

## **Service Learning Reflection - Fall 2018**

This reflection assignment has opened my eyes and confirmed some of my thoughts relating to my own self awareness and social awareness. It mainly brought attention to my current lack of service and what I can be doing to serve my community when I do enter my profession as an Bilingual Elementary school teacher. I hope to use what I learn about service in this class to better my small communities in my hometown at our Bilingual Elementary school, which is on the more underprivileged side of town.

One insight that was brought to my awareness from this assignment was the amount of service I am not doing. I haven't been prioritizing any service since graduating High School and am glad that I am realizing how important it is to start earlier rather than later, when I am actually in my career. I can make as much of a difference right now as a college student as a teacher in the future. I was most interested in the question asking of our opinions on why certain races have lower poverty rates compared to others. This question was most interesting to me because I do not know the actual answer. I would love to say that the root causes of these difference in poverty rates has nothing to do with racism or lack of education but I am assuming its related to both. Furthermore, thinking about the spread of responsibility and who it may or may not belong to was something I had never thought about.

While reflecting, I did find myself going deeper in each question. Instead of thinking of the social unfairness on a basic level I thought about it more elaborately. I do feel I was honest as I was reflecting over the questions. Some of the discoveries I made had to do with service, and how I have a much larger impact than I had originally thought. As a teacher, I knew I would have an influence on children, but hopefully I will also have one on the community of families within

the school and within the town. I wasn't very uncomfortable with any questions, but the question regarding poverty, again, did really interest me. It actually interested me to a level pretty close to being uncomfortable just because I didn't know how to answer to the questions. My thoughts did flow very naturally, thankfully. Most of the questions were something that I was aware of, and had discussed before. I attribute the flowing of my thoughts to the previous knowledge I held in some of the subjects.

Personally, the most challenging question to answer was question #4. This question wasn't very difficult but was one of the ones I spent the most time on, so it was more time consuming than the others. This question was time consuming for me because of the multiple parts and the amount of thinking for each part. For example, setting my goals of service now, as a student, and also planning my service goals for the future as a teacher. Again, I also thought the question about the differences in poverty, and which race was more prone to poverty was also a difficult question for me. It's not something I fully understand yet, so it was harder for me to know how to answer the multiple parts after.

My own personal social group identifies does greatly impacts my opinions on "service", being latina and speaking Spanish has encouraged me to be apart of the Spanish speaking communities and has taught me to embrace more of the culture. Speaking Spanish has greatly encouraged me to become a bilingual teacher to help the latin community, I've learned to love. Also, being a woman has really taught me to be kind and helpful to other women, especially mothers. I've always been a very maternal person, loving kids and babies, which is another reason why I want to become a teacher and want to serve those communities.

I know the most about the unfairness there can sometimes be when someone is speaking their native language and is being judged or demeaned for not speaking the language that that person knows. At work, we had a dishwasher who only spoke English get angry and say that “All the kitchen does it talk behind our backs in Spanish” which is far from the truth. When we speak in Spanish it is because it is more easy, just like when our cooks speak English with the servers because it is easier. I understand those issues the best because i’ve seen that first hand. I understand the least about the poverty across races, dues to a lack of knowledge in that specific topic. Another case I’ve seen is in nail salons, where the salon attendants are speaking and laughing with each other and the person getting their nails done looks uncomfortable or says something. These salon attendants are just trying to have fun while they are doing strenuous or boring work. They speak in their native language not to be sneaky but out of ease and familiarity.

The opinions I am most likely to change is about poverty across the races. I am most likely to change this one because of my lack of knowledge, and once I know more about it I can discover whether my initial thoughts were true or not. The opinion I am least likely to change would be my opinion on children being able to learn about their heritage. I believe this is extremely important for multiple reasons. One reason being, communication. If a child was born to immigrant parents in the United States, but had all of their family in another country and was forced to only learn English, and American cultures the child would lose so much potential contact/communication with his family. This child would also lose something that is most likely very important to his parents. Children should be encouraged to share their culture/heritage for the greater knowledge of himself and his classmates.

Some questions I would like to explore regarding this topic would surround the poverty line and race. What is the actual reason why some races have lower poverty rates while other have higher? Also, what are some examples of good service projects that have affected someone for the better?