

Service Learning Reflection Examples

Reflections are written in many different ways. However, the main point of a reflection is to think about how it helped you further your understanding of one of the seven Learning Outcomes. Refer to the Learning Outcomes, which indicate the outcome and several examples of what it means to accomplish this outcome.

Example One, Outcome 1

“I have always loved working with animals, so when I heard about Service Learning I decided to volunteer for the Nevada Humane Society. My mom attended my training with me so that she could sign my consent forms, but once I started volunteering I was on my own. When I arrived for my first actual shift, I was nervous because I wasn’t sure what to expect. I was pretty quiet during that first afternoon, and just kind of sat there listening to the other volunteers and doing tasks when they asked me. I wasn’t really engaging much because I was so nervous. However, after a few more times working at the shelter, I started to find tasks that I really enjoyed and was good at. For example, while cleaning up after the cats isn’t fun, I realized that I did a better job than some of the other volunteers. I always made sure in the cat colonies that there were clean water and food dishes, no spilled food or water, and all of the litter boxes were filled and clean. Several supervisors commented on what a great job I did. When I first started volunteering, I didn’t think I would actually like cleaning up after cats; I just thought I would walk the dogs and pet the cats, but I quickly learned that the cats and other volunteers depended on me to keep the area clean so that the cats could stay healthy. Plus, who wants to live in a dirty place? Even though I thought I would like playing with the animals, being responsible for their care felt much more rewarding and helped me to understand responsibility.”

Example Two, Outcome 4

“I have never really volunteered before this year, so when I started to think about ideas for Service Learning, I thought about my friend’s youth group, which is always doing some kind of event each month. I decided to go with her to see what it was all about. The first event they were planning was to feed the homeless. Most of the kids in the group seemed nervous about planning the event and almost like they didn’t want to get involved. So, my friend and I stepped up to help the group leader plan the event. We had to make lists on what kinds of supplies we would need. We also made lists of what kinds of businesses might be able to donate for the event, and then gave other members of the group jobs, like calling those businesses, to help us get going. Even the kids who didn’t want to help at first started doing more once we gave them a job to do. It felt really different, but nice, to be the one that the other kids came up to when they had questions or wanted to know what to do next. As a group, we were able to raise several hundred dollars worth of supplies and were able to feed over 75 homeless people at our event. It felt really great to know what a difference our group had made. One person wouldn’t have been able to accomplish such a goal by themselves, but together, we were able to feed over 75 people, which made me feel great.”

Example Three, Outcomes 2 & 3

“WHEAT club gave me the opportunity to help my community within my school by making our campus more environmentally friendly with different projects and activities. This club was a fun way to engage in making my school a better place. This experience helped me to serve my school community by creating a more “green” environment in my school. The third learning outcome, learning perseverance over challenge, was met because I was a part of the club for the whole school year in ninth grade. I also feel like I met the second learning outcome, developing international-mindedness and global understandings, because global warming has been a global issue for many years and without helping our environment to be less polluted the problem will get worse and worse. This issue is a worldwide issue and without starting in my own community the problem will never get any better.”

Example Four, Outcomes 2 & 4

“Volunteering at the children’s Christmas party was a heartwarming experience. Seeing all the kids that could not celebrate Christmas at home with their families because their parents were in jail or they couldn’t afford it was a really sad thing but I was very glad that I could spend some of my Christmas with them for the third year in a row. This event is fun for the kids and the volunteers since it consists of decorating cookies, face painting, meeting Santa, and many more fun activities. The fourth outcome, collaborating with others, was met because I had to work with the children to ensure that everyone enjoyed their time at the Christmas party and to make sure that none of the children were left out of any activities. The second outcome, global understandings, was demonstrated because there are children all around the world that don’t have a family to celebrate the holidays with.”

Example Five, Outcomes 6 & 7

“I noticed that some of the classrooms in my little sister’s elementary school needed some serious attention. The paint was peeling and was a really distracting color. I had gone to elementary school there when I was young, so I was sad to see it in such a state. When I asked my old principal why they didn’t paint, he stated they hadn’t been able to work it into the budget yet. I decided I would talk to my dad to see if he’d agree to help me paint the school. Because I was only 15, I didn’t think the principal would let me do it on my own. But, since my dad is a professional painter, I thought it would be a good project for us to do together. My dad thought it was a great job, and was really excited that I had taken the initiative to do something about my sister’s school. The only problem was, the principal didn’t think he could come up with the money for all of the paint. He said we might be able to get donations. I decided I would work with him to come up with a list of places to talk to about donating paint. I showed a lot of initiative by first offering to help paint, arranging for an adult supervisor, and then reaching out to several businesses to get the paint. I also learned a lot of new skills (learning outcome 7) because I had never painted a building before. My dad showed me how to cover holes in the wall from nails, how to tape and tarp off the work area, and how to edge the ceiling and floor. Overall, it was a great experience that taught me how to take initiative and taught me many new skills.”