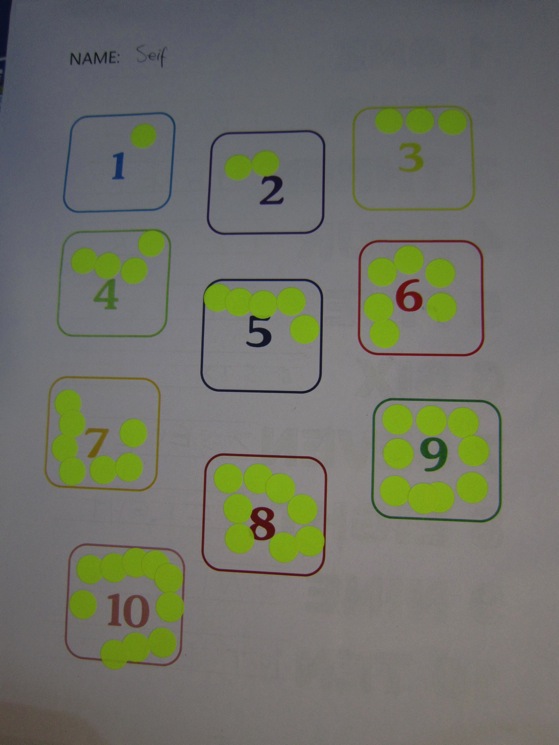
Last year, our group has started to teach numbers. When we asked them how to count, they counted numbers very well.

To improve their skills, we decided to teach simple math. This worksheet is the review of how to count and write the numbers.

This is the worksheet for addition (mathematics). With the drawings, kids easily completed the worksheet.

I hope next week, Abdullah still remembers the concept of addition and easily solve the problems!





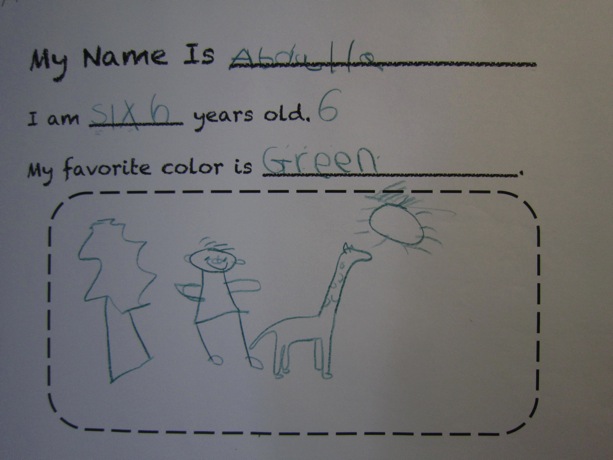
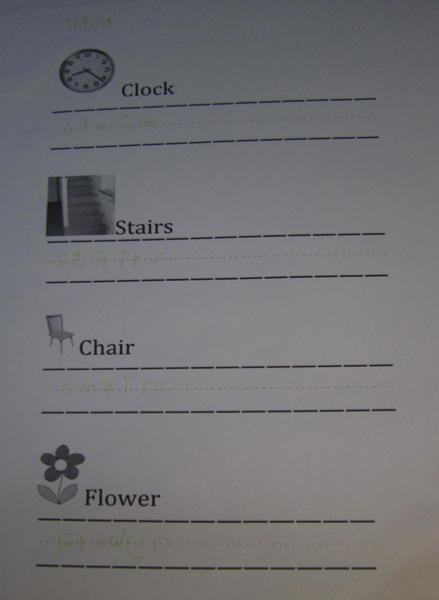
For fun activities that can also work as the revision, our group has prepared stickers and asked them to put the stickers on the paper with the right number.

February 4, 2012

Our group started to teach them easy words that are frequently used. By knowing these words in Arabic, they could easily memorize the words.

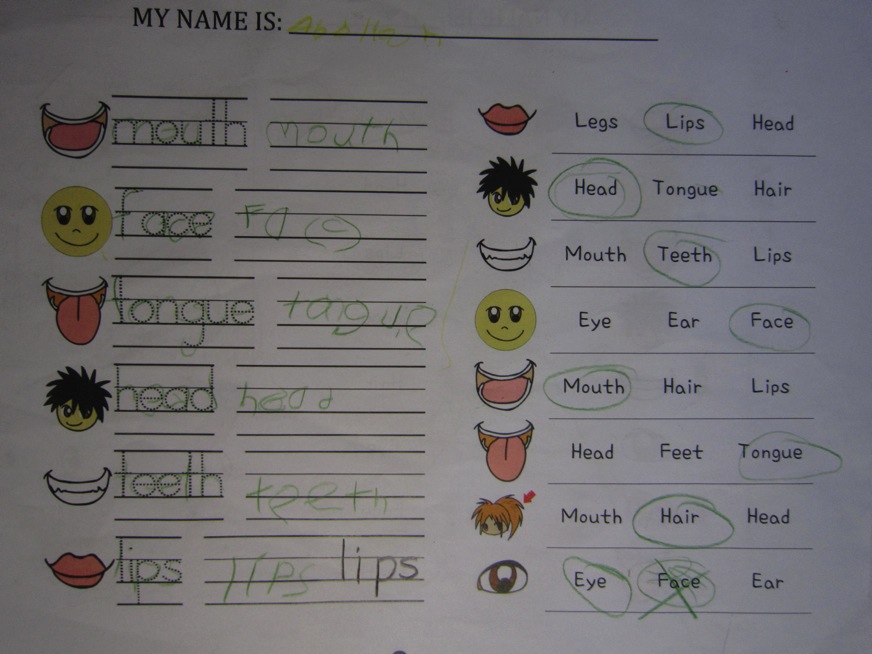
After this week, when I visited the center again, I asked how to say flower in English. Without hesitation, many kids said, “flower!”

Kids’ English skills were expanding.



For revision, I have created a worksheet where they write their name, age, and their favorite color. Also I placed space for the drawing.

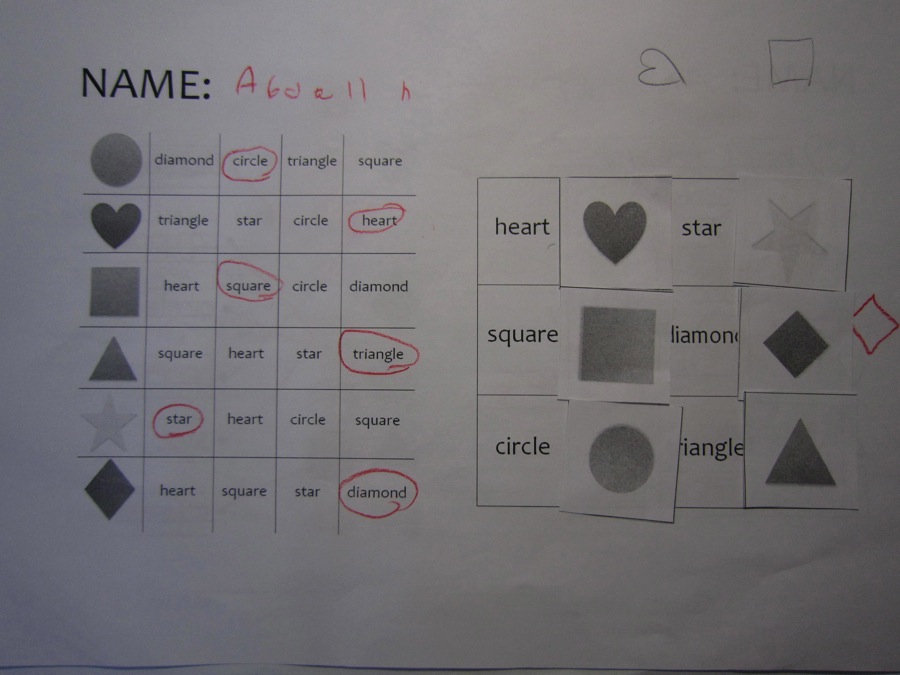
March 3, 2012





We decided to teach body parts. Since the words are sometimes long, they had hard time memorizing words. However, repeating learning the words, they could memorize some words. I have realized repetition is the important factor of learning. I have made flashcards to help them to memorize.

April 21, 2012



After teaching body parts for one month, our group decided to teach shapes. As usual, they had hard time pronouncing the words and matching words with the correct shapes but with continuous repetition, they could keep few words in their brain. By cutting the shapes out and sticking into the paper, kids could learn the shapes with more fun.

**Disability Research**

**What is Autism?**

Autism is a disorder of neural development characterized by impaired social interaction and communication and by restricted and repetitive behavior.

**When is an autistic person first diagnosed and what are the preliminary and the lasting symptoms?**

Autism is usually first diagnosed in early childhood (about 3 years old).

Children with autism might have problems talking with people or might not look in the eye when someone talks to them. They may have to line up their pencils before they can pay attention. Some people with autism never learn how to talk. Because people with autism can have very different features or symptoms, autism is referred as a “spectrum” disorder. Asperger syndrome is a milder version of the disorder.

**What are the special needs for an autistic patient?**

* Behavior modification (treating inappropriate, repetitive, and aggressive behavior)

Need sensory integration therapy, play therapy, or etc. that is a type of behavior modification that is used to improve emotional development.

* Dietary modification

Changing the diet or adding vitamin supplements may improve digestion and eliminate food intolerances or allergies, which may contribute to behavioral problems in autistic patients.

Pictures



Our group Yeiji, Sena, Chanho, Jiho, Hannah, Youngjae, and JIeun





