

Reflective Writing Template

Below is the information to use in your Leo academic portrait service learning reflective writing submission

Please include in your reflective writing:

Name

Community Service Organization

Date(s) of service

Time commitment

persons served

Reflect on your recent experience serving an organization in your community.

Reflective writing should not merely be descriptive writing (telling a story). You should not only tell what happened during your experience, but you should be able to relate this to your future career roles. Other topics for reflection include: what your assumptions and values were in relation to your community project and how these have changed or the social, cultural or economic community factors you experienced and how this relates to your medical education or future medical career.

There is no required length for your reflective writing as long as it fulfills the above description.

Patient confidentiality: If you are submitting your writing for preceptor feedback only, it is acceptable to give details of the patient case. However, if the writing will be more widely distributed or published, please use broader descriptions or combine several cases so that patients cannot be easily identified.

If you need some help getting started, you will find writing prompts below.

- How can health care workers more effectively partner with local agencies to better meet the needs of our communities?
- How do you see yourself participating in your community in the future as a physician based on your recent community experience?
- What assumptions, expectations or biases did you bring to the experience? Have these changed? If yes, how; if not, why not?
- What have you learned about culture, diversity, and social justice as applied to community services?

Reference: Jacoby, B. (2015). *Service-Learning Essentials: Questions, Answers, and Lessons Learned*. San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass.

Reflective Writing Feedback

Student's Name:

Evaluator's Name:

Date of service:

Date of reflection received:

Acceptable levels of reflective writing:

- “Surface: Focuses just on one aspect of a situation. Offer observed characteristics of the service site or behaviors of clients in the setting but provide little or no insight into the reasons behind their observations.”
- “Emerging: Reflection provides a cogent critique from a single perspective, but fails to see the broader system in which the issue or situations embedded and other factors that may make change difficult to achieve.”
- “Deep: Students view situations from several perspectives, demonstrate clarity of reasoning, and place their experiences in broader, nuanced and complex contexts.”

J. Bradley, 1995

Not Acceptable:

- Not reflective, only descriptive account of service participation

Additional Feedback:

Resource for faculty giving feedback on reflective writing.

Resource 9: A Framework for Reflective Writing

Descriptive Writing

This account is descriptive and it contains little reflection. It may tell a story but from one point of view at a time and generally one point at a time is made. Ideas tend to be linked by the sequence of the account / story rather than by meaning. The account describes what happened, sometimes mentioning past experiences, sometimes anticipating the future – but all in the context of an account of the event.

There may be references to emotional reactions but they are not explored and not related to behaviour.

The account may relate to ideas or external information, but these are not considered or questioned and the possible impact on behaviour or the meaning of events is not mentioned.

There is little attempt to focus on particular issues. Most points are made with similar weight.

The writing could hardly be deemed to be reflective at all. It could be a reasonably written account of an event that would serve as a basis on which reflection might start, though a good description that precedes reflective accounts will tend to be more focused and to signal points and issues for further reflection.

Descriptive account with some reflection (Surface)

This is a descriptive account that signals points for reflection while not actually showing much reflection.

The basic account is descriptive in the manner of description above. There is little addition of ideas from outside the event, reference to alternative viewpoints or attitudes to others, comment and so on. However, the account is more than just a story. It is focused on the event as if there is a big question or there are questions to be asked and answered. Points on which reflection could occur are signalled.

There is recognition of the worth of further exploring but it does not go very far. In other words, asking the questions makes it more than a descriptive account, but the lack of attempt to respond to the questions means that there is little actual analysis of the events.

The questioning does begin to suggest a 'standing back from the event' in (usually) isolated areas of the account.

The account may mention emotional reactions, or be influenced by emotion. Any influence may be noted, and possibly questioned.

There is a sense of recognition this is an incident from which learning can be gained, – but the reflection does not go sufficiently deep to enable the learning to begin to occur.

Reflective writing (1) (emerging)

There is description but it is focused with particular aspects accentuated for reflective comment. There may be a sense that the material is being mulled around. It is no longer a straight-forward account of an event, but it is definitely reflective.

There is evidence of external ideas or information and where this occurs, the material is subjected to reflection.

The account shows some analysis and there is recognition of the worth of exploring motives or reasons for behaviour

Where relevant, there is willingness to be critical of the action of self or others. There is likely to be some self questioning and willingness also to recognise the overall effect of the event on self. In other words, there is some ‘standing back’ from the event.

There is recognition of any emotional content, a questioning of its role and influence and an attempt to consider its significance in shaping the views presented.

There may be recognition that things might look different from other perspectives, that views can change with time or the emotional state. The existence of several alternative points of view may be acknowledged but not analysed.

In other words, in a relatively limited way the account may recognise that frames of reference affect the manner in which we reflect at a given time but it does not deal with this in a way that links it effectively to issues about the quality of personal judgement.

Reflective writing (2) (deep)

Description now only serves the process of reflection, covering the issues for reflection and noting their context. There is clear evidence of standing back from an event and there is mulling over and internal dialogue.

The account shows deep reflection, and it incorporates a recognition that the frame of reference with which an event is viewed can change.

A metacognitive stance is taken (i.e. critical awareness of one's own processes of mental functioning – including reflection).

The account probably recognises that events exist in a historical or social context that may be influential on a person's reaction to them. In other words, multiple perspectives are noted.

Self questioning is evident (an 'internal dialogue' is set up at times) deliberating between different views of personal behaviour and that of others).

The view and motives of others are taken into account and considered against those of the writer.

There is recognition of the role of emotion in shaping the ideas and recognition of the manner in which different emotional influences can frame the account in different ways.

There is recognition that prior experience, thoughts (own and other's) interact with the production of current behaviour.

There is observation that there is learning to be gained from the experience and points for learning are noted.

There is recognition that the personal frame of reference can change according to the emotional state in which it is written, the acquisition of new information, the review of ideas and the effect of time passing.

Material developed by Jenny Moon, University of Exeter