Quick Sheet: Integrating Reflection into Course Design

This Quick Sheet explores the subject of INTEGRATING REFLECTION INTO YOUR COURSE DESIGN and provides you with an article which more-fully discusses the need for reflection in service-learning. Please click on one of the topic headings to skip to that section. Or, scroll and read the sheet in its entirety. If you would like more information on any of the topics, please contact the Duquesne University Office of Service-Learning.

Reflection Topic Headings:
What is reflection and how should it be structured?
Three forums and frames of reflection
Components of effective reflection
Types of reflection
Classic journal example

What is reflection and how should it be structured?
Bringle and Hatcher define reflection as “the intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives.”

Reflection activities engage students in the intentional consideration of their experiences in light of particular learning objectives, and provide an opportunity for students to:
• Gain further understanding of the course content and discipline
• Gain further understanding of the service experience
• Develop self assessment skills as a life-long learner
• Explore and clarify values that can lead to civic responsibility

According to Reed and Koliba, reflection is more than “touchy-feely,” it provides students with the opportunity to learn from their experiences and can help them to become reflective professionals.

Reflection activities must occur regularly, be embedded in course work, and should be part of your plan for assessing students’ learning.

Of utmost importance is the place reflection occupies within your course design. In order for your students to gain meaning from their community experiences, understand what is expected of their reflections, and fully integrate course topics with their community learnings, you must:
• Implement reflection activities pre, during, and post-service.
• Create reflection activities that are structured and guided… spell out how you would like students to link the course information with their community experiences.
• Provide students with rubrics so that they know how their work will be graded.

Three forums and frames of reflection
There are three forums for reflection:
1. Reflection done alone
2. Reflection done with classmates
3. Reflection done with community partners

There are three time frames for reflection:
1. Pre-service
2. During service
3. Post-service

If you combine these matrixes, you get Janet Eyler’s Reflection Map:

This map is a tool for organizing our thinking about the types of reflection activities that are consistent with what we know about how students can acquire and use complex information and progress in their abilities to identify, frame, and resolve ill-structured problems. The activities which are listed at the intersection of a frame and forum are examples of possible reflection assignments. For a more complete list of assignments, please see the section entitled, “Types of Reflection.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before Service</th>
<th>During Service</th>
<th>After Service</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>Letter to Self</td>
<td>Reflective Journal</td>
<td>Individual paper, film, artwork</td>
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<td>Goal Statement</td>
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<td>With Classmates</td>
<td>Explore, “hopes and fears”</td>
<td>List serve discussions Critical Incident Analysis</td>
<td>Team presentation</td>
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<td>Contrast Expert Views</td>
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<td>With Community Partners</td>
<td>Create contract Needs Assessment</td>
<td>“Lessons learned” (on site debriefing)</td>
<td>Presentation to community partner</td>
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**Components of effective reflection**

The guidelines for effective reflection activities are discussed at length in the attached article. For your convenience, some of the more important points have been listed below:

Effective Reflection Activities…
- Link experience to learning objectives
- Are guided
- Occur regularly
- Allow feedback and assessment
- Include the clarification of values

Guidelines for Facilitating Student Reflection:
- Structured as ongoing aspect of course
- Offered in multiple forms
• Included assessment
• Modeled by instructor
• Connected to course content
• Supported by class content

**Types of reflection**

What can reflection look like?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking:</th>
<th>Writing:</th>
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<tr>
<td>One-on-one conferences with the teacher/leader</td>
<td>Essay, expert paper, research paper, final paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class/group discussions</td>
<td>Project report</td>
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<td>Small group discussion</td>
<td>Learning log – kept daily, weekly, or after each service experience</td>
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<td>Oral reports to group</td>
<td>Guide for future volunteers/participants</td>
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<td>Discussions with community members or experts on an issue</td>
<td>Self-evaluation or evaluation of program</td>
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<td>Public speaking on project</td>
<td>Newspaper, magazine, and other published articles</td>
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<td>Teach material to younger student</td>
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<tr>
<th>Activities:</th>
<th>Multimedia/ Performing Arts:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis and problem solving</td>
<td>Photo, slide show</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information gathering needed to serve or understand project</td>
<td>Scrapbook</td>
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<td>Planning new future projects</td>
<td>Interactive computers</td>
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<td>Allocating program budget</td>
<td>Paintings, drawings, or collages</td>
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<td>Recruiting peers to serve</td>
<td>Dance, music or theater presentations</td>
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<td>Recognition and celebration programs</td>
<td>CD Rom Products</td>
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<td>Simulation or role-playing games</td>
<td>Website Development</td>
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National Youth Leadership Council, 1993

**A Classic Journal Example:**

Three-part journal (also What? So What? Now What?)

Description (What):
A narrative of events, interactions, decisions, successes, problems, and plans. Also, it can include your thoughts and feelings.

Analysis (So What):
The analysis section should establish connections between the service experience and material from the textbook and lectures. You should identify material that you find useful in analyzing and understanding the events in your service experience.

Application (Now What):
This section relates the course material and the service experience to your personal life or larger systemic issues.
This Quick Sheet was developed by the Duquesne University Office of Service-Learning, 2005
Ed. M. Canada. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass New Directions for Higher Education Series,
2001. 35-43.


Reed, J. and C. Koliba. Facilitating Reflection: A Manual for Leaders and Educators. This online
manual was designed for educators and leaders of service groups who have an interest and
a commitment to provide reflection opportunities for students and community partners
alike.