



## **What Makes a Project Service-Learning?**

By Melynda Conner, M. A., High Impact Practice Specialist  
Office of Student Success, TBR – The College System of Tennessee

Community service and volunteerism activities do not necessarily produce learning by themselves. If we want these projects to be considered as service-learning components, there must be an academic element incorporated within the activity. Preferably the academic element will be related to a particular lesson within a course of study. Reflection assignments bridge the gap between the service and the lesson. When incorporated as an essential part of activity completion, reflection assignments turn community service and volunteerism activities into service learning opportunities.

Effective reflection assignments help students to interpret events, understand the social issue driving the need for service, and relate the activity to a more informed perspective about themselves and the population they serve. These assignments can occur before, during, or after the service, and may be used at all three intervals. Reflections are usually structured as short essay assignments prompted by pointed questions to direct student thinking.

Some example questions are:

- Why is/was your service needed? How might you help others understand this need for service?
- How can you use the knowledge you gained from this experience to promote change?
- How are you like the people you are serving? What personal qualities has your service helped you to develop?
- How did the service experience relate to the lesson?

For more information about reflection including the design, execution, and assessment of a successful service-learning activity, see:

Jacoby, B. (2013). What makes service-learning unique: Reflection and reciprocity. Faculty Focus, 1 November 2013. Retrieved from <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/curriculum-development/what-makes-service-learning-unique-reflection-and-reciprocity/>

### **Service-Learning Resource: FreeRice.com**

At FreeRice.com correct answers feed hungry people. Since 2007, the free-to-play educational quiz site has helped to provide both free education for its players and free food to those in need. Students can test their knowledge of 15 subjects including basic math, English vocabulary and grammar, chemical symbols, human anatomy, flags of the world, famous paintings, geography, and five romantic languages. The website even provides SAT Test preparation quizzes. For each correct answer, 10 grains of rice are distributed by the United Nations' World Food Programme to those in need. Incorporate this easy, fun, and fast way to help students be in service to others today!

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