

Service/Community Based Learning

Tip Sheet

Reflection

Reflection uses critical thinking skills to cement the learning that begins with brainstorming and planning a service-learning project. To ensure that students are making cognitive gains, reflection must be incorporated into the entire service-learning experience.

What? Reflection is planned, has objectives, and involves all the thinking skills.

When? Reflection is ongoing. The brain needs several minutes of reflection time to process all new experiences.

Where? Wherever learning is taking place: in the classroom, on a bus, or at the project site.

Who? Reflection is for everyone involved with the service-learning effort, not only the students.

How? Whether individually, in small group, or as a team, be sure to use many different forms of reflection to reach all the different learning styles. It is especially important to note that students need to be taught how to reflect, and should be supported as they learn this new technique.

Following are some reflection ideas that address a range of learning styles:

Write: Personal journals ~ group journals ~ stories ~ poems ~ essays ~ letters to the editor ~ informational brochures ~ newspapers ~ music lyrics

Read: Articles about service ~ books related to the project ~ prose ~ poetry ~ journals ~ data ~ reports about the project

Tell: Class discussions ~ “think, pair, share” ~ discussions ~ debates ~ songs ~ presentations ~ skits ~ cheers ~ dances ~ question-and-answer sessions.

Do: Collages ~ posters ~ photo essays ~ videos ~ service fair displays ~ sculptures ~ scrapbooks ~ interviews ~ skits ~ musical performances ~ storyboards ~ murals ~ doodles ~ mobiles ~ cartoons ~ puzzles