

Reflection Activity Ideas

For
Community Service
&
Service-Learning
Projects



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Written & Adapted By:

Jessica Jens, Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Extension, 4-H Youth Development

References Used to Create This Resource:

Americorps Reflection Tool Kit – Northwest Service Academy, Metro Center, Portland.
(<http://nationalservicerresources.org/filemanager/download/615/nwtoolkit.pdf>)

The Free Child Project “Guide for Facilitators: Reflection Activities.”
(<http://www.freechild.org/Firestarter/reflection1.htm>)

Sugerman, D.A., Doherty, K.L., Garvey, D.E., & Gass, M.A. (2000). Reflective learning theory and practice. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

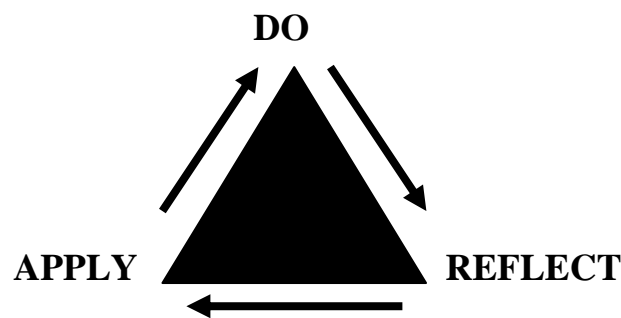
Introduction

Why is Reflection So Important?

Reflection is a key component to effective youth and adult service-learning projects, but it also has important implications for use in other service projects and youth and adult activities. Structured reflection helps participants...

- Consider what they accomplished and learned during an activity.
- Contemplate ways that the experience could be adjusted to improve the outcome.
- Formulate concrete ideas of how they can use their experience in other facets of their lives.
- Share their ideas and feelings with others.
- Communicate the value of their participation with themselves and other participants.

Reflection is also a key component in the Experiential Learning Cycle (or “Learning by Doing” model). This learning model is a researched-based, effective method of structuring positive youth development activities. The Experiential Learning Cycle can be described using the following model.



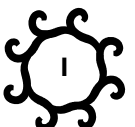
In this model, a participant completes an activity and then reflects on his participation. The reflection helps him formulate how the experience relates to other aspects of his life. He uses this new knowledge by applying it to his life and making appropriate changes in future activities. Once other activities begin, the cycle repeats itself again...and again...and again.

As you can see in this model, reflection is a key component in experiential learning. Not only is it an integral part of debriefing a service project, it can also be an equally powerful tool when incorporated into other activities. For example, reflection activities can increase the educational outcomes for participants when used with the following 4-H activities:

- With camp counselors midway through 4-H camp.
- After a club performance at a theatre arts competition.
- As part of a year-end club banquet to help members reflect about the past 4-H year.
- With a project group after the county fair.
- After a club trip or recreational activity.
- At the completion of a club fundraising activity.
- After the first dress rehearsal of a club performance.

The possibilities for incorporating reflection activities into youth and adult activities are endless. The best part is that the reflection activities presented in this guide are quick, hands-on, and fun for the participants and leaders!

Experiential Learning Model, Pfeiffer, J.W., & Jones, J.E., "Reference Guide to Handbooks and Annuals" © 1983 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.



Tips for Using This Guide

This guide contains directions on how to facilitate 18 different hands-on reflection activities. All the activities are centered on active participation by the youth and/or adult participants. Additionally, many of the activity descriptions include examples of reflection questions that you can use to guide a reflective group discussion.

Before you decide on an activity to use, think about the experience the participants will be reflecting on, your desired outcome(s) of the reflection process, the number of participants, how long you will have to facilitate the reflection activity, and your comfort and experience level in leading a group in a reflective process. Use your answers to these questions to pick out an activity that best fits your needs.

Don't be afraid to adapt the activities! Maybe you can think of more appropriate reflective questions for your group, or you may want to try and combine one or more of the activities. The possibilities are endless! As you begin to feel more comfortable in facilitating reflective activities and have the opportunity to see the positive effects of reflection on group participants, you will have a better grasp of how to adapt these and other activities to meet you and your group's needs. Good luck and have fun!

Where Can You Find More Information?

Keep your reflection activities new and exciting for the participants! Information on reflective activities and leading groups along the road to effective reflection can be found in a number of sources. Below are just a few you may want to consider investigating.

Information on Experiential Education & Facilitating Reflection

Sugerman, D.A., Doherty, K.L., Garvey, D.E., & Gass, M.A. (2000). *Reflective learning theory and practice*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Diem, K. G. (2001). The learning by doing approach to life skill development. Rutgers Cooperative Research and Extension. Fact Sheet #FS891. Available on line: <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pid=fs891>

Experiential Learning & Experiential Education: Philosophy, Theory, Practice & Resources
<http://www.wilderdom.com/experiential/>

Group Facilitation & Processing: in Experiential Education, Outdoor Education & Adventure Training
<http://www.wilderdom.com/facilitation.html>

New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series. *Learn by Doing the 4-H Way*. Available on line:
<http://www.rcrc.rutgers.edu/pubs/pdfs/4h/e148/447-454.pdf>

Additional Reflection Activities

Americorps Reflection Tool Kit – Northwest Service Academy, Metro Center, Portland.
<http://nationalservicelearning.org/filemanager/download/615/nwtoolkit.pdf>

The Free Child Project “Guide for Facilitators: Reflection Activities.” <http://www.freechild.org/Firestarter/reflection1.htm>

Sugerman, D.A., Doherty, K.L., Garvey, D.E., & Gass, M.A. (2000). *Reflective learning theory and practice*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Information on Service-Learning

National Service-Learning Clearing House: The National Site for Service-Learning Information
<http://www.servicelearning.org/>

Stafford, J, Boyd, B., & Lindner, J. (1997). *Community service versus service-learning: which is better for 4-H?* Journal of Extension. 41(6). Available on line: <http://www.joe.org/joe/2003december/a1.shtml>

Community Service Ideas. Ohio State University Extension. <http://vinton.osu.edu/4h/commser.htm>

Mantooth, L.J, & Hamilton, M.P. University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service. *4-H Service Learning Standard and Best Practice Guide*. Available on-line: <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/4H/sos/acrobat/4-HServiceLearning.pdf>



Line Up!



Material Needed: A rope or item to make a “line” on the ground...or just imagine one!

Ideal Group Size: 5+; for larger groups, just make the “line” longer.

Description: In this activity, you read several statements about the project the youth just completed and ask the youth to place themselves on the “line” in a continuum based on if they “agree” or “disagree” with the statement.

First explain how the activity works to youth:

“This line represents how you feel about the statements I’m going to make. This end of the line (point to one end) is the “strongly disagree” end of the line and this end of the line (point to the other end) is the “strongly agree” end of the line. The middle of line is “neutral.” I will read a statement and you need to place yourself on the line depending how much you agree or disagree with the statement”

Give the group a practice statement such as “I really like chocolate ice cream.” Ask them to place themselves on the line based on how much they agree or disagree with this statement. If they are having troubles understanding the directions, try out another practice statement such as “I like to be outside.” Once everyone understands the directions, move on to the reflection statements for the activity that you just completed.

After each statement, you can ask individuals to explain why they chose to stand where they did on the line. Another option is to have everyone turn to the people around them and explain to each other why they chose to stand where they did on the line. Emphasize that there are no “right” or “wrong” responses to each statement...or there is no “right” or “wrong” place to stand on the line.

Here are some example statements that can be used for most activities:

1. *I enjoyed/had fun participating in this service activity.*
2. *I learned a lot from participating in this service activity.*
3. *I would participate in this type of service activity again.*
4. *I have a good idea for a different service activity that our group could do.*
5. *I will go home and participate in more service activities because of the experience I had in this activity.*

Here are some example statements that are appropriate after an environmental stewardship activity:

1. *Humans can positively affect the environment.*
2. *Humans can negatively affect the environment.*
3. *I will try to limit my impact on the environment.*
4. *I feel that I helped out nature and our natural resources through my participation in this activity.*
5. *I have ideas about ways I can do environmental stewardship projects at home.*

Pass the Ball

Material Needed: Any soft object that can be tossed from one participant to another

Ideal Group Size: 5–15

Description: In this activity, the group sits in a circle and you facilitate a discussion about what the youth learned by participating in the service activity. A soft object is tossed around the circle. Who ever has the object is the one that can talk. Many times youth are more willing to participate and answer the questions because they want to be able to hold and toss the object. The “cooler” and “neater” of an object you can use, the better – funky, squishy animals and objects work particularly well.



First explain how the activity works to the youth. Ask them to sit (or stand) in a circle. “I’m going to ask a question. If you’d like to answer raise your hand and I’ll pass you the ball (or whatever object you have). Then once you are done you can pass the ball to someone else that would like to answer the same question.”

When you are ready to ask a different question, ask that the object be tossed back to you. After the youth answer each question, you can take time to summarize what they said or expand on the thoughts they shared.

Here are some example questions that can be used for most activities:

1. *What did you like best about this service activity?*
2. *What did you like least about this service activity?*
3. *What did you learn by participating in this service activity?*
4. *What are two or three words you can use to describe how you feel about this service activity?*
5. *What are some other service activities that you would like to do?*
6. *Why was it important that we worked together to complete this service activity?*
7. *What, if anything, will you do differently at home because of the experiences you had while participating in this service activity?*
8. *Would you like to participate in this service activity again? Why or why not?*
9. *If we did this service activity again, what could we do to make it better?*

Beach Ball Reflection



Activity Name: Beach Ball Reflection

Material Needed: An inflatable beach ball. Before the activity, use a permanent marker to subdivide the beach ball into 10-20 sections. In each section, write a reflection question (see sample questions below).

Ideal Group Size: 10–40

Description: In this activity, a beach ball is passed around between the participants who are standing in a circle. This ball has a number of different reflection questions written on it. After three “bumps” of the beach ball, the participant who has the ball reads the question that their right thumb is on. The participant then answers the question. The ball is continually passed around the circle until all the participants have the opportunity to answer at least one question.

First, ask the participants to stand in a circle and explain how the activity works. “This beach ball has lots of different questions on it relating to the service project we just completed. We will bump (or pass) this ball back and forth around the circle. After the ball has been hit three times, the person who catches it next will read the question that their right thumb is on. That person then has the opportunity to answer the question, or they can “phone a friend” and ask someone else to answer it. We will continue passing the ball back and forth until everyone (who wants to) has had an opportunity to answer a question.”

Another option is to give all participants a chance to answer the question once it is read. As the facilitator, you may choose to expand or summarize answers to help the participants in their reflection.

General Questions for Most Service Projects:

1. *What did you like best about this service activity?*
2. *What did you like least about this service activity?*
3. *What did you learn by participating in this service activity?*
4. *What are some other service activities that you would like to do?*
5. *Why was it important that we worked together to complete this service activity?*
6. *What, if anything, will you do differently at home because of the experiences you had while participating in this service activity?*
7. *Would you like to participate in this service activity again? Why or why not?*
8. *If we did this service activity again, what could we do to make it better?*

Questions for Environmental Stewardship Projects:

1. *What can you do to help protect the environment?*
2. *What is one negative way humans affect nature?*
3. *What is one positive way humans affect nature?*
4. *Why is it important for people to help the environment?*
5. *How did today’s project help the environment?*

Fun, Random Questions:

1. *What is your favorite type of ice cream?*
2. *If you could go anywhere on vacation, where would it be?*
3. *What time do you get out of bed on the weekends?*

Quiz Show

Material Needed: Nothing!

Ideal Group Size: 20 +

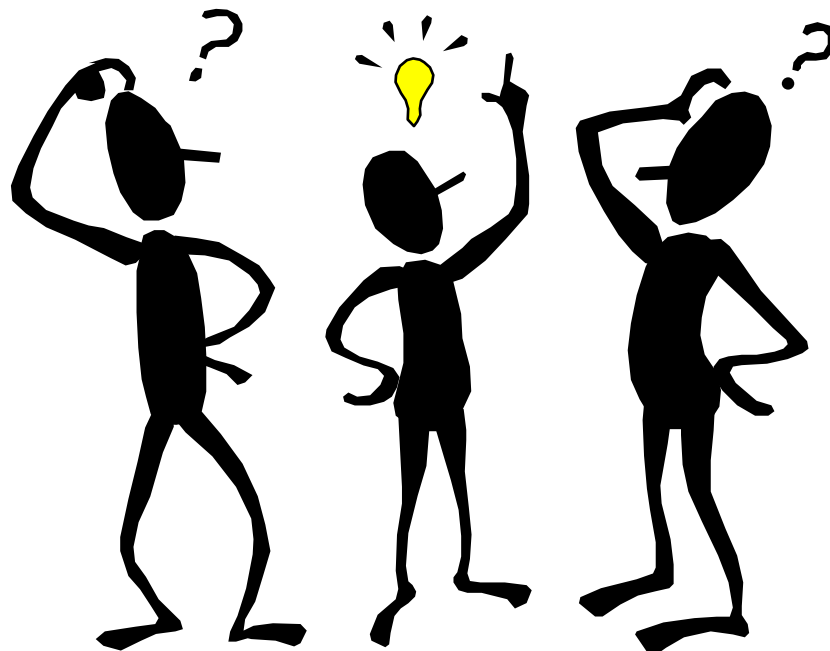
Description: In this activity, the participants are divided into teams. The facilitator poses a series of questions to the teams. The first team who has an answer to the question “buzzes” in and gives their answer. Other teams can then “buzz” in and answer the question also.

First separate the large group into four to six small subgroups and explain the directions. “This activity is like a quiz show. First I need each small group to come up with a “buzzer” noise. (Give the groups a minute to come up with a buzzer noise such as mooing, beeping, or screaming a word.) I will read a question and then each group needs to work together to come up with one answer. When your group has an answer, make your “buzzer noise” and I will call on you. The first group to make their buzzer noise will be called on first. After they are done giving their answer for the question, other groups may buzz in as well. The catch is that a group may not repeat an answer that was given by a group who went before them. We will continue doing this until I have read and you have answered all of the questions.”

As a facilitator, you may choose to summarize and/or expand the answers given for each question. This will help the participants reflect on the service activity.

Here are some example questions that can be used for most activities:

1. *What did you like best about this service activity?*
2. *What did you like least about this service activity?*
3. *What did you learn by participating in this service activity?*
4. *What are some other service activities that you would like to do?*
5. *Why was it important that we worked together to complete this service activity?*
6. *What, if anything, will you do differently at home because of the experiences you had while participating in this service activity?*
7. *Would you like to participate in this service activity again? Why or why not?*
8. *If we did this service activity again, what could we do to make it better?*



Sculpting Your Thoughts



Material Needed: A chunk of sculpting material for each participant

Ideal Group Size: 3–10

Description: In this activity, the participants take time to quietly reflect about the service activity and sculpt their feelings and thoughts with the sculpting material. Each participant then has the opportunity to share his/her sculpture and reflections about the service activity with other group members.

First, gather the participants together and ask them to reflect on their experiences during the service activity. Use some prompting questions to guide their thoughts:

1. What did the group accomplish during this service activity?
2. What impact did your work and contribution have on the community?
3. What did you learn during the service activity?
4. What effect did your participation in this service activity have on you?

After the participants have had a couple of minutes to reflect on the service activity, hand-out sculpting material to each participant. Ask them to sculpt a form that represents the service activity. Their sculpture can represent what they accomplished during the activity or what effect their participation had on them. Re-state some of the initial reflection activities to help them along.

When all participants have completed their sculptures, ask each person to share and explain their sculpture. When all participants have had a chance to share, facilitate a reflection discussion around the participants' comments and the initial reflection questions.

Graffiti

Material Needed: Multiple sheets of large blank paper (flip chart paper works well) and markers or crayons

Ideal Group Size: 3–15

Description: In this activity, participants use pictures and words to reflect on the service activity. Large pieces of paper are posted on walls or on tables where the participants are encouraged to use markers or crayons to reflect on the service activity. The final sheets of “graffiti” are used to facilitate a group reflective discussion.



First, gather the participants together and ask them to reflect on their experiences during the service activity. Use some prompting questions to guide their thoughts:

1. What did the group accomplish during this service activity?
2. What impact did your work and contribution have on the community?
3. What did you learn during the service activity?
4. What effect did your participation in this service activity have on you?

After the participants have had a couple of minutes to reflect on the service activity, move them to the area where the paper is posted and hand out markers/crayons to them. Explain that all participants should draw pictures or write words on the paper that represent the service activity – either what they accomplished during the activity or how the activity affected them personally. Restate some of the initial reflection activities to guide them if they need help. Get out of their way and let them doodle and write all over the paper.

When all participants have finished, collect the markers/crayons and place the paper(s) in a place where everyone can view them. Ask the participants to describe what they see on the paper. Ask them if they can answer any of the initial reflection questions (restate the questions one at a time) by looking at the “graffiti.”

Show & Tell

Material Needed: None – the participants bring objects from home.

Ideal Group Size: 3–20

Description: This activity is most appropriate for groups that reflect on their service activity several days after the activity is complete. In this activity, each participant is asked to bring an object from home that represents the service project – either what the group accomplished during the activity or how the activity affected them personally. A reflection conversation is facilitated when each participant shares their object with the group.

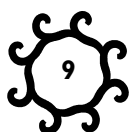
At the end of the service activity, explain the directions to the participants. “When you get home, I would like each of you to find an object that you can bring to next month’s 4-H meeting. The object should somehow represent either what we accomplished together during this service activity or how you were personally affected by your participation in this service activity. At next month’s meeting, each of you will be asked to share your object with us and explain why you picked it.”

At the reflection activity, gather the participants in a circle and explain the directions. “Thank you for bringing your objects to this meeting! We will go around the circle and each person will have the opportunity to show their object and explain why they felt it represents the service activity.”

When all the participants have had a chance to share, a short reflection discussion may be facilitated to help summarize the participants’ comments or bring forth ideas that may have not been shared.

Here are some example questions that can be used for most activities:

1. What did you like best about this service activity?
2. What did you like least about this service activity?
3. What did you learn by participating in this service activity?
4. What are two or three words you can use to describe how you feel about this service activity?
5. What are some other service activities that you would like to do?
6. Why was it important that we worked together to complete this service activity?
7. What, if anything, will you do differently at home because of the experiences you had while participating in this service activity?
8. Would you like to participate in this service activity again? Why or why not?
9. If we did this service activity again, what could we do to make it better?



We're All Connected

Material Needed: A ball of yarn or string

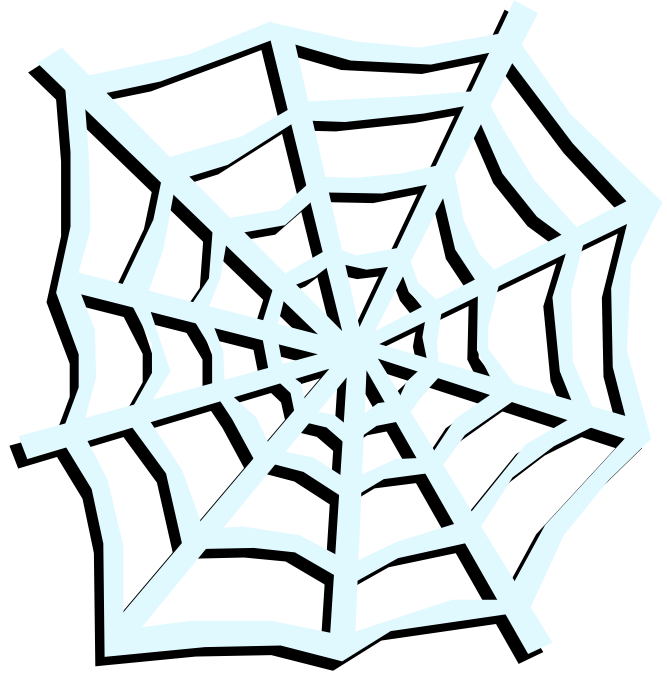
Ideal Group Size: 10–20

Description: In this activity, participants answer reflection questions about the service activity as they pass a ball of yarn back and forth across the circle. A “web” is formed by the yarn which helps the participants see how they are all affected by each other and how together they can make a big difference in the lives of others.

First, gather the participants in a circle and explain the directions. “I am going to ask a series of questions to you. Two people will have an opportunity to answer each question. When you answer a question, you will be passed the ball of yarn. When you have the yarn ball, you should hold onto the end of the yarn and toss the ball – leaving a trail of yarn behind the ball. In this way, we will make a “web” of yarn between all of us.”

Ask the first question and while holding onto the end of the yarn, toss the ball to a participant (preferably across from you) and ask them to answer the question. Depending on group size, and the number of reflection questions you would like to include, you can change the question after each person or allow multiple participants to answer each question.

Once the “web” is complete, ask the participants to pull the yarn taut, then pick up one section of the web and “pluck” it. Ask the participants if they all could feel that. Most likely, the vibration will be felt by all participants. Use this example to illustrate how we are all interconnected and our actions can positively or negatively affect many other people. Ask one person to drop their part of the yarn. This illustrates that if even one participant was not involved in the service activity, the result would have been different. Each person’s contributions make a big difference!



Here are some example questions that can be used for most activities:

1. What did you like best about this service activity?
2. What did you like least about this service activity?
3. What did you learn by participating in this service activity?
4. What are two or three words you can use to describe how you feel about this service activity?
5. What are some other service activities that you would like to do?
6. Why was it important that we worked together to complete this service activity?
7. What, if anything, will you do differently at home because of the experiences you had while participating in this service activity?
8. Would you like to participate in this service activity again? Why or why not?
9. If we did this service activity again, what could we do to make it better?

Before & After

Material Needed: A paper plate for each participant and markers or crayons

Ideal Group Size: 3–30

Description: This is a good project for younger youth (pre-K through 3rd grade). In this activity, the participants reflect on the difference they made by completing the service activity. Through drawing pictures on both sides of a paper plate, the participants will illustrate the “before” and “after” status of the service activity.

First, gather the participants together and hand-out one paper plate to each person. Ask the participants to use the markers or crayons to draw a picture of the environment or situation before they completed their service activity on one side. Then, ask the participants to draw a picture of the environment or situation after they completed their service activity on the other side. The second picture should illustrate the impact they had through their service activity.

When all the participants are completed, ask each person to share their pictures with the group and explain why they chose to draw what they did.

Five Senses

Material Needed: Nothing!

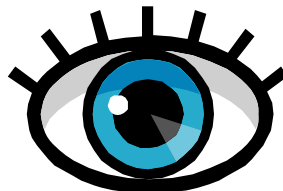
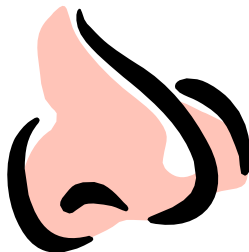
Ideal Group Size: 3–15

Description: This is a good project for younger youth (pre-K through 2nd grade). In this activity, participants are asked to reflect on the service activity through their five senses.

First, gather the group together and ask them to form a circle. Ask the participants the following questions and allow each participant a chance to answer the question. If desired, a soft object can be passed around the group so that the only person who is talking is the one holding the object.

Five Senses Reflection Questions:

1. *Sight: What did you see during the service activity?*
2. *Smell: What did you smell during the service activity?*
3. *Hearing: What did you hear during the service activity?*
4. *Taste: What did you taste during the service activity?*
5. *Feeling: What did you feel during the service activity?*



Charades or Pictionary

Material Needed: Nothing for charades; paper and writing utensils for Pictionary.

Ideal Group Size: 5-15

Description: This is a fun game type activity that can be used with a small group of participants. Each participant has the opportunity to either act out (charades) or draw (Pictionary) a depiction of their answer to a series of reflection questions. You can choose to facilitate this activity as a “charades” activity or a “Pictionary” activity, or both. If you choose to facilitate this activity in the form of “Pictionary,” make sure you have large sheets of paper and markers available for the participants.

First, gather the group into a circle. Ask the group if they know how to play “charades” (or “Pictionary”). Explain that you are going to pose a question to the group to help them reflect on the good work they accomplished during their service project. Each participant should think of an answer to the question, but not share that answer with anyone else. Once time has passed for the group to reflect on the posed question, explain that you will ask for a volunteer to act out (or draw) their answer for the group. It is then the group’s job to guess the participant’s answer.

As the facilitator, you can give each participant a turn to act (or draw) their answer for each reflection question posed, or you can ask for one to two participants to act (or draw) their answer for each reflection question posed. Just make sure to rotate participants so everyone has a turn.

Here are some example questions that can be used for most activities:

1. *What did you like best about this service activity?*
2. *What did you like least about this service activity?*
3. *What did you learn by participating in this service activity?*
4. *What is one word you can use to describe how you feel about this service activity?*
5. *What are some other service activities that you would like to do?*
6. *What, if anything, will you do differently at home because of the experiences you had while participating in this service activity?*
7. *If we did this service activity again, what could we do to make it better?*

Group Photo

Material Needed: Nothing!

Ideal Group Size: 3-50

Description: This is a short activity that can prelude a formal reflection discussion. It is a good activity to help the participants begin to reflect on what they accomplished in their service project.



Gather the participants in a group and ask them to think about the service activity they completed. Explain to the participants that they are going to create a living “snap shot” of their service project. Ask for one volunteer to start the photo by striking a pose that illustrates their involvement in the service project. After the first participant finds their pose ask another person to join on to help “build” the living snap shot. Continue in this manner until everyone has a place in the photograph. Once everyone is in place, use a real camera to take a group photo!

For a more in depth reflection experience, follow this activity with another reflection activity such as “pass the ball,” “beach ball reflection,” or “we’re all connected.” (See additional Reflection Activity Ideas for directions to these activities.)

Service Skit

Material Needed: Nothing

Ideal Group Size: 8-50

Description: This is a great reflection activity to facilitate with a group if you have a longer amount of time set aside for reflection (30 minutes to one hour).

Gather the participants together and split them into groups of three or four. Ask each group to reflect on the service project they just completed. Their task is to portray their service experience through a skit. Give each group 10 minutes to plan what they will do and up to five minutes to share their skit with the rest of the group.

After each presentation, facilitate a group discussion with all the participants. The discussion should include reflection questions and include an opportunity for the “audience” to share reactions to the presented skit, give suggestions for effective future projects, and give positive feedback to the actor/actresses.

Rap or Rhyme

Material Needed: Nothing!

Ideal Group Size: 3-50

Description: This reflection activity allows participants to work in small groups to create a rap or rhyme about the service project they completed.

Gather the participants together and divide them into small groups of three to four. Give students 10 minutes to write a rap or rhyme about their service experience. The groups must incorporate all of their members into the production.

After each presentation, facilitate a group discussion with all the participants. The discussion should include reflection questions and include an opportunity for the “audience” to share reactions to the presented rap or rhyme, give suggestions for effective future projects, and give positive feedback to presenting group.

Group Poem

Material Needed: A piece of paper and a writing utensil.

Ideal Group Size: 5-15

Description: This is a quiet reflection activity that has the potential to create a wonderful group poem about the completed service activity.

Gather the participants together. Circulate a piece of paper around your group with the title across the top “For Love of Service” (or other appropriate title). Ask one participant to write an opening line to the poem, or the facilitator may write the opening line. Encourage each student to write a line in response to the previous until everyone has had the opportunity to add to the poem. When finished, have a volunteer read the work to the entire group, and then discuss it.

The resulting poem can be shared in newsletters, with any community organizations that partnered in the service project, or posted in a location that participants can read and remember their contribution through the service project.

You may want to combine this project with another reflection idea such as “Sculpting Your Thoughts.” This will provide participants a focus while each group member is writing their line of the poem.





Show Me Your Hand!

Material Needed: Nothing!

Ideal Group Size: 2-25

Description: This reflection activity can be used as a quick check-in with all the participants. It can be utilized to quickly gauge what each group member is learning, understanding, and feeling about the activity.

Gather the group into a circle. Ask a question, such as “how was your communication in this activity” or “how well did we work together as a team?” Then ask each participant to “rate” their answer to the question. A “one” would represent “not very good at all” and a “five” would represent “awesome!” As the participants think of their answer, they can hold up their fingers (1-5) to illustrate their feelings.

You can also ask for a “thumbs up,” “thumbs down,” or “thumbs sideways” response. In this situation, the “thumbs up” response would indicate agreement or a positive reaction, a “thumbs down” response would indicate disagreement or a negative reaction, and “thumbs sideways” response would indicate a neutral response.

To expand the activity, participants can be asked why they chose their response. Or, asked what could increase their response (make all five fingers stand up or turn that thumb down to a thumb up). Remember that many gestures have different meanings in different cultures. Make sure to clearly explain what each hand sign stands for so that there is not any confusion between participants and unintentional meanings associated with each gesture.

Mr. (or Mrs.) Machine

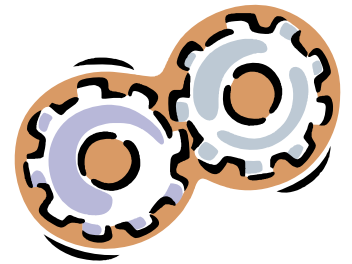
Material Needed: Nothing!

Ideal Group Size: 5-15

Description: This fun activity helps participants make a metaphorical connection between their experience and a machine and also practice their drama skills!

Have the group sit in a circle. Explain that you want the group to think of themselves as some type of a machine (a car for example) in regards to the experience you are debriefing. Explain that you’d like everyone to think about this machine (in our example, the car) and pick out one part of the machine that they feel is similar to their role in the experience. (In our example, it could be the horn, the engine, or maybe even the flat tire!)

After giving the participants a few moments to think of an idea, ask for a volunteer to explain what part of the machine she was and why she chose that part. After the explanation is finished, have that person enter the middle of the circle and act out what part of the machine she chose. Ask that person to stay in the center of the circle. As each successive person speaks, he enters the circle and adds on to the machine. At the end of the activity, everyone will be in the middle of the (now invisible) circle. One last time, have the entire group act out the machine they created.



The Evolving Evaluation



Material Needed: Flip chart paper and markers

Ideal Group Size: 15-50

Description: This is a more formal evaluation/reflection activity that works well for groups of older youth and adults. It helps the group leaders learn what the participants felt were the most important parts and learning points of the activity or lesson. The primary value of this activity is it allows the participants to create the topics and discuss what they feel is important. The topics chosen and the depth of discussion will often surprise the facilitators.

Gather the group together and explain that they are going to have an opportunity to expand on what they learned through the activity or lesson and also pose questions to other group members. Allow individuals several minutes to think of a specific topic (in regards to the project they completed or new ideas learned) they'd like to discuss further with the other group members. When a person comes up with a question or discussion topic, ask them to write it on a piece of flip chart paper. Depending on the group size, allow two to four people to come up with topics. Post the pieces of flip chart paper around the room so everyone can view them.

For example, if the group organized a countywide food drive, participants may ponder questions and topics such as: how could the number of donated items be increased in future years; did we reach all targeted populations in the county; was the project a success; or was it worth our time to complete this project? This reflection activity also works very well for more formalized learning lessons, such as an officer training session. In this example, participants may ponder questions and topics such as: how do you get adults to stop talking during the meeting; why did you want to become a club officer; what do you like best about being a club officer; or what is your greatest challenge in being a club officer?

Ask each participant to decide which question/topic they would like to discuss further and direct them to go stand by that piece of paper. The participants who created each topic/question will facilitate the discussion around their topic/question. Give each small group about 10 minutes to discuss their topic/question. Group ideas should be jotted down on the flip chart paper. At the end of the time allowed, a spokesperson for each small group then reports their ideas back to the entire team. If there is time and interest, the leader can offer another round of topics for discussion.

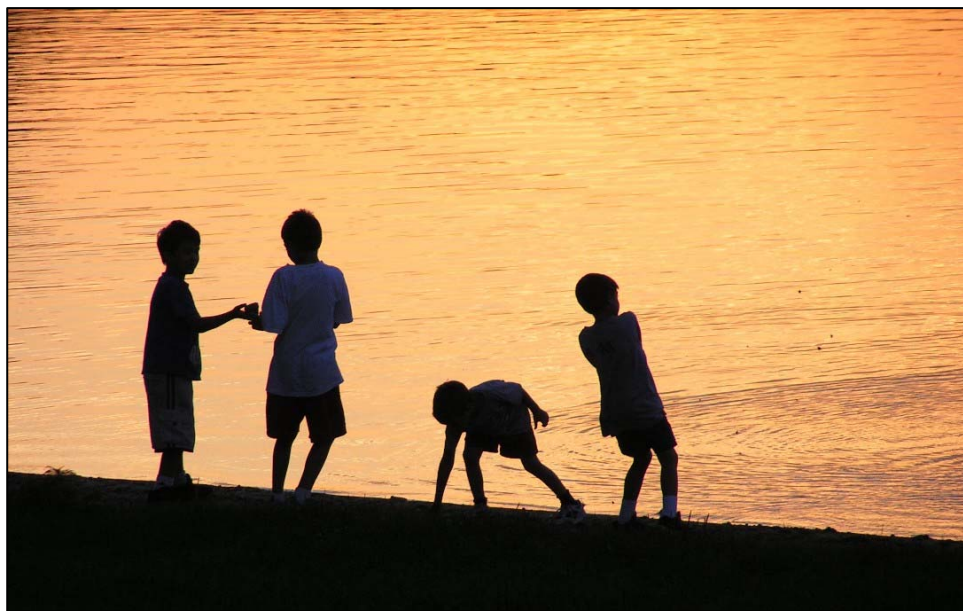
For more resources to help you strengthening your local 4-H club, please visit the Wisconsin 4-H Community Club Central Website at:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/index.cfm>



The University of Wisconsin-Extension 4-H Youth Development Program, in collaboration with the following groups, has provided this guide to you:

**Strengthening the Vitality of 4-H Community Clubs
2006-07 Work Team
&
UW-Cooperative Extension Service-Learning Committee**



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