

SERVICE LEARNING REFLECTION

Whatever the form of the reflection—journals, photos, web sites, performances, discussions, ask the What's.

What did you do? Participants explain simply and clearly what they did. This builds skills in summarizing, presenting facts and information, and explaining processes. For example, "I spent three hours on Tuesday picking up trash in the park."

So what? Participants think about what difference the service made. Add the question of what difference it made for whom: for the community, other people, oneself. This type of reflection builds skills of analysis, critical thinking, and forming opinions. For example, "The park got clean and nice. I found out that people throw away all kinds of things, and there aren't enough trash cans. I don't like picking up trash. Maybe others don't, either. If there was less garbage on the ground, we wouldn't need to clean it up."

Now what? Participants should think about changes or next steps. What might they do differently? What else should happen? This builds skills of making hypotheses, drawing conclusions from evidence, planning, and presenting ideas. For example, "I'm going to try to throw away less stuff on the street. I think we should write a letter and try to get more trash cans in the park, and get them emptied more often."

Reflection and learning is ongoing. Final reflections, presentations, and performances sum it up. Offer options that fit students' different learning styles and your own skills.

- ☐ Keep an ongoing journal like a diary, answering questions throughout project
- ☐ Create a blog
- ☐ Write a letter or e-mail
- ☐ Write a poem or a series of poems that reflect experiences
- ☐ Create a skit showing roles of different participants and perform it for the group or stage it as an event
- ☐ Make a photo journal
- ☐ Create and script a video
- ☐ Create a map with highlighted areas and issues or experiences
- ☐ Represent the experience in music or with songs
- ☐ Hold small group discussions about the project
- ☐ Hold large group discussions
- ☐ Write an article for a newsletter or paper
- ☐ Role-play something that happened during the project that was challenging
- ☐ Stage a debate with different students advocating different positions around the issue

