Introduction
The Romeo and Juliet Intergenerational Project service-learning activity enables young people to learn from the experiences of the elderly by examining their first love experiences and comparing them to Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet. Through reader’s theatre, the students will re-write a scene from this drama about young love and then present it to senior citizen home residents. Next, the students collaborate with an elderly individual to write the senior’s personal story about their memories of their own first love. Finally, the stories are compiled in a book (might include translations where appropriate) and presented to the senior citizen during a culminating celebratory event.

Project Goals
- Students will be able to interpret and understand Shakespearian language through a reading of Romeo and Juliet.
- Students will be able to make connections between Shakespearian characters and their own lives, as well as the lives of the elderly in their communities.
- Student will become meta-cognitive learners by examining the appropriate vocabulary to incorporate to communicate ideas.
- Students will learn to present scenes from Shakespeare in dramatic fashion.
- Students will develop writing and editing skills as they create their own love stories based on interviews with senior citizens.
- Students will reflect on their experiences.

Procedure/Project Sequence
1. Teacher schedules tentative senior center visitation date or dates (number of visit(s) determined by dates available for teacher and nursing home).
2. Students receive background information on Shakespeare and are provided with tools to read and understand a Shakespearian drama.
3. Students read Romeo and Juliet and select a scene to present.
4. Students re-write the selected scene in modern day language and rehearse a reader’s theatre presentation of the scene.
5. Students present a Reader’s Theatre dramatic presentation to the senior center residents.
6. Students collaborate with an elderly individual and write the senior’s personal story in the student’s journals documenting the senior’s memories of their young love.
7. *Students collaborate with computer students to create senior love story books.
8. During culminating celebratory event books are presented to elderly partners at senior center.
9. During culminating celebration provide a reflection activity that engages students and senior citizens in discussion about the experience.
10. Conduct a final classroom evaluation using some of the following questions: What did we want to happen? What happened? Describe rationales for outcomes? *Optional collaboration activity

Community Partner/Resources
Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, Agency on Aging
Senior Centers providing adult day service are located by zip code:  
[www.state.il.us/aging/1directory/adult_day.pdf](http://www.state.il.us/aging/1directory/adult_day.pdf)
State of Illinois Volunteer Center: [http://www2.illinois.gov/serve/Pages/volunteer-centers.aspx](http://www2.illinois.gov/serve/Pages/volunteer-centers.aspx)

Chicago Cares  
2 N. Riverside Plaza, Suite 2200  
Chicago, IL 60606  
312 780 0800  
http://www.chicagocares.org/

Little Brothers, Friends of the Elderly Chicago Chapter  
355 North Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL 60607-1019  
(312) 455-1000  
http://littlebrotherschicago.org/

**Addendum**

**Standards**
This project addresses the following Social Emotional Learning Standards as well as the following Common Core State Standards.

**Goal 2:** Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships  
A. Recognize the feelings and perspectives of others.  
2. A.4b: Analyze similarities and differences between one’s own and other’s perspectives.  
2. A.4b: Use conversation skills to understand others’ feelings and perspectives.  
2. A.5b: Demonstrate ways to express empathy for others.

**RL.9.2:** Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.  
**W.9.4:** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Duration**
Students who complete the entire project should spend 20-30 hours on the project depending on the amount of time spent with the seniors and on the book of love stories. The suggested duration of this project is 5-10 weeks.

**Preparation:** Choosing a scene from *Romeo and Juliet* and preparing it for presentation as a Reader’s Theatre piece – 4-6 hours  
**Action:** Presenting the scene at a senior center, gathering stories of first love and creating a book for presentation to the senior citizens – 10-12 hours  
**Reflection:** Discussion/Writing with senior citizens and evaluating with fellow classmate – 5-7 hours

**Cross-Curricular Connections**
Connections with Sociology classes (unit on aging) and Drama could be made during this project.

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