

Topic: The role of service

Preparation

Students read an article or book that describes various stages or types of community service involvement, the socialization of volunteers, or the role of service in effecting social change. The reading is then used as an ‘anchor’ piece for reflection and analysis during the course of the service learning.

Reflection

The reflective component of this activity can take various forms. The reading can serve as a foundation for large or small group discussion, personal journaling, or more formal papers. In their initial reflections on their service they might:

- Compare their own experiences with those they have read during the preparation.
- Discuss difficulties they are having in their site and reflect on how the individuals they have read about would handle similar problems.
- Create models that capture stages of experience based on their own experiences and those of volunteers with whom they have worked.
- Evaluate their own ‘stage’ of involvement in community service. Towards the end of the service experience, reflection might move from current experience to future experience and more explicit concerns with the role of service in one’s life.
- Identify goals for future levels and types of involvement.
- Create definitions of community service—and what it means in their lives now.

Sample Readings

There a number of books and articles about service that could serve to anchor students’ reflections about the role of service and their own development as citizens.

Bellah, Robert. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985

Colby, Anne. *Some Do Care: Contemporary Lives of Moral Commitment*. New York: Free Press, 1992.

Coles, Robert. *The Call of Service: A Witness to Idealism*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1993.

Covey, Stephen. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989.

Davis, Adam, ed. *Taking Action: Readings for Civic Reflection*. Chicago: The Great Books Foundation, 2012.

Davis, Adam and Elizabeth Lynn, eds. *The Civically Engaged Reader*. Chicago: The Great Books Foundation, 2006.

Delve, Cecilia, Suzanné D Mintz, Greig M Stewart, eds. *Community Service as Values Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990.

Peavey, Fran. *Heart Politics*. Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1986.