

Using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle, here are some useful guiding questions which you can give your students to guide them to reflect more effectively on their service-learning experiences:

1. Description: What happened?

- What did you do?
- What did other people do?
- What did you observe?
- Who else was there?
- In what ways did your team help you?
- What issue was being addressed?
- What were your initial expectations?
- What was your role at the community site / in your team?
- How were the responses from the service recipients?
- How did the service end? Was the service complete or incomplete?

2. Feelings: What were you thinking and feeling?

- How were you feeling when the event started?
- How did you feel and what did you think during the experience?
- How did you feel and what did you think after the experience?
- Did you hear or feel anything that surprised you?
- What did you think you performed the best?
- What did you like / dislike about the experiences?
- How was your experience different from what you expected?
- How were you feeling when you worked with your team?
- Did any teammate surprise you? How and why?
- Did anything about your community involvement surprise you? If so, what and why??
- What did you think about the recipients' situation?
- What was your first impression of the recipients?

3. Evaluation: What were good and bad about the experience?

- What went well?
- What didn't go well?
- Why didn't your plan work?
- How did you react to the situation? How did other people react?
- How is the service experience connected to your academic knowledge?
- What are the successful elements of your team?
- Are there any improvements that could have been made to the teamwork? If so, what?

4. Analysis: What sense can you make of the situation?

- Why did your clients or teammates behave in the way they did?
- Why did you behave in the way you did?
- What ideas or theories are you aware of which are applicable to this situation?
- Do these theories help you make more sense of what happened?
- Could you use these theories to improve this aspect in the future?
- What did you learn about the community that you served? And why?
- What did you learn about the people that you served? And why?
- What did you learn about yourself?

5. Conclusion: What else could you have done?

- How could this have been a more positive experience for everyone involved?
- How, specifically, has the community benefited?
- How has your understanding of the community changed as a result of your participation in this project?
- What factors may have impacted upon the clients' views or experiences of the project?
- How does this project address their needs?
- Did you learn a new skill or clarify an interest?
- Talk about any disappointments or successes of your project. What did you learn from these?
- How do your experiences relate to your personal development?
- What did you learn about your teammates?
- Did you realise any strengths or shortcomings about yourself?

6. Action plan: If it arose again, what would you do?

- What do you need to do in order to be better prepared to face this experience in the future?
- Even if the experience was positive and you did well, in which areas can you improve?
- What specific steps do you need to take in order to achieve the suggested improvements?
- What additional skills and knowledge do you need to develop?
- How could your team be improved? (e.g. work distribution, re-arrange the role during the services)
- What information can you share with your peers or the community?
- How can you continue your involvement with this group or social issue?