Reflection: Theory & Practical Application
Outline

I. Introduction:
   a. We are glad you are interested in Service-Learning! This is the second in our Service-Learning series, designed to give you a solid foundation in service-learning methods and best practices.
   b. Each module contains references to additional resources to learn more about service-learning theory, best practices and methodology. You may click on any of these links as you move through the module; the links will open in a new window and you can resume the presentation at any time.
   c. Each circle contains a "Stop & Write" prompt. Please take a moment to respond to the prompts by clicking on the link located below the first prompt. A new window will open with one form where you will enter all of your answers. Once you have completed all of the "Stop & Write" activities, click "submit" on the form. Your responses will be reviewed and saved by Service-Learning staff and used as you continue to plan your course.
   d. This presentation will introduce:
      i. reflection theories in service-learning,
      ii. best practices and techniques for reflection,
      iii. strategies for purposeful reflection,
      iv. and methods for planning, assessing & evaluating reflection
   e. So - What is reflection?
      i. Reflection is a structured opportunity for students to critically examine their experiences, observations, and thoughts regarding their service experience.
      ii. Reflection is integral to service-learning; it provides a comfortable environment for students to explore ideas, and critically discuss the impact of their service, and make connections between course material and service experience.
      Reflection is the learning in “service-learning”.

II. Models of Reflection: There are multiple models for reflection in service-learning. The goal of each model is to guide students to specifically analyze and evaluate their service experience.
   a. The Experiential Learning Cycle
      i. Dewey first proposed a cyclical model for experiential education in which the learner prepares for and reflects on each experience.
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iii. Kolb's model (see below) has been further enhanced below by integrating the "What?", "So What?", and "Now What?" reflection prompts developed by Virginia Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) in 1995.

iv. Graph-

1. Experiencing: The activity phase
2. Sharing: Exchanging reactions & observations
   What? Students describe their service experience. These reflections generally include phrases like "I did this, experienced this feeling, saw that...."
3. Processing: Discussing patterns and dynamics
   So What? Students begin making concrete connections between the service experience and the course work. These reflections generally include phrases like, "My initial feelings were..." and "I can now see the connection between...."
4. Generalizing: Developing real-world principles
   Now What? Students critically think about their experience and explore the changes they will make as a result of their newly gained knowledge. These reflections generally include phrases like, "Next time, I will..." and "This process would work better if...."
5. Applying: Planning effective use of learning

b. The ABC Model of Reflection: This model offers three ways that students can reflect on their service experience. Ideally, students will integrate all three elements into their reflection.
   i. Affective:
      1. Students express their thoughts and emotions, and put them into context of their service experience. Generally include phrases like "I think..." and "I felt that..."
      2. Example: "The last time I visited W---- Elementary, I felt much more welcome than the first. This time several of the staff and students
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recognized me and were able to ask more seriously how I was doing. I also knew a few of the kids better and was able to talk to them easier. A few of the girls sat by me, very excited to tell me what they had done in school and at home. I felt happy to see them so excited to tell me about their days and such.”

ii. Behavioral:

1. Students examine their actions throughout the service experience and may explore the reasons behind them. Behavioral reflections will generally include phrases like "I feel that I responded that way because..." and "I was nervous because...."

2. Example: “I did the same thing I did the last time I visited. I sat with the kids at the breakfast tables, walking around to see each table and the kids sitting there. If a child was sitting alone, I went and talked to them until others came too. I helped wash off the table and clean up after the kids headed to class, and was able to talk to the kitchen staff, which was very enjoyable.”

iii. Cognitive:

1. Students connect their experiences to course content, and purposefully refer back to theories or text examples when discussing their service. Reflection in a cognitive context will generally include phrases like "The reading really prepared me for ..." or "I can understand this now that...."

2. Example: “… It’s nice to have a little background from class readings to use as a guide when working with the people in the school. I have seen several examples of how behavior in the school is related to what I’ve read.”


c. Bradley’s Levels of Reflection: In this model, each reflective level progresses towards a deeper and more holistic understanding between course work and service experience.

i. Level One: Students' reflection is egocentric. Typical statements made by students at this level are "I did this, I learned that..."
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ii. Level Two: Students begin to identify perspectives outside their own. Typical statements might be “I began to understand this differently…” or “I realized that not everyone feels the same way…”

iii. Level Three: Students consider a variety of perspectives, and make connections between their service experience, the course work, and its greater social context.


d. Bloom's Taxonomy: Bloom provides six cognitive domains that can be applied to reflection to enhance the connection between the service experience and course material.

i. Knowledge: The ability to recall learned concepts

1. Example: "Identify a theory/concept/model that relates to your service experience."

ii. Comprehension: The ability to interpret, summarize and explain concepts and theories

1. Example: Explain how the previous chapter relates to what you have been experiencing in your service project.

iii. Application: The ability to implement and execute learned theories, methods, or rules

1. Example: "How did you see this theory/concept/model in action in your service experience?

iv. Analysis: The ability to recognize patterns and hidden meanings and to identify parts of a whole

1. Example: "What are some possible reasons for the differences between the course material and your service experience?"

v. Synthesis: The ability to generalize and combine learned knowledge to create new ideas, draw conclusions, or identify relationships

1. Example: What resources and strategies would you use to evaluate the effectiveness of this service project in meeting the needs of your community partner?

vi. Evaluate: The ability to assess and critically examine the validity of theories, concepts and methods

1. Example: "What are the strengths and weaknesses of this theory/model/concept in the context of your service experience? Given
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this evaluation, what would you recommend to improve the relevance of
this theory/concept/model? 


Stop & Write #1:

Review the models presented (Experiential Learning, ABC, Bradley, Bloom’s Taxonomy) and describe
the model that you relate to the most.

III. Best Practices & Techniques

a. Reflection Best Practices

i. Quality reflection should:

1. Be used to help students to clearly connect service experience to course
content.

2. Be clear in terms of expectations and criteria for assessing activities with
an emphasis on the learning gained from the experience, not the service
itself.

3. Include feedback from instructors and community partners.

4. Include opportunities for students to consider and analyze their personal
values.


b. The 4 Cs: Effective Reflection Is:

i. Continuous: Reflection is used as a teaching tool throughout the service-
learning experience and semester. This means that reflection takes place:

1. Pre-service: To guide students to prepare for their service;

2. During service: To help students make curriculum connections and
troubleshoot issues at their site;

3. Post service: To allow students to review and reflect on their academic,
personal, and professional development through the service experience.

ii. Connected: Reflection blends the theoretical concepts with the service
experience to create a holistic understanding of classroom learning objectives.
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iii. Challenging: Reflection should push students to question their perceptions and explore new ideas and alternative viewpoints.

iv. Contextualized: Reflection corresponds in a meaningful way to learning objectives. Reflection methods will vary depending on the service experience and course learning objectives.


c. Techniques of Reflection: Below is a list of possible reflection activities

i. Journals: Students maintain regular journal entries about their service experience.

ii. Formal Writing: Deans (2000) identifies three common types of writing produced in service-learning courses: writing about, for, or with community partners.
   1. Students writing about their experiences in the community most often produce analytical or reflective academic essays.
   2. Students writing for community partners often produce practical documents such as brochures, Web sites, public service announcements, trail signs, and educational curricula.
   3. Students writing with community partners may collaboratively write oral histories, life books, or more complex practical documents such as grant applications.

iii. Group Discussions: Students talk about their service experience with community partners, instructors and fellow students.
   1. Examples of discussion questions
      a. How did course material help you overcome obstacles or dilemmas in the service experience?
      b. How has your understanding of the community issue changed as a result of your service experience? Did the experience contradict or reinforce class material?
      c. Did the experience contradict or reinforce course material?
      d. What would it take to positively impact the situation (from individuals, communities, education, government, etc)?
   2. Additional Resource: "Questions for Discussion or Writing"
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iv. Artistic & Creative Activities: Students use the arts as a tool to foster thought and learning in service-learning.

Stop & Write #2
Think about classes you have taught in the past. How have some of the reflection best practices or techniques been present in your teaching style?

IV. Strategies for Purposeful Reflection

a. "Reflection does not have to be difficult, but it does need to be purposeful and strategic." (Whitney, 2011)

b. Strategies for Quality Reflection Activities

i. Successful reflection activities:

1. Have an identified outcome and are appropriate for the participants;
2. Are connected directly to the service and take place consistently throughout the course;
3. Increase personal commitment to service, and draw "teachable moments" from negative experiences;
4. Actively engage participants in the process of reflection.

IV. Strategies for Continuous Reflection: The following are a few examples of ways to incorporate reflection throughout the semester:

i. Pre-Service

1. Activity Examples:
   a. Case studies
   b. Individual interviews
   c. Direct writing exercises
   d. Readings
   e. Lectures
   f. Letter of introduction to community partners
   g. Project proposals
   h. Role playing

ii. During Service

1. Activity Examples:
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a. Theory application papers
b. Group discussions
c. Free form and structured journaling
d. On-the-Job Training
e. Simulations
f. Case studies

iii. Post-Service
1. Activity Examples:
   a. Community partner interview
   b. Group discussion
   c. Analytic paper
d. Calls to action
e. Project portfolios

d. Bloom’s Taxonomy: Action Words- The following key words can be helpful when developing effective reflection questions
   i. Knowledge: Define, describe, identify, label, list, match, name, outline, recall, recognize, reproduce, select
   ii. Comprehension: Interpret, exemplify, classify, summarize, infer, paraphrase, predict, compare, explain
   iii. Application: Execute, implement, demonstrate, apply, relate, develop, translate
   iv. Analysis: Differentiate, organize, attribute, analyze, compare, contrast, examine
   v. Synthesis: Plan, design, propose, develop, formulate, document, relate, construct
   vi. Evaluation: Assess, compare, evaluate, argue, deduce, validate, conclude

e. Reflection Questions: There are several types of questions that can be used during reflection. These examples can be tied to the reflection models discussed previously.
   i. Video (transcript): “Questions may start out as very broad, like “What if…”, “I wonder why…”, or “Golly gee, could it be that…”. But as teachers become more precise in their thinking, their questions become more detailed and direct, like: “What should I have done differently”? “What can I do next time”? “Why did I react that way”? And “What I have I learned from this”? As you refine your reflective thinking skills, you will be able to answer the questions, solve the problems, or resolve the conflicts. This will help in maintaining a learning
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environment in which each student is able to experience a sense of personal fulfillment. And success is crucial.”

ii. Concrete Experience Questions: Ask for descriptions of specific behaviors, interactions, or facts related to a particular situation.
   1. Example: How did the clients react to ....

iii. Reflective Observation Questions: Ask students to personally reflect on and interpret experiences, offer insights on other perspectives, and/or discuss impacts of experiences
   1. Example: Put yourself in your clients' shoes. What would be their perspective on this project?

iv. Abstract Conceptualization Questions: Ask students to compare, critique, and apply course theory to their service experience.
   1. Example: Explain how our last reading applies to your service experience.

v. Active Experimentation Questions: Ask students to compare, critique, and apply course theory to their service experience.
   1. Example: What would you do differently if you could redo this project?

Stop & Write #3

Brainstorm one question or activity that you might do for each point in the semester (pre-service, during service, and post service).

V. Planning Reflection: Reflection maps are a strategy for organizing reflection for your Service-Learning curriculum. They can be tailored to any type of reflection activity. For example:
   a. Use a map to visualize potential reflection activities throughout the service:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alone</strong></td>
<td>Letter to myself</td>
<td>Structured journals</td>
<td>Reflective essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>With Classmates</strong></td>
<td>Hopes/fears discussion</td>
<td>Theater</td>
<td>Team presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>With Community Partners</strong></td>
<td>Asset mapping</td>
<td>Debriefing</td>
<td>Presentation to Community Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Or to visualize reflection activities for different learning styles:
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before</th>
<th>During</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>“Role of Service” articles</td>
<td>Case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Letter to self</td>
<td>Critical questions essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing</td>
<td>Field data gathering</td>
<td>Oral histories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling</td>
<td>Informal discussion</td>
<td>Oral presentation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stop & Write #4

Develop a Reflection Map for your Service-Learning course. (Or, describe how you might incorporate reflection w/ CP before, during and after service).

VI. Assessing and Evaluating

a. "Without the sense of action to the Debrief, it is often a lifeless, futile exercise (...) The experience can come alive in the Debrief. The experience can be relived. The discussion is not a static, safe, merely cognitive exercise. It has feeling, anger, frustration, accomplishment and fun." (Schoel, Prouty & Radcliffe, 1988)

b. Rubric Examples: It is helpful to know how to evaluate the learning gained as well as the level of student reflections. There are several ways to approach this evaluation. The following are examples of assessment criteria for student reflection using Bloom and Bradley's Models.

i. Bloom's Criteria for Assessing Levels of Reflection: Bloom's criteria can be applied to student reflections to assess LEARNING GAINED from the service experience. For example we can incorporate Bloom's Taxonomy into a rubric:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identify</th>
<th>Apply</th>
<th>Analyze</th>
<th>Evaluate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflection demonstrated student's knowledge by identifying and describing academic concepts that are connected to the service-learning experience.</td>
<td>Reflection demonstrated student's ability to apply academic concepts in the context of his/her service experiences.</td>
<td>Reflection demonstrated student's ability to analyze the relationship between the academic material and his/her service experience.</td>
<td>Reflection demonstrated student's ability to evaluate the relevance of the course material in the context of their service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For example: &quot;This is how I see this theory/concept/model</td>
<td>For example: &quot;It seems that the difference between this</td>
<td>For example: &quot;The strength/weakness of this theory in my service experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exemplary |
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For example: &quot;This experience reminded me of our discussion about....&quot;</th>
<th>in action in my service-learning experience...&quot;.</th>
<th>theory/concept/model and my experience are due to...&quot;</th>
<th>was.... Given this evaluation, I would recommend....&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. For this assessment to be effective, it is important to clearly and effectively communicate the expected learning outcomes, and how students will be assessed.

2. For an expanded Bloom-based rubric, click [here](#).

   ii. Bradley's Criteria for Assessing Levels of Reflection: Bradley’s Model can be used to identify what LEVEL of reflection the students are expressing. This can help you to find ways to help students move to the next level of reflection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student reflection...</td>
<td>Students reflection...</td>
<td>Student reflection...</td>
<td>Student reflection...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focuses on examples of observed behaviors without offering insight into the reasons behind these behaviors.</td>
<td>• Uses both unsupported assumptions and evidence, but is beginning to differentiate between the two.</td>
<td>• Exhibits an awareness and understanding of multiple facets of an issue, including potentially conflicting goals and perspectives of the individuals involved.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• May acknowledge that other perspectives exist, but will generally focus on his/her own personal perspective.</td>
<td>• Can provide a thorough critique from one perspective, but fails to see the broader system in which the aspect is embedded.</td>
<td>• Demonstrates understanding that actions can be situationally dependent.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. For an expanded Bradley-based rubric, click [here](#).

   iii. Additional Resource- For additional examples of service-learning reflection rubrics click [here](#)

VII. Review and Works Cited

   a. Review

   i. Reflection:

      1. Structured and consistent opportunity for students to critically discuss and examine:

         a. experiences,
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b. observations,
c. connections to course material

2. Reflection is the learning in "service-learning"

ii. Models of Reflection

1. The Experiential Learning Cycle: This model depicts the reflection process as an integrative and cyclical event. Most reflection models are variations of this one.

2. The ABC Model of Reflection: This model offers three different ways students can relate to and process an experience:
   a. Affectively
   b. Behaviorally
   c. Cognitively

3. Bradley’s Levels of Reflection: This model offers three levels of reflection. Each reflective level progresses towards a deeper and more holistic understanding of course work and service experience.

4. Bloom’s Taxonomy: Provides another way to examine levels of understanding
   a. Knowledge
   b. Comprehension
   c. Application
   d. Analysis
   e. Synthesis
   f. Evaluation

iii. Best Practices

1. Quality reflection should:
   a. Help students clearly connect service to course content
   b. Have clear expectations for assessment
   c. Focus on learning gained from experience, not the service itself
   d. Include feedback from both instructors and partners
   e. Allow students to consider and analyze their personal values

iv. The 4 Cs

1. Effective reflection is:
   a. Continuous
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v. Techniques of Reflection
1. Journals/logs
2. Direct writing
3. Formal writing
4. Group discussions
5. Artistic & creative activities

vi. Strategies for Continuous Reflection
1. Pre-service reflection should prepare students for their service experience. Students can be prepared through relevant training and readings, and by meeting the community partner.
2. During service reflection is used throughout the semester to help students to concretely connect the service experience with course learning objectives.
3. Post-service reflection guides students as they consider their personal and professional development through their service experience.

vii. Reflection Questions
1. There are four general types of reflection questions:
   a. Concrete Experience
   b. Reflective Observation
   c. Abstract Conceptualization
   d. Active Experimentation

viii. Planning Reflection
1. Reflection
   a. Strategy for organizing and conceptualizing reflection for your Service-Learning curriculum.
   b. Used to incorporate reflection before, during and after service experience
   c. Can be tailored to any type of reflection activity, including mapping elements reflection, and reflection for different learning styles.
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ix. Assessing & Evaluating Reflection

1. Bloom’s Criteria: Can be used to assess the LEARNING GAINED of student reflection.
   a. Identify: Students can identify and relate an academic concept to their service experience.
   b. Apply: Students apply academic concept in the context of their service experiences.
   c. Analyze: Students analyze the relationship between the academic material and their service experience.
   d. Evaluate: Students evaluate the relevance of the course material in the context of their service.

2. Bradley’s Criteria: Can be used to assess the quality of student reflection.
   a. Level 1: Focuses on observed behaviors; may acknowledge that other perspectives exist, but focus on their personal perspective.
   b. Level 2: Can provide a thorough critique from one perspective, but fails to see broader perspectives
   c. Level 3: Exhibits an awareness and understanding of multiple facets of an issue

b. Works Cited


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c. If you have more questions, contact:

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   karabrascia@boisestate.edu

This ends "Reflection: Theory & Practical Application" Additional Service-Learning training
modules are available here: http://servicelearning.boisestate.edu/faculty/new.asp