Reflection Methods and Activities for Service Learning

A Student Manual and Workbook

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The Importance of Reflection

Tell me and I will forget; show me and I will remember; involve me and I will understand.

– CHINESE PROVERB

Chapter Outline

- Philosophical Foundation of Reflection
- Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle
- Elements of Reflection

A Tale of Two Students' Service-Learning Experiences

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times; it was the age of supreme accomplishment, it was the age of looming failure. Thus begins "the tale" of two students' experiences in an honors English composition course with an ongoing service-learning project. One student appeared headed for disaster. By mid-semester, her community partner requested that she not come back. In contrast, the other student became the toast of the community. Her project was written up in

the local newspaper, and the board of the organization asked her to attend their monthly meeting to "tell {them} what {they were} doing wrong." The powerful constant in both students' experiences was reflection.[9]

British statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke famously said, "Reading without reflecting is like eating without digesting." What he said about reading can be said about serving. For serving to result in learning, reflection is essential.

Learning is an active search for meaning and understanding of the world. It takes place through combinations of thought and action, practice and reflection, theory and application.

Experience is not the same as learning. Surely, we can – and should – learn from experience. However, learning requires more than experience. And this is where reflection comes into the picture. Reflection is a process of examining and interpreting experiences to gain understanding and fresh perspectives. It is the use of critical-thinking skills to learn from service experiences. Experience without reflection does not produce meaningful learning. As Bringle and Hatcher point out, "Experience becomes educative when critical reflective thought creates new meaning and leads to growth and the ability to take informed actions."[10]

Let's see what others have written about reflection:

- "At its simplest, reflection is being able to step back and be thoughtful about [one's] experience – to monitor one's reactions and thinking processes."[11]
- Reflection is "the ability to step back and ponder one's own experience, to abstract from it some meaning or knowledge relevant to other experiences."[12]
- Reflection is "the process of stepping back from an experience to ponder, carefully and persistently, its meaning to the self through the development of inferences."[13]

Although reflection is a central component of service learning, it is not the exclusive province of this methodology. Indeed, reflection is used in other experiential education programs, allowing participants to connect and synthesize knowledge gained from various activities and experiences. Experiential-learning practitioners promote reflection within the context of Kolb's definition of learning – "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience."[14]

Service learning is "based on the pedagogical principle that learning and development do not necessarily occur as a result of experience itself but as a result of a reflective component explicitly designed

[9] Teresa Baumgartner, Reflection: A Tale of Two Service-Learning Experiences (Apologies to Dickens), 2006. Used with the author's permission.

[10] Robert G. Bringle and Julie A. Hatcher (1999), Reflection in Service Learning: Making Meaning of Experience, *Educational Horizons*, 77(4), 180.

[11] Janet Eyler and Dwight E. Giles, Jr. *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 171.

[12] Pat Hutchings and Allen Wutzdorff, Experiential Learning across the Curriculum: Assumptions and Principles. *Knowing and Doing: Learning through Experience.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988), 15.

[13] Marilyn W. Daudelin (1996), Learning from Experience through Reflection. *Organizational Dynamics*, 24(3), 39.

[14] David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development.* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 38.

to foster learning and development"[15] Reflection, then, is the link or bridge between your experience in the community and your learning and development. Practitioners and researchers have concluded that service learning is most effective when provision is made for structured opportunities for you (participants) to reflect critically upon your service experience. Through the reflection process, you make connections between your classroom and out-of-classroom experiences and transform those experiences into genuine learning. Through this process, you think about, discuss, and document the knowledge, skills, attitude change, and accomplishments resulting from your community-service experiences, particularly in relation to your course work.

Consider this scenario: One student enrolled in a course participates in a service project and does not acquire relevant knowledge. Another student enrolled in the same course participates in the same project and gains relevant knowledge from it but cannot apply that knowledge to new situations or to solve problems. A third student taking that course not only acquires relevant knowledge but can also transfer that knowledge to new situations and apply it to problem solving. The outcome for the first student is "essentially no learning"; for the second, it is "rote learning"; and for the third, "meaningful learning."[16]

Likewise, social psychologist Irwin Altman differentiates three types of knowledge: *content knowledge* (rote learning), *process knowledge* (skills), and *socially responsive knowledge.*[17] Carefully designed service learning fosters meaningful learning outcomes or socially responsive knowledge. Your professor is probably familiar with the three goals of socially responsive knowledge: To educate you as students in the problems of society; to have you experience and understand, first-hand, social issues in your community; and, most important, to give you the experiences and skills to act on social problems.

Guided or structured reflection enhances the learning process. The term *structured reflection* refers to a thoughtfully organized process that challenges and guides you in (1) examining critical issues related to your service-learning project, (2) connecting the service experience to course work, (3) developing civic skills and values, and (4) finding personal relevance in the service you have provided.

Structured reflection can help you better understand course content; it can support personal growth, provide insight, help you develop skills, and promote civic responsibility. Your professor understands that the deliberate integration of community service and course work requires that developmentally appropriate reflection activities be included in the course. Through reflection activities that engage you in examining the relationship between relevant service and a particular discipline, there is enormous potential for academic, social, moral, personal, and civic learning.

Further, reflection can enable you to form, as well as examine, your beliefs, values, opinions, assumptions, judgments, and practices as related to your service project or experience. Reflection challenges prevailing assumptions and perceptions, provoking critical thought, so that you are exposed to a deeper level of problem solving, which provides more realistic and effective solutions. In the process, reflec-

[15] Barbara Jacoby, *Service-Learning in Today's Higher Education. In Barbara Jacoby and Associates, Service-Learning in Today's Higher Education: Concepts and Practices.* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 6.

[16] Lorin W. Anderson and David R. Krathwohl, *A Taxonomy For Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.* (New York: Longman, 2001), 64–65.

[17] Irwin Altman (1996), Higher Education and Psychology in the Millennium. *American Psychologist*, 51(4), 375–376.

tion reinforces and sharpens communication and teamwork skills, self-understanding, and leadership. Thus, reflection can enable you to gain a deeper understanding of your experience and to prepare for further action.

Reflection ...

... Gives meaning to an experience (accomplishment of goals, quality of performance, benefits to the community, context as part of a larger effort, etc.) ... Can help you understand the opportunities and limitations of the community organization or service site ... Relieves tension and reenergizes you (especially when the service project is emotionally challenging) ... Can create a sense of accomplishment (which is crucial, especially when there are limited external rewards) ... Can help you develop a spirit of service and civic-mindedness ... Can create a sense of closure (especially after a long service period, project, or emotional experience) ... Helps you deepen your knowledge of relevant issues ... Provides a "reality check," guarding against reinforcement of inaccurate or negative perceptions and biases ... Encourages you to do higher-level thinking (as you look for root causes of complex issues) ... Links course objectives to service objectives (highlighting the relevance of service experiences to assigned readings, lectures, and classroom discussion) ... Enhances your understanding of the subject matter ... Helps you assess your own values, goals, and achievements ... Fosters commitment to solving problems considered important to you and the communities in which you study, live, and work ... Helps you internalize the lessons learned and connect those lessons to your own personal choices and behavior.

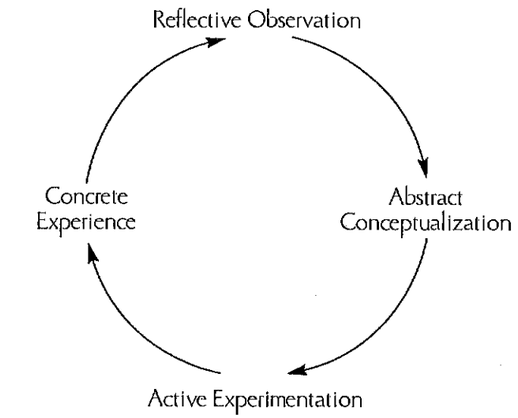
Philosophical Foundation of Reflection

Service learning is deeply rooted in the action-reflection theories of American philosopher John Dewey and educational theorist David A. Kolb, who both emphasized the importance of combining individual action and engagement with reflective thinking to develop a greater understanding of the content being studied. Dewey referred to reflection as a bridge between experience and theory.

Widely cited for providing a scientific interpretation of reflection, Kolb illustrates the process of reflection in the Experiential Learning Cycle (Figure 4). Kolb's model suggests how the integration of feeling and action with abstract and systematic thought might be accomplished. The basic cycle may begin with a learning mode that Kolb calls *concrete experience*. Once you have immersed yourself in experience, you pull back and attempt to interpret that experience thoughtfully through *reflective observation*. Reflective observation becomes the grist for *abstract conceptualization*, in which you attempt to derive meaning from the experience and to integrate observations with other sources of knowledge and understanding. At this stage, you may formulate strategies for action that may be tested through *active experimentation*.

Alternatively, the process may begin with *abstract conceptualization* (e.g., positing a theory or planning a project using a conceptual schema). *Reflective observation* could entail your considering how to improve the original conceptualization.

FIGURE 4
Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle



Your professor may refer to Kolb's work as it relates to experience and learning styles. Kolb discusses four basic learning styles, which may be labeled *divergent*, *assimilative*, *convergent*, and *accommodative*. A detailed description of these learning styles is beyond the scope of this manual. *Divergers* typically use concrete experience combined with reflective observation; *assimilators* primarily use reflective observation combined with abstract conceptualization for learning; *convergers* use abstract conceptualization and test implications through active experimentation; and *accommodators* combine active experimentation with concrete experience.

Recently, in focus group discussions and individual interviews, students at one university emphasized that they prefer a practicum or field work to lectures. They prefer to get information not only from the library but also from the community. They prefer to be put in a situation where they can be involved rather than only hear about the situation from a distance.

How about you? What is your preferred learning style? Does the Chinese proverb at the beginning of this chapter resonate with you?

Your course instructor or service-learning administrator may use Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle as scaffolding for designing reflection activities. We'll take a further look at Kolb in the next chapter.

Elements of Reflection

Effective reflection is characterized by four core elements (the "four Cs"): *continuous*, *connected*, *challenging*, and *contextualized*.[18]

[18] Janet Eyler, Dwight E. Giles, Jr., and Angela Schmiede, *A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning: Student Voices and Reflections*. (Nashville: Vanderbilt University and Corporation for National Service, 1996).

Continuous

Reflection activities are undertaken throughout the service-learning course, rather than intermittently, episodically, or irregularly.

To ensure the greatest learning outcomes over time, critical reflection must be an ongoing component of a student's entire education and service involvement. In the context of a particular course, continuous implies that reflection must occur before, during, and after the service-learning experience. "Pre-reflection" assists in preparing you, as students, to render service to the community and address relevant issues. Reflection during service occurs mainly through problem solving and feedback on site. Post-service reflection generates data and information that can be used for an assessment of student learning and an evaluation of the course.

Connected

Reflection efforts are structured and directly related to the learning objectives.

Service-learning reflection must connect experience to intellectual and academic pursuits. "Connected" reflection draws bridges between classroom learning and first-hand experiences. Service experiences make theories real, turn statistics into people and situations, and pose questions in ways that might not happen in a non-experiential context. In turn, you may even develop your own model to help explain what you experienced through service.

Challenging

Reflection efforts set high expectations, demand high quality effort on your part, and facilitate instructor feedback that stimulates further student learning.

"Challenging" reflection poses old questions in new ways, reveals new information and perspectives that require thought and investigation, and also raises new questions. Challenge and support from faculty should be balanced.

Contextualized

Reflection activities are appropriate for the particular course, and commensurate with and complementary to the level and type of other learning activities in the course.

When designed with context in mind, reflection provides the link between thinking and doing, and preparing for doing again. The context of the course helps to guide choices about reflection – its process, content, and location. Reflection may be designed as, for example, informal conversation, a structured journal, and large- or small-group interaction; and it may occur in the classroom or at a community site, with community partners, or individually.

Related to the third "C" ("Challenging") is another "C" – "Critical." The importance of making reflection truly critical is illustrated in the apocryphal tale about a 20-year-old student who completed a service-learning project at the local soup kitchen. After returning to campus, he declared, "This was a great experience; I hope my kids will be able to do community service at a place like this someday."

As the story goes, the teacher was stunned, and had good reason to be. Obviously, that student was accepting the status quo and not reflecting critically on important issues, such as hunger and poverty.

In critical reflection, you would ask and seek to answer questions such as: Why are people hungry, starving, or homeless? What local, state, or national policies affect hunger and homelessness? Why do we create soup kitchens rather than solve the problem by identifying the root causes of it? If hunger (or homelessness) is a global problem, how do other countries deal with it?

Commenting on the process of critical reflection, Eyler and Giles assert:

> ***Critical reflection is about pushing students to explore the assumptions that underlie their own perceptions and the way that society is organized. ... Critical reflection is the process that may lead to transformational learning – changes in how students understand the social order – and to action to right social wrongs.***[19]

In the same vein, James Dubinsky affirms that critical reflection helps students "ponder and evaluate their experience, consider its value, and transform it into knowledge they will use later as ... citizens."[20] As you analyze your experiences, you become aware of community issues and commit yourself, as an active citizen, to assisting in dealing with those issues.

Service-learning methodology dictates that you should do more than simply recount or report on experiences. Rather, you should examine the impacts of what you do – the impacts on yourself, the community, and others. Without reflection, your thinking about an experience stays, at best, at a superficial (primarily descriptive) level. At worse, you may take misconceptions with you or have your stereotypes confirmed. Critical reflection is clearly critical.

[19] Eyler and Giles (1999), 198.

[20] James Dubinsky (2006), The Role of Reflection in Service Learning. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 69(3), 310.

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Reflection Models

Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created by the transformation of experience.

– DAVID A. KOLB, EDUCATIONAL THEORIST (1939–)

Chapter Outline

- Rubrics
- The Experiential Learning Cycle
- Bloom's Taxonomy
- The "What? So What? Now What?" Model
- The EDIT System
- The R3A3 Processing System
- The DEAL Model
- The ORID Model

Service-learning experts suggest that the reflection process should provide not only a mirror but also a magnifying glass and binoculars. Through reflection, it is said that service learning holds up a mirror for us to look at ourselves, a microscope for us to examine society, and binoculars for us to see clearly what lies ahead.

Jennifer Moon outlined five stages of a deeper approach to learning, which, while focusing on professional practice, involves reflection. The five stages are as follows:

1. *Noticing* – Observing what has occurred
2. *Making sense* – Knowing/fitting the facts together
3. *Making meaning* – Putting into context(s)
4. *Working with meaning* – Linking to other ideas
5. *Transforming learning* – Restructuring ideas and understandings[21]

How can you use this approach in such a way that it enhances your learning? As you begin to take full responsibility for your own learning, you should be prepared to immerse yourself in a reflective process that leads to "transformative learning." Transformative learning is a process of getting beyond mere knowledge acquisition to becoming changed in some meaningful way by what you have learned. This kind of learning takes place through the formal academic curriculum, student life, collaborative co-curricular programming, and community-based experiences, including service learning. Your role is to use the reflective process to integrate what might be disparate experiences so that your learning prepares you for life – a life of purpose and fulfillment.

Rubrics

Course instructors understand that reflection should include components that can be evaluated on the basis of well-defined criteria. **Rubrics** are typically used for this purpose. As an assessment instrument, rubrics often include such standards as "Excellent," "Very Good," "Good," "Satisfactory," and "Unsatisfactory," with indicators typical of each level of achievement.

A disadvantage of rubrics is that they sometimes seem inflexible and arbitrary. Your professor knows that rubrics should not be so rigid that you treat them as scorecards. Your professor knows, too, that the rating you're given should not be random, or even appear to be. Therefore, when reviewing your journal entries, for example, your professor is expected to provide written comments especially in relation to the evidence necessary to support the standard (criterion) and rating. You should insist on getting written comments from your professor.

The Experiential Learning Cycle

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (see Exhibit 6) serves as a model for reflection. In relation to service learning, the process entails the community-service activity (*concrete experience*), followed by an exchange of reactions and observations (*reflective observation*), generalizing or development of principles (*abstract conceptualization*), and planning the effective use of learning (*active experimentation*). Effective use of learning leads to an experiential activity, which could be a continuation of a service project or a new project (*concrete experience*). In a real sense, then, the Experiential Learning Cycle is an action–reflection–action process with four stages.

[21] Jennifer Moon, *Reflection in Learning and Professional Development*. (London: Kogan Page, 1999).

Exhibit 6

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

- **Concrete Experience** – Community-service project/activity
- **Reflective Observation** – Assimilation of experiences and ideas; recorded and presented in discussions, journals, papers, etc.
- **Abstract Conceptualization** – Forming hypotheses or developing action strategies (perhaps combining ideas from textbooks, community-service site, and previous experience); examining the relationship between theory and practice
- **Active Experimentation** – Testing new ideas, decisions, and strategies (in the community); solving problems (and gathering data for evaluation); making commitments

Bloom's Taxonomy

Benjamin Bloom and colleagues[22] developed a taxonomy of educational objectives, which is useful for course development, assignment design, and interaction among students, as well as between students and their teachers. Within the cognitive domain, there are six major classes – from the simple recall or recognition of facts, at the lowest level, through increasingly more complex and abstract levels, to the highest level, which is categorized as *evaluation*. Bloom's taxonomy can serve as a model for reflection in service learning. Each class (level) can be thought of as a degree of difficulty, which suggests that lower levels must be mastered first.

The cognitive domain of the taxonomy is summarized in Exhibit 7. The focus of this domain is on cognition – the act or process of knowing, including both awareness and judgment.[23]

[22] Bloom (the editor) and his colleagues – a Committee of College and University Examiners – created the taxonomy for three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.

[23] Bloom et al., 1956.

Exhibit 7

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Cognitive Domain)

KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge

- of specifics
- of terminology
- of specific facts
- of ways and means of dealing with specifics
- of conventions
- of trends and consequences
- of classifications and categories
- of criteria
- of methodology
- of the universals and abstractions in a field
- of principles and generalizations
- of theories and structures

INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES AND SKILLS

Comprehension

- Translation
- Interpretation
- Extrapolation

Application

Analysis

- of elements
- of relationships
- of organizational principles

Synthesis

- Production of a unique communication
- Production of a plan, or proposed set of operations
- Derivation of a set of abstract relations

Evaluation

- Judgments in terms of internal evidence
- Judgments in terms of external criteria

Source: Summarized from Bloom et al., *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals. Handbook I: Cognitive Domain.* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1956), 201–207.

Anderson and Krathwohl revised Bloom's original taxonomy by combining the cognitive process and the knowledge dimensions. They delineate six educational objectives for students: *remember*, *understand*, *apply*, *analyze*, *evaluate*, and *create*.[24] The revised taxonomy is particularly useful for efficiently aligning objectives to assessment techniques.

Adapted as a reflection model, the taxonomy can serve to demonstrate student learning, as indicated in Exhibit 8. This exhibit includes examples of question cues (verbs representative of activities) for each level of the taxonomy.

[24] Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001.

Exhibit 8

Bloom's Taxonomy as a Reflection Model (Cognitive Domain)

Domain Level	Learning Demonstrated
Knowledge (What do you know?)	• Observe and recall information/facts • Know specifics (dates, events, etc.) • Know major ideas, concepts, and principles List, define, identify, show, tell, label, tabulate, quote, name, state, repeat, recall
Comprehension (What do you understand?)	• Understand information/key ideas from the course content or from the service experience; grasp meaning • Translate ideas into other formats/knowledge into new context • Interpret facts; compare and contrast • Predict consequences Summarize, describe, discuss, locate, restate, interpret, contrast, predict, translate, explain, differentiate
Application (Can you put the knowledge to use in a concrete situation and in a meaningful way?)	• Use knowledge and understanding, especially for some practical purpose, in new situations • Use concepts and theories in specific and concrete situations • Solve problems using required knowledge and skills Apply, demonstrate, illustrate, show, solve, modify, relate, use, experiment, practice
Analysis (Can you dissect ideas into constituent parts to make the organization clear?)	• Separate the whole into component parts • See patterns and relationships • Recognize hidden meanings Analyze, examine, separate, order, distinguish, explain, connect, compare, criticize, classify, categorize, explain, infer
Synthesis (Can you effectively interconnect knowledge and experiences from various situations and experiences?)	• Integrate parts to form a new "whole"; use old ideas to create new ones • Generalize from given facts • Relate knowledge from several, diverse areas; establish new relationships Combine, consolidate, integrate, plan, create, produce, design, develop, assemble, rewrite, compose, formulate, manage, generalize, predict
Evaluation (Can you judge the value of an idea, procedure, materials, etc.?)	• Assess value of ideas • Make sound judgments using specific, appropriate criteria/reasoned argument • Verify value of evidence • Recognize subjectivity Rank, rate, test, measure, judge, argue, predict, assess, evaluate, appraise, summarize, prioritize, decide, recommend

The course instructor or reflection facilitator may ask a series of hierarchical questions at each level to gauge student learning. Exhibit 9 provides an example. In this example, gerontology students completed their community-service assignment at a fictitious nursing home.

Exhibit 9

Reflection Example Based on Bloom's Taxonomy

Course:	Gerontology 301
Service Site:	Happy Grove Nursing Home, Pleasantville
Knowledge:	Happy Grove Nursing Home is situated in Pleasantville, three miles south of our university campus. The home provides residential care, including skilled nursing care, for elderly persons who are unable to take care of themselves or whose families can no longer take care of them. Established in 1989, the 40-bed private institution is certified for Medicare and Medicaid – both federal government assistance programs. Happy Grove provides round-the-clock nursing care; a 24-hour emergency response system is available and there is an emergency evacuation plan.

Physical, occupational, or speech therapy services are provided onsite by licensed professionals.

Medicare covers about 12 percent of private nursing home costs while Medicaid covers about 50 percent.

The following statistics are from course readings about nursing homes in the United States:

- Number of nursing homes: 18,000
- Number of beds: 1.9 million
- Occupancy rate: 87 percent
- Number of current residents: 1.6 million
- Average length of stay: 892 days (2.44 years)

My service-learning placement was in the Activities Coordinator's office at Happy Grove Nursing Home. The Activities Coordinator is responsible for organizing social, cultural, and recreational programs. Staff, residents, family members, or volunteers lead the activities.

During my eight weeks at Happy Grove, I helped to organize and run many activities, including a Valentine's Day dinner, games, and the Book Service. In addition, I spent a lot of time just having a conversation with residents and I occasionally visited the Alzheimer's Unit.

The following activities are part of the program at Happy Grove:

- Birthday parties (monthly)
- Holiday celebrations: Valentine's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Halloween, Christmas, Hanukkah
- Concerts, including 'sing-alongs'
- Games: Bingo, bridge, chess, etc.
- Arts and crafts
- Book Service
- Exercise/Outdoor activities: Yoga, walks, gardening, cookouts, and other leisure-time activities
- Trips and tours to community events
- Newsletter: Contents include birthday list, resident and staff personality profiles, poetry, and event photos
- Tea and coffee hours
- Religious services

	The activities are listed on a calendar of events, which is available to each resident. They are also posted on bulletin boards in large print for the benefit of wheelchair-bound residents.
Comprehension:	Nursing homes provide a cost-effective way to enable patients with injuries, acute illnesses, or post-operative care needs to recover in an environment outside a hospital. When these patients are admitted from a hospital, Medicare will cover the cost. The type and scope of programs available in any nursing home depends on the health and interests of the residents. Programs should meet the needs of all residents, from the ambulatory to the wheelchair-bound. At Happy Grove, the variety of activities was impressive – far better than I expected to see at a nursing home in a rural community. The Book Service was one of my favorite assignments. Run by volunteers, the Book Service involved taking a cart of books to the room of immobile or bedridden residents. Family members, friends, and volunteers support the Book Service by reading to those unable to see well (or unable to see at all). Books included Christian fiction, historical fiction, "gentle romances," mysteries, Westerns, and a few non-fiction books. There were even talking books for the blind. Most of the books were interesting and enjoyable. Religious services are an important part of the program. Every Medicare- and Medicaid-certified nursing home must, by federal regulation, provide the opportunity for residents to attend religious services of their preference. Happy Grove welcomes denominational groups to provide religious services in the home for residents who wish to attend. Relatives and friends sometimes join the residents in worship. Religious services thus provide a good support system for nursing home residents.
Application:	My experience at Happy Grove has changed my perspective on aging and my attitude towards elderly persons. The experience has opened my eyes and my heart to the needs of nursing home residents. Many older adults, including those living in nursing homes, experience loneliness, helplessness, and boredom. They need more than medical care. They also need the support of family, friends, and professional caregivers so that the rest of their lives will be meaningful and purposeful. I will therefore commit two to three hours each month to a nursing home visit. I will spend time reading, playing games, and swapping stories with residents. I will treat them with empathy, understanding, and respect. And that's how I will also treat other elderly persons in my own community.

Analysis:	In the United States, the elderly population aged 65 and older constitutes 13 percent of the total population. We are still experiencing the "graying of America." Approximately 63 percent of nursing-home patients are cognitively impaired. At Happy Grove, about 70 percent of the residents are women, and two of every three residents have no living relatives. At Happy Grove, the most challenging part of the experience for me was relating to patients in the Alzheimer's Unit. Alzheimer's disease is a degenerative brain disorder that causes gradual deterioration in intelligence, memory, awareness, and ability to control body functions. I noticed that Alzheimer's patients asked the same question over and over again; many were depressed and disoriented; and some seemed agitated. Several studies suggest that agitated behavior is twice as prevalent among patients with Alzheimer's as it is among patients with other forms of dementia, although researchers aren't sure why. The conversations I had with residents helped me understand what their lives were all about and what they were going through. I enjoyed hearing their stories, and they seemed to enjoy hearing mine. Nursing home residents are not just old people who should be ignored or cast aside. They are senior citizens who have lived useful lives and have made their contributions in their own way to our communities. Sure, they have a lot of gray hairs and wrinkles, but they also have a lot of experience and wisdom. Come to think of it, in many ways, they are just like me – and I am just like them.
Synthesis:	Gerontology, the study of aging, is a multidisciplinary field that examines the biological, economic, psychological, social, and health/fitness aspects of the aging process. A nursing home provides a good venue for students to see at least parts of the actual process. This is especially true for those of us who do not have very old relatives, such as grandparents or great-grandparents, at home. In class, we discussed the importance of preparation for service delivery roles in order to work directly with elderly persons; educating society at large about the processes of aging and the implications of an aging society; and helping older adults maximize their options in a complex and challenging age. My experience at Happy Grove Nursing Home – where assisted-living facilities are provided for older adults who are not capable of living independently – has given me an insight into some of these roles and has made me interested in service delivery through social and recreational activities.
Evaluation:	Happy Grove is a safe, well-run nursing home that takes good care of its residents. Residents are offered a variety of activities that contribute to their health, safety, and well-being. Although the program is comprehensive, I recommend that the Activities Director make resident discussion groups part of the social program at Happy Grove. Some residents are experts on particular subjects and can serve as the group leaders. Some topics may be covered by volunteers as discussion facilitators. The list of topics may relate to current events/general knowledge or to the same kinds of topics found in the books that are used in the Book Service. As I reflect on my experience in the Alzheimer's Unit, it is evident that one common source of frustration – and potential agitation – for several residents was the loss of love and companionship once provided by their family pets. To address this need, I recommend that a visitation program be established to bring pets to people confined to the nursing home. Perhaps the local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) could administer the program. SPCA volunteers could bring well-trained, docile domestic pets (dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, and even birds) to the nursing home monthly. By petting and interacting with these animals, the residents would not feel such a great sense of loneliness and loss.

Note: While all names are fictitious, the substantive information about nursing homes is factual.

The "What? So What? Now What?" Model

A reflection session is often conceptualized and structured in the framework of the "What? So What? Now What?" model. This three-step model calls for you to reflect on your service project or experience (*What?*), the implications of the experience (*So what?*), and the applications beyond that particular project or experience (*Now what?*), as explained below.

The "What? So What? Now What?" model is effective particularly as a guide for facilitators of group discussions. As an engaged student, you may finding yourself playing the role of facilitator. In each of three consecutive phases of the discussion, the facilitator prompts the group or class with relevant, open-ended questions.

What?

The first set of questions explores the substance of the service project or experience, including your interactions with community partners. You are encouraged to report objectively, providing facts and describing events or occurrences at the service site.

Here are some simple, relevant questions/prompts that you can expect from your professor: What happened today? What "critical incidents" occurred? Let's talk about what you observed this week ... What issue is being addressed by the organization? What population is being served by the agency? What were some interesting things you noticed?

So What?

The "So what?" question moves you from the descriptive to the interpretive and analytical modes. You are expected to comment on the impact of the experience on you, as well as on the agency or community in which you served. Reflective responses will indicate the implications or consequences of the service activities and the meaning that the overall experience holds for you (and each of your classmates).

Your professor may ask some of the following questions: What did the experience mean to you? How do you feel about what happened today? What difference did it make? How does it affect you and your family? Why should we care about this situation? Did you learn a new skill or clarify an interest? What feelings or thoughts seem strongest today? How is your experience different from what you expected? What struck you about that? How was that significant? How did you respond to "critical incidents"? What did you like or dislike about the experience? What did you learn about the people in the community? How does this project address pressing needs or issues in the community? What is the best impact you can imagine for the project? In what ways did the group work well together, and what does that suggest to you about the group? How might the group have accomplished its task more effectively? In what ways did others help you today, and how did you help them? How were decisions made?

Now What?

The final set of questions in this reflection approach will help you transfer and reapply lessons learned from the community-service experience to other situations. You are expected to see the "big picture" and connect what may be a small service project to a larger endeavor. At this stage, you should suggest "next steps" for further study or action. You may set goals and do long-term planning. Reflection facilitators should encourage each participant to set realistic, achievable goals while remaining open to spontaneity and change.

Now, here are some questions that you may be expected to answer: What lessons did you learn by doing this service project that you can use when you do another project? Given the challenges that many of you have mentioned, what can we do individually and collectively to address them? What will you do when you get back to campus? (Or, What will you do next?) How can you apply what you learned? What would you like to learn more about in relation to this project or issue? What follow-up is needed to address any challenges or difficulties? If you were in charge of the project, what would you do to improve it? (Or, If you could do the project again, what would you do differently?)

In Chapter 7, you'll find an example of a service-learning rubric that uses the "What? So What? Now What?" model and specific criteria for assessing student learning. You'll also see an assessment rubric that combines Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle with the "What? So What? Now What?" model.

The EDIT System

The *EDIT* system of processing experiential activities is a good model for reflection in service learning. Conceptualized by Myers and Myers (1975)[25], *EDIT* is a four-step process:

[25] George E. Myers and M. T. Myers, *Instructor's Manual to Accompany Communicating: People Speak.* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975).

1. **E**xperience: Organize and implement the community-service project.
2. **D**escribe: Talk about the experience; answer probing questions about how the experience makes you feel.
3. **I**nfer: Examine the service activities in relation to issues or problems that were being addressed (e.g., drug abuse, HIV-AIDS, homelessness, illiteracy, poverty, and teenage pregnancy).
4. **T**ransfer: Analyze the project and the pertinent issues in relation to your own life and your plans for the future.

The R3A3 Processing System

Pamela Gray developed a special reflection model – the *R3A3* processing system for experiential learning in the classroom.[26] It is designed to assist instructors and facilitators in getting you to discuss your experiences openly and thoughtfully. *R3A3* is similar to the *EDIT* model (above). The first three components of *R3A3* – *Report*, *React*, and *Reflect* – require that you describe what you have experienced. The next three components – *Analyze*, *Assess*, and *Apply* – allow you and other participants to infer and transfer. The facilitator will pose questions that fit the model (see generic questions in Exhibit 10).

Exhibit 10

Questions for the R3A3 Processing System

R3

Report: What happened? (To begin, your professor asks you to give a report.)

React: How did/do you feel? (Continuing, your professor asks you to react by describing how you felt after the service experience or how you feel right now.)

Reflect: What else can be said? (Here, your professor asks you to reflect upon what more could be said about the service experience.)

A3

Analyze: Why did it happen? (e.g., Why does hunger exist?) (In this case, you are asked to analyze a particular topic or issue – usually the topic or issue addressed through the service project.)

Assess: Is this good or bad? Was your service a help or a hindrance? (Here, you are asked to assess the situation by making a judgment call.)

Apply: What can be concluded as a result of this experience? (This is the "Now what?" question that facilitators often want you to answer after the service project. In this case, you are asked to apply the situation to your own life and describe what you yourself would do in this situation.)

[26] Based on Pamela Gray (1991), The R3A3 Processing System for Experiential Learning in the Classroom. *Basic Communication Course Annual*, 3, 61–178.

The DEAL Model

DEAL is a new model for critical reflection, which calls for you to *Describe*, *Examine*, and *Articulate Learning* (see Figure 5). The service-learning researchers who created *DEAL*[27] emphasize that the purpose of reflection is to generate, deepen, and document learning and to help students become aware of their learning. In the DEAL model, the three learning goal categories of service learning are personal growth, civic engagement, and academic enhancement. Reflection facilitators should not begin a reflection activity by asking "What did you learn?" That question serves as a good *last step* for reflection. Also, it is important to remember that reflection is not the same as description; rather, description is good *first step* in reflection.

Describe

After engaging in service, the first step is to describe (in fair detail and as objectively as possible) the experience or activity.

Part I: Overview of the "big picture" – What have I done since the last reflection session?

Part II: Hone in on two or three key experiences on which to focus the reflection – What were the most significant or reflection-worthy experiences?

- Where was I?
- Who else was there?
- When did this experience take place?
- What was said?
- What did I/others do?
- Why were we there? (NOTE: Be careful here. "Why" can be an objective question, as in "We were having this conversation because the Director had scheduled a meeting of the entire group and had invited both me and Mr. Smith." But it can also open the door to interpretation, as in "We were having this conversation because the Director wanted me and Mr. Smith to advise her")

Examine

Step 2 is to examine the experience or activity in accordance with the learning objectives (through responding to questions/prompts, engaging with a quote, playing games, etc.). You should examine your experience from the perspectives of personal growth, civic engagement, and academic enhancement by answering the questions below.

[27] Sara L. Ash, Patti H. Clayton, and Myra G. Moses, *Teaching and Learning through Critical Reflection: An Instructor's Guide*. (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, under development).

1. Personal growth

- How did this experience make me ***feel*** (positively and/or negatively)? How did I handle my emotional reactions? Do I believe I should have felt differently than I did?
- What ***assumptions or expectations*** did I bring to the situation (including my assumptions about other persons involved), and how did they affect my actions? To what extent did they prove true? If they did not prove true, why was there a discrepancy?
- How have ***past experiences*** influenced the manner in which I acted or responded to this situation? Am I comfortable with the influence past experiences has on me?
- What personal ***strengths/weaknesses*** of mine did the situation reveal? In what ways did they affect the situation, positively and negatively? What might I do to build on strengths/overcome weaknesses?
- Why did I, or did I not, experience ***difficulty working/interacting with other people***? What might I do differently next time to minimize such difficulties?
- What personal ***skills*** did I draw on in handling this situation? What personal skills would I like to have had in order to have handled it better, and how might I develop them?
- How did this situation reveal my own ***attitudes or biases*** toward other people and toward the organization in question? Do I need to make any changes?

2. Civic engagement

- What was I/someone else ***trying to accomplish***? In taking the actions I/they did, was the focus on ***symptoms*** of problems or ***causes*** of problems? Was the focus (symptom or cause) appropriate to the situation? How might I/they focus more on underlying causes in the future?
- What ***roles*** did each person/group/organization involved in the situation play, and why? What alternative roles could each have played?
- Did I/other individuals act ***unilaterally*** or ***collaboratively***, and why? Should I/they have worked with others in a different way?
- Did I ***reinforce*** or ***challenge*** an assumption or social system by the way I acted? How does this experience highlight the relationship between individual choices/actions and the operation/constraints of institutions/larger systems?
- How else could I have handled the situation? Identify both ***the paths of least resistance and the paths of greater resistance***. Why did I/others follow the path I/they did?
- What ***agendas*** did I and others bring to the situation? Are these agendas appropriate? Are they understandable? Are they shared? How are these agendas related to larger social or cultural issues?
- In what ways did ***power differentials*** emerge in this experience? What are the sources of power in this situation, and who benefits and is harmed? In what ways might any dependencies be eliminated?

- What *privilege* did I/others bring to this situation? What are the sources of such privilege? How am I, or others, disempowered by lack of privilege?
- How did *leadership* emerge in this situation, on my part, and/or on the part of others?
- What is in the interest of the *common good* in this situation? In what ways is the *individual good* (mine or that of other people) linked to and/or contrary to the common good? What tradeoffs between them are involved?
- In what way did any other *tradeoffs* (long-term/short-term, justice/efficiency, etc.) emerge in this situation? Were the trade-offs made appropriate or inappropriate, and why?
- What *changes* does this experience suggest are needed: within my group, within the organization, within our society more generally? How can these changes be accomplished: with individual action or collective action/ working within the system or challenging the system?
- How does this experience help me to better understand the *organization's vision, mission, and goals?* What does it reveal to me about the relationship between the organization and those it serves? What does it suggest about how this relationship might be improved?

3. Academic enhancement

- What specific *elements of our course materials* relate to this experience?
- How was I able to *apply* a skill, perspective, or concept related to our academic material?
- What *similarities and differences* are there between the perspective on the situation offered by our academic material, and the situation as it in fact unfolded?
- How does this experience *enhance my knowledge* of a specific reading, theory, or concept? Does it *challenge* or *reinforce* my prior understanding?
- Based on analysis of the experience in light of course material, is the *material (or my prior understanding of it) adequate*? What reasons might there be for any differences or inadequacies? What questions should I ask to put myself in a better position to judge the adequacy of the material?
- Instructor's specific course-related questions.

Articulate Learning

The final step is to articulate learning by answering four questions, in writing:

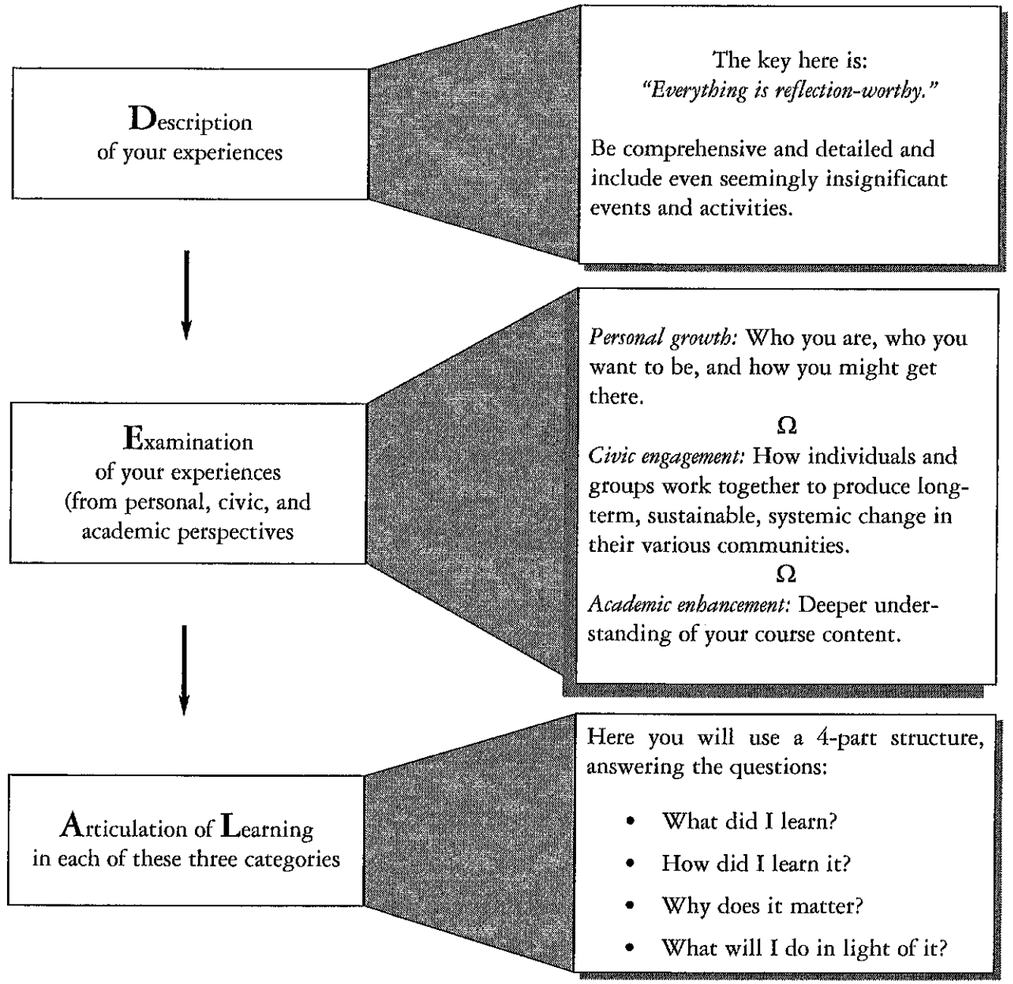
1. What did I learn?
2. How, specifically, did I learn it?
3. Why does this learning matter; why is it important?
4. In what ways will I use this learning; what goals shall I set in accordance with what I have learned in order to improve myself and/or the quality of my learning and/or the quality of my future experiences/service?

Answering these questions provides a way for you, as students, to capture and express your learning, in a form that it can be a guide to future action.

Your course instructor may ask you to articulate learning orally, through a drawing, through the creation of a concept map, and through physical imagery. Still, your instructor knows that critical thinking is perhaps best facilitated through written articulated learning.

After articulating learning, you are expected to continue (or resume) engaging in service. This will allow you to test learning and to implement new goals that you have set for yourself.

FIGURE 5
The DEAL Model



Source: Excerpted from Ash, Clayton, and Moses (under development). Used with the authors' permission.

The ORID Model

ORID is the acronym for *Objective*, *Reflective*, *Interpretive*, *Decisional*. The ORID model provides a progression of questions designed to elicit deep reflective responses to the service experience. The first set of questions is simple and focuses on the concrete experience. The additional questions are more complex and demand deep, critical analysis of the experience. *ORID* may be completed in one or two sessions, or throughout the semester.

Objective

The purpose of the Objective-level questions is to establish the facts. Such questions deal with the concrete experience: What did you do, observe, read, and hear? Who was involved? What happened as a result of your participation?

Reflective

The Reflective-level questions explore initial reactions to the facts generated at the Objective level. The questions address the affective experience; they appeal more to the heart than to the head (including emotions, memories, and associations): How did the experience make you feel? How did your apprehension change or your confidence grow? Do you feel more knowledgeable, successful, or effective? What has been the most enjoyable/frustrating/surprising part of your experience?

Interpretive

The Interpretive-level questions require critical thinking on the experience. Relevant questions explore your cognitive experience; they appeal to the mind (dealing with meaning, value, and significance): What did the experience make you think? How did it change your thinking about a specific issue? What did you learn? What worked, and what did not work? Why was your service needed? What have you learned about the issue and/or the people whom you served? How do these (local) issues tie into global issues? What connections have you made to other topics you have been studying?

Decisional

Questions at the Decisional level help you start the process of incorporating your experience into a new paradigm. You may have a shift in knowledge, awareness, or understanding that affects how you see things and, ultimately, how you act. Questions at this level appeal to future resolutions or commitments, including proposed next steps: What decisions or opinions have you formed? How have your assumptions or preconceived notions changed? Did this experience change the way that you would deal with this issue? What will you do differently next time? How will the experience affect your career path, your personal life choices, or your use of new information, skills, or technology? How will you inform and educate others about what you have learned?

An effective ORID approach is not simply to ask you a set of questions but, rather, to create a discussion prompted by questions at each level, which will put the service experience in proper perspective. You can expect your professor to manage reflection using the ORID model in such as way that it prompts spontaneous, free-flowing discussion in class at the end of service projects. The questions you are asked should serve to provide focus for the discussion and stimulate your participation.

Reflection should be both retrospective and forward-looking: you should consider your service experience with a view to influencing your future action. Furthermore, the learning and development outcomes of reflection activities in a service-learning course should be amenable to assessment and evaluation. Multiple reflection activities will accommodate multiple learning styles. Further, multiple activities will help you and your classmates understand reflection as an indispensable part of the learning process, rather than an isolated activity.

6

Facilitating Reflection

In a reflection session, the facilitator should look not only for acts and facts, but also for views and values.

Chapter Outline

- Group Activities and Instructions for Facilitators
- Tips for Facilitating Reflection

Course instructors and faculty advisors are the principal facilitators of the service-learning reflection process. When planning a course, faculty usually consider whether reflection would be enhanced by including the following elements:

- Opportunities to reflect on expectations before the service begins
- Frequent opportunities for discussion of service
- Frequent classroom application of theory to service experience and vice versa
- Written assignments with increasing demands for analysis as service progresses
- Frequent feedback on journals, projects, and other work products

- Critical reflection that challenges student assumptions[30]

Having specified in the course syllabus the learning goals that are tied to the service project, the instructor gears critical reflection activities to meet those goals. Evidently, there are numerous ways to provide opportunities for reflection in a service-learning course and to facilitate the process. Choices depend on the goals of the course; the class size; what students may contribute in terms of abilities, interests, and experience; and faculty interests and skills. The structure of the class will lend itself to certain reflection activities and not others. Different strategies accomplish different learning objectives. Faculty and facilitators should identify the learning objective first and then match reflection models and methods to the desired outcome.

Students' learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic), as well as their experiences and their level of intellectual development, should be considered as well. Using a variety of reflection activities, rather than a single type, takes into account that different students learn in different ways. Faculty may need to assign additional questions or redesign assignments geared to the developmental levels of students.

The reflection process should actively engage every student. Indeed, every student, as a participant in reflection, should feel included, respected, and safe. They should feel free to share experiences, concerns, and expectations.

The course instructor should select a reflection model or a framework for guiding the reflection (which typically includes a presentation or discussion, or both). The facilitator should create a climate for meaningful reflection and encourage all students in the session to be open-minded. It is important that the facilitator monitor the reflection activity, encourage and model active listening, and offer feedback.

Group Activities and Instructions for Facilitators

Interviews

Break the class into small groups and have group members interview one another about their service experience. One member of each group should take notes and present a summary to the entire class.

Concentric Circles/Concentric Conversations

Divide the students into two groups, with half of them forming a tight circle in the center of the room. Instruct the remaining students to pair up with someone in the circle. Then pose a question for each pair to answer in a few minutes. Couch the questions in the kind of language that will stimulate deep reflection on the service project or experience. Ask either the inner or outer circle to rotate one space to the left or right. Ask another question to prompt discussion by the new pair. This activity can go on for as long as desired, giving students the chance to have one-on-one conversations/discussions with many different individuals.

[30] Eyler and Giles (1999), 192–193.

Poetry-Writing Slam

Throughout the semester, students take turns at writing a short poem about the service project and sharing it with classmates. Alternatively, each student comes up with a metaphor to represent where he/she is in life (or in service) right now. The metaphors are shared in class and are written on flip charts. Divide the students into groups of six. Each group chooses a metaphor, and each student writes for five minutes, using a "stream-of-consciousness" or "interior monologue" approach. Each person chooses two favorite phrases from his/her writing and weaves them together with the phrases from other participants of the group to compose a twelve-line poem.

Ball of String/Yarn Web

Students stand in a circle. One of them has a ball of string/yarn. Taking turns, students throw the ball to one another and say one word that explains what they have learned from the project that they have just completed and what they will bring to the next project. Ask students to also comment on something that they appreciated in the person to whom they are throwing the ball of yarn. Eventually, students should be able to recognize the pattern formed by the yarn. Ask students to identify the pattern and what it represents.[31]

"What Was It Like?"

Each student brings in and passes around an object (something found in nature, a type of food, a book, etc.) and shares how the object is like them or like their service project. Students comment on how they feel about the project, how they contributed to teamwork, and what they learned.

As an alternative, the facilitator brings in a mixture of fruits and nuts and asks students to use them as metaphors to describe their day/week, project, or service experience. Students would first answer the question, "How did it taste?" and then "What would you want it to taste like?"

Group Banner

This activity is recommended for teams or small groups of students. Supply teams with a piece of banner paper and markers and instruct them to depict their experience using a combination of words and pictures. After 10–15 minutes, teams take turns at sharing their banners with the whole class. This serves as a good starting point for fully "processing" the experience.

[31] The pattern is a web, supported by the group. The web represents the interconnectedness of people and suggests that they are all part of the solution to community problems.

Collage

Students make a collage to express how they view their service site and their service experiences. It could include an original cartoon that reflects on something important regarding the service project. As a form of reflection, the Collage is similar to the Group Banner (described above) and "All on the Wall" (described below).

"All on the Wall"

The reflection facilitator puts a large sheet of construction paper or newsprint on one wall or several sheets on all the walls around the classroom. Using the brainstorming technique, students create expressions (words or pictures) about their feelings and what they have learned from the service experience and post them on the wall. The expressions may be posted based on categories, such as a "happy face," "sad face," or "bewildered face." (The paper/newsprint would be labeled accordingly.) Afterwards, the facilitator leads a discussion based on the expressions.

Fish Bowl

Fish-bowl activities allow students to practice a skill while being observed by others. There are different approaches to this activity. Here's one: The facilitator asks five to seven volunteers to stand in a circle in the middle of the room. The remaining students form a larger circle. (Students form a set of concentric circles.) The facilitator asks members of the inner circle a series of open-ended questions about the content of the course and their service experiences, and encourages them to maintain a discussion. If a student from the outer circle has something to add to the discussion, that student joins the inner circle and replaces an inner-circle student. This activity allows students to speak freely about sensitive topics and allows for both internal and external processing, private and public reflection. It is important that a clear set of ground rules be followed: all ideas are respected; replacing a student happens after he/she has finished speaking; and there should be no talking from members of the outer circle.

Quotes in Print

Faculty or reflection facilitators may use quotes as a way to initiate student reflection. One approach is for facilitators to fill a hat with strips of paper containing different quotes. Each student draws a strip of paper and reads the quote to himself/herself. Participants take turns reading their quote aloud, explaining what they think it means, and discussing how it might pertain to the service project.

Another approach is for students to be assigned a page of quotes and instructed to pick one that represents their experience with service learning. (For examples, see Exhibit 14.) Students can then explain why they chose a particular quote. Instructors can assign this as a one-minute paper in class (for reading aloud to the rest of the class upon completion) or as an out-of-class assignment.

Oral Reflection

Oral reflection (reports, presentations, and discussions) should include mostly open-ended questions so that students can express themselves fully. In a discussion session, the facilitator may provide affir-

Exhibit 14

Service Quotes

- Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little. – Edmund Burke
- He who wishes to secure the good of others has already secured his own. – Confucius
- If I can stop one heart from breaking,/I shall not live in vain./If I can ease one life the aching,/Or cool one pain,/Or help one fainting robin/Unto his nest again,/I shall not live in vain. – Emily Dickinson
- Service is what life is all about. – Marian Wright Edelman
- It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself. – Ralph Waldo Emerson
- How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. – Anne Frank
- The fragrance always remains on the hand that gives the rose. – Mahatma Gandhi
- Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country. – John F. Kennedy
- Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve. ... You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. ... You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love. – Martin Luther King, Jr.
- A different world cannot be built by indifferent people. – Horace Mann
- Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has. – Margaret Mead
- We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results. – Herman Melville

mation that supports the reflection. For example, the facilitator may say: "Your thoughts are important"; "You can find a way that works for you when you are ready"; "You will grow at your own pace … You can experiment and explore"; or "You can learn from what doesn't work for you."

Some of the questions should be provocative so that both cognitive and affective learning will be stimulated. Now, here is a bit of advice: "In a reflection session, the facilitator should look not only for acts and facts, but also for views and values."[32] At the same time, it is vital that if there are emotional issues, students get the closure they need by the end of the class session.

In conclusion, faculty and other facilitators should be guided by Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede's "four Cs" of reflection. Facilitators should ensure that reflection is continuous, connected, challenging, and contextualized.

Tips for Facilitating Reflection

- Schedule reflection activities as part of the course; specify it in the syllabus.
- Select the reflection model and methods that will be used.
- Provide criteria for assessing student participation.
- Ensure that every student participates in the reflection.
- Provide opportunities for both individual and group reflection.
- Establish norms of behavior or rules of conduct.
- Clarify the role of students in the process.
- Model effective communication skills (i.e., listening, observing, and asking questions).
- Handle emotional or affective issues carefully.
- Use silence effectively – Students need some silence to reflect internally, some more than others do. Ask the question; then wait.
- Ensure that all participants have an equal opportunity to become involved.

[32]Glenn A. Bowen, *Service Learning in Higher Education: Giving Life and Depth to Teaching and Learning*. (Cullowhee, NC: Coulter Faculty Center, Western Carolina University, 2005), 11.

7

Assessing Student Learning

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

– T. S. Eliot, poet (1888–1965)

Chapter Outline

- Assessing Critical Thinking
- Assessing Student Learning at Three Levels

Effective reflection activities are structured and guided. Reflection that is properly structured and carefully guided will generate rich information for assessing student learning and development. Structured reflection activities conducted on an ongoing basis provide a means for assessing student progress towards service-learning goals and for giving feedback to the student. Since faculty may not be able to observe your service activities directly and in detail, reflection activities, such as presentations and integrative term papers, are good choices for assessment of service learning and for assigning a grade. The quality of your reflection is paramount.

On the next page is an example of a service-learning rubric that uses the "What? So What? Now What?" model and specific criteria for assessing student learning. Your professor may ask you to put additional notes or comments on a separate page. At Virginia Commonwealth University, from which this example comes, art education majors (mentors) tutor children in public school settings and then write weekly journal entries reflecting on the three question areas. (Your professor will probably add "Linkages to Course Content" as a criterion to direct your attention to content, ideas, and discussions raised in your regular classes. In this way, the connection between theory and practice will be emphasized.)

Another approach that your instructor will probably use is to combine Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle with the "What? So What? Now What?" model and assess the reflection accordingly. For example, your instructor might assess your journals using elements of both (see Exhibits 15 and 16).

Exhibit 15

Service-Learning Journal Assessment Rubric

Name _____ Site _____ Grade Level _____ Date _____ Pupil _____

Criteria	Excellent 4	Very Good 3	Satisfactory 2	Needs Work 1	Unsatisfactory 0
Writing Quality (Grammar, syntax, spelling, etc.)	Strong writing style with clear ability to express thoughts and point of view. Excellent grammar, etc.	Good writing style with solid ability to convey meaning. Very good grammar, etc.	Writing style conveys meaning adequately. Some grammar, spelling errors, etc.	Difficulty in expressing ideas, feeling or description. Limited syntax. Need to work on grammar, spelling, etc.	Considerable difficulty in expressing ideas or descriptions clearly. Many grammatical,syntactical, and spelling errors, etc.
What?	4	3	2	1	0
Description of Service-Learning Session	Clear, incisive description that reveals situation dynamics, etc. vividly. Excellent use of adjectives, metaphors, etc. Sensitive, perceptive.	Solid description that fully discloses scene. Some interpretation of events, meanings, etc.	Factual description of sequence of events with little "texture" or interpretation. Clearly not fully developed.	Brief or general statement with few details. Little if any sense of meaning.	Little description at all, or brief, perfunctory statement, glossing over event. The reader has little idea of what transpired.

So What?	4	3	2	1	0
Insights and Understanding	Definite insights into issues and implications of events for self and future. Aware of increased complexity of issues and situation. Makes valid generalizations. Sets goals and plans based on insights.	Has some insights into situation, issues and personal change/growth. Making connections with implications for self. Some sense of complexity.	Positive experience at an intuitive or emotive level. Gains affectively from the "experience" but insights based on conscious reflection are few or simplistic.	Doing the assignment. Neutral experience without personal resonance or impact.	Rigid attitude; resistant to change in established point of view.
Now What?	4	3	2	1	0
Commitment and Challenge	Creates a plan of action or personal challenge based on commitment to child or insights into mentoring.	Creates a 'next step' based on previous events or progress in mentoring.	Committed to child through rapport or personal caring. Notes child's progress.	Somewhat committed to child and/or mentoring. Unchallenged.	Not committed to child or mentoring. Definitely not exerting self beyond present level of commitment.

	4	3	2	1	0
Progress and Leadership Development	Significant growth or personal development. Evidence of synthesis of experience into goals or plan of action, with implications for the future.	Increased sensitivity, change of attitude, and awareness of connections	Steady course. Incremental progress of which the teaching assistant may not be personally aware.	No progress. Repetitious experience and reflection	Losing ground. Bored or frustrated. Negative attitude in reflection.

Source: Adapted from Burton (1999). Used with the author's permission.

Exhibit 16

Service-Learning Journal Review

Student: _____

Course: _____ Instructor: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	STRONG EVIDENCE	SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE	MINIMAL EVIDENCE	NO EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
	3	2	1	0	
CONCRETE EXPERIENCE (What?)					
– Objective Description of Incident/Situation/Experience					
REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION (So What?)					
– Behaviors					
– Ideas					
– Feelings					

Student: _____ Course: _____

Instructor: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	STRONG EVIDENCE	SATISFACTO-RY EVIDENCE	MINIMAL EVIDENCE	NO EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
	3	2	1	0	
ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATON (So What?)					
– Relationship of Theory to Practice					
– Analysis					
ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION (Now What?)					
– New Insights					
– New Ways of Thinking					
– Application to Other Situations					
SUMMARY COMMENTS:					

Reviewer: _____ Date: _____

Source: Center for Service Learning, Western Carolina University. Used with permission.

In assessing student learning, faculty should also assess the reflection component of service learning. Assessing critical reflection requires an assessment of critical thinking. Paul and Elder[33] provide a set of directions for an assignment designed to assess critical-thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills (see Exhibit 17).

Exhibit 17

Assessing Critical Thinking

This assignment is designed to assess your critical-thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. Your answer will be judged for its clarity, relevance, coherence, logic, depth, consistency, and fairness. More specifically, the reader will be asking the following questions:

1. Is the question at issue well stated? Is it clear and unbiased? Does the expression of the question do justice to the complexity of the issue?
2. Does the writer cite relevant evidence, experiences, and/or information essential to the issue?
3. Does the writer clarify key concepts when necessary?
4. Does the writer show sensitivity to what he or she is assuming or taking for granted (insofar as those assumptions might reasonably be questioned)?
5. Does the writer develop a definite line of reasoning, explaining well how he or she is arriving at his or her conclusions?
6. Is the writer's reasoning well supported?
7. Does the writer show sensitivity to alternative points of view or lines of reasoning? Does he or she consider and respond to objections framed from other points of view?
8. Does the writer show sensitivity to the implications and consequences of the position he or she has taken?

Source: Adapted from Paul and Elder (2000).

Jim Bradley outlines three levels of reflection and criteria to evaluate each level (Exhibit 18). The first level of this three-factor rubric (or three-level scoring system) is, in essence, observation; the second, analysis; and the third, synthesis. Your professor might use this rubric to evaluate your journal or paper. The factors will not be consolidated into a single grade because the measurement is not quantitative.

[33] Richard W. Paul and Linda Elder, *Critical Thinking: Basic Theory and Instructional Structures*. (Dillon Beach, CA: Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2000).

Exhibit 18

Criteria for Assessing Student Learning

Level One

1. Gives examples of observed behaviors or characteristics of the client or setting, but provides no insight into reasons behind the observation; observations tend to be one-dimensional and conventional, or unassimilated repetitions of what has been heard in class or from peers
2. Tends to focus on just one aspect of the situation
3. Uses unsupported personal beliefs as frequently as "hard" evidence
4. May acknowledge differences of perspective, but does not discriminate effectively among them

Level Two

1. Observations are fairly thorough and nuanced although they tend not to be placed in a broader context
2. Provides a cogent critique from one perspective, but fails to see the broader system in which the aspect is embedded and other factors which may make change difficult
3. Uses both unsupported personal beliefs and evidence, but is beginning to be able to differentiate between them
4. Perceives legitimate differences of viewpoint
5. Demonstrates a beginning ability to interpret evidence

Level Three

1. Views things from multiple perspectives; able to observe multiple aspects of the situation and place them in context
2. Perceives conflicting goals within and among the individuals involved in a situation and recognizes that the differences can be evaluated
3. Recognizes that actions must be situationally dependent and understands many of the factors which affect their choice

4. Makes appropriate judgments based on reasoning and evidence
5. Has a reasonable assessment of the importance of the decisions facing clients and of his or her responsibility as a part of the clients' lives

Source: James Bradley, A Model for Evaluating Student Learning in Academically Based Service. In M. Troppe (Ed.), *Connecting Cognition and Action: Evaluation of Student Performance in Service-Learning Courses.* (Providence, RI: Education Commission of the States/Campus Compact, 1995), 21. Used with the author's permission.

Your professor might design the reflection requirement (journal or paper) in such a way that it moves you gradually to the third level. Accordingly, your professor will give you appropriate comments based on the ranking (level) that your journal or paper receives.

For example, to improve your analysis, your professor may write these two questions in the margin of your paper: "What factors have contributed to the situation you have outlined? How do the theories we have discussed in class help you understand the situation?"

Your professor will look for evidence, in your journal entries or your paper, of your level of thinking (i.e., reflection) in relation to the learning goals of the service assignment. The higher your level of thinking, the deeper is your level of reflection. In the final analysis, deep reflection strongly indicates deep learning.

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