

Kids on the Wire: Highlights from 2010 A Few Ideas for Teachers



In the introduction to this collection we write:

“Students to Get a Voice on Teacher Performance Under New State Law.” “Students Unite Across Schools, Oceans to Help Uganda.” “High School Garden Project Grows into Full-Scale Urban Farm.” “New Orleans Students Have Their Say on the Oil Spill.” “Student Sleuths Use DNA, History to Trail Buffalo.”

For young people around the country, and the world, 2010 was another year of activism, entrepreneurship, problem solving. They invested in improving their schools, joining the debate over teacher evaluation and fighting cuts in education spending. They created their own media, reporting on their communities as well as international issues. They raised crucial funds for those in need—or in the case of a group of Kansas City students, built infant caskets for indigent families who had lost a newborn. They did scientific research to help move us toward energy independence. They fought for immigration reform . . . and so much more.

The young people making headlines aren’t just toeing the line—a low expectation, we believe, for what kids can do. As our [Kids on the Wire](#) bulletins demonstrate, these and other young people across the United States are keenly aware of their social responsibility in a time of dissension, in a country that many feel has lost its way, and in a world whose challenges have become truly global.

At WKCD, we stay on top of this ongoing social activism among our nation's youth. Every day, WKCD researcher Montana Miller scans newspapers nationwide for stories that testify to the dynamism and invaluable contributions of teenagers across the country—and puts them on our front page.

How might teachers use these teen news stories with students?

- Put students in pairs and give each pair three stories to research online, using the links presented with the KOW 2010 story abstracts on the WKCD website. Ask students to summarize in writing—in a 1-2 paragraphs—the who, what, when, where, and why of the story.
- Ask students to read through the list of story abstracts and pick the five that interest them most. Ask for volunteers to explain their top picks to the class as a whole.
- Working in groups of 3-4, ask students to invent their own story about kids at their school doing something amazing. Ask them to create a headline for their story, plus two opening paragraphs.
- Have students brainstorm and create a list of cool projects they could do—to contribute to their school, their community, or to young people elsewhere in the world.