**Summary**
The new school year is under way, and one class has a new teacher, Mr. Post. His experience as a summer volunteer inspires him and his students to develop a yearlong community volunteer project through which students offer their time and skills to members of the community.

**Lesson Vocabulary**
- community
- enthusiasm
- labor
- mural
- nonprofit
- organization
- reporter
- sign-up
- success
- volunteer

**Introduce the Book**

**Introduce the Title and Author**
Discuss with students the title and the author of *Mr. Post’s Project*. Ask them to look at the cover illustration and talk about how it might relate to the title. Ask: Who is the man in the illustration, and what is he doing? Why is his name on the chalkboard?

**Build Background**
Discuss community service and volunteering. Ask: Why do people volunteer? Have you or members of your family volunteered? Have you ever been helped by volunteers?

**Ask students to discuss what aspects of starting a new school year are exciting and which are difficult.** Ask: How can others help students who are not native English speakers?

**Preview/Use Text Features**
Have students preview the book by looking at the illustrations. Encourage students to use the illustrations to predict the story line. Point out the way in which the text on page 20 is set off with a heading. Ask: Why might the author have done this?

**Read the Book**

**Set Purpose**
Have children set a purpose for reading *Mr. Post’s Project*. They might be interested in the type of teacher Mr. Post will be or what kinds of students will be in his class. After looking at the illustrations, you might guide students to set a purpose related to learning more about volunteering or how to organize a volunteer project.

**Strategy Support: Prior Knowledge**
Encourage students to discuss any prior experience in organizing an activity. Remind students that their prior knowledge will help them understand the story. Their prior experience as volunteers or working on simple fundraising projects might well help them understand some of the issues involved with organizing a volunteer project that involves an entire class.

**Comprehension Questions**

**Page 5**
Why were students curious about Mr. Post? *(It was his first year at the school.)*

**Page 10**
What ideas did Mr. Post’s students have for volunteer projects? *(recycling, delivering groceries for the elderly; raking leaves for people who couldn’t rake)*

**Page 13**
How was the class project organized? *(On sign-up sheets, students volunteered to do things they had time for and liked to do.)*

**Pages 16–17**
What do the photos show? How realistic are they? *(They show the students doing volunteer activities. They are very realistic.)*

**Page 20**
How do nonprofit groups help with community projects to build homes? *(They pay for materials, equipment, and land, and they organize workers.)*
REVISIT THE BOOK

READER RESPONSE
1. Most of the book takes place in the classroom. Mr. Post fits easily into that setting because he is the teacher.
2. Possible responses should demonstrate an understanding of or questions about volunteering.
3. Possible responses: The baseball player showed dedication when he overcame his injury. A dedication was made to the soldiers who served in the war.
4. Possible response: Yes, because I would like to help people in my community.

EXTEND UNDERSTANDING Remind students that characters are the people or animals in stories. Since this book focuses largely on the character of Mr. Post, invite students to discuss him. Ask: What kind of person is Mr. Post? How do you know? Would you like Mr. Post to be your teacher? Ask students to describe how they have reached their conclusions about Mr. Post.

RESPONSE OPTIONS
WRITING Invite students to examine the illustrations in the book closely. Assign each illustration to a small group of students, and have each group write a caption that describes what is happening in the picture. Encourage students to write lively captions or dialogue.

WORD WORK Have each student write a story about an imaginary school volunteer project. Each story should include at least six of the vocabulary words.

SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTION As a group, have students plan a classroom volunteer project. On the board, write down the steps that students feel must be done to complete the project, from start to finish. Students should consider the needs of the community, interests and skills of students, fundraising, publicity opportunities, and how to celebrate the project’s success.

Skill Work

TEACH/REVIEW VOCABULARY Read aloud the vocabulary words. Ask students to explain words they already know and to look up words they don’t know. Have students practice using unfamiliar words in read-aloud sentences.

TARGET SKILL AND STRATEGY

CHARACTER AND SETTING Remind children that good characters—the people in a story—and a believable setting—where and when a story takes place—make a story come alive for the reader. Character traits are qualities that tell about a character’s personality. Good readers try to understand how characters feel and why they do the things they do. Have students analyze the character traits of Mr. Post while they are reading. What clues tell the kind of teacher he is? Students should support their statements with clues and details from the book. Ask them how Mr. Post’s classroom—the setting—is like their own classroom and how it is different.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE Tell students that prior knowledge is what they know about a given topic, and it comes from their reading and personal experiences. Explain how connecting prior knowledge to a text can help students understand what they read. Read aloud sections of the story, and pause to ask students what it reminds them of. Tell students that they can use their prior knowledge, as well as illustrations, to determine whether a story is a realistic story or a fantasy.

ADDITIONAL SKILL INSTRUCTION

THEME Explain to students that every story has one “big idea” called the theme. Instruct students that they can often determine the theme by asking themselves as they read, “What does the writer want me to learn from reading this story?” Tell students that sometimes the theme will be directly stated. Other times, students can look at the actions taken by characters in the story to figure out the theme.
Character

- A character is a person who takes part in the events of a story.
- Character traits are qualities of a character that tell information about his or her personality.

Directions Fill in the graphic organizer after rereading Mr. Post’s Project.
Vocabulary

Directions  Choose the word from the box that best completes each sentence. Write the word on the line.

Check the Words You Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>community</th>
<th>enthusiasm</th>
<th>labor</th>
<th>mural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nonprofit</td>
<td>organization</td>
<td>reporter</td>
<td>sign-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>success</td>
<td>volunteer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The volunteer ____________ helped students plan and buy supplies.
2. The students were so excited, they could not contain their ____________.
3. A ____________ gives his or her time to help others.
4. A newspaper ____________ visited the surprised students.
5. Many people from the ____________ had project ideas for the students.
6. Raking leaves required the students to perform physical ____________.
7. The students made a big ____________ to hang on the wall.
8. A ____________ organization does not make a profit.
9. Mr. Post hung a ____________ sheet on the door so students could volunteer.
10. The community project to clean the park was a huge ____________.

Directions  Write a paragraph about volunteering, using as many vocabulary words as you can. Underline each vocabulary word you use.