



New York City Department of Education
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Daily Reflective Journal

(get a small composition book for this)

To reflect on something means to think about something. To earn credit for this course you must keep a reflective journal (like a diary), in which you write 1 or 2 paragraphs every day after you complete your community service work..

We want you to record your expectations, your experiences (both positive and negative), and your growing understanding about how your volunteer work is helping you to become a more mature and fully developed person.

At the end of your forty hours of community service – and many of you may choose to do more than forty hours of service when you discover how much people have come to depend on you – you will be a different person. You will know that you have valuable skills that you can share with others. You will also have learned a variety of important job-related skills that will aid you here in Richmond Hill and later in life. See the other page on this website for ideas about the things you can talk about in your daily journal entries:

Sample Reflective Journal Entries

These are ideas and experiences you may want to write about on different days – some you may only write about once, others you may write about several times as your perceptions change over time. Be prepared to talk about these in your weekly meetings with your supervising teacher.

- **First day thoughts.** Describe your initial feelings/reactions. What are your goals? What do you hope to learn and/or achieve? What are your first day impressions of the school or agency where you are working?
- **Describe the workplace.** What is it like physically? What is the atmosphere like? Are there particular people who immediately impress you either positively or negatively? Explain.
- **The students.** Describe the students you are working with. Are they happy to work with you? Are there any particular problems you encountered when first starting to work with the students?
- **The teacher/supervisor.** Describe the teacher (or supervisor) you are working with most closely. How is the teacher (or supervisor) making you feel comfortable in doing your job? Is there anything you think the teacher (or supervisor) could be doing to assist you more?
- **Personal qualities needed.** What personal qualities (e.g. kindness, patience, etc.) does one need for success in your volunteer position? Which ones are essential and which ones are simply helpful? Why? What qualities do you think you need to work on?

- **Taking stock (after at least 10 hours of volunteer work).** How do you assess your volunteer work so far? What do you like best? What do you like least? What is frustrating? What have you done to solve issues that you find frustrating?
- **Academic skills.** Are you surprised to discover how much you know? Is helping younger students helping you develop your own academic skills further? What do you like best about sharing your knowledge with younger students?
- **Time management issues.** Are you finding it hard to keep up with your regular academic work for your classes at Richmond Hill and keep your community service commitments as well? What are you doing to make sure that you juggle all of your various commitments successfully?
- **Bragging time.** Every once in a while it makes sense to brag about your accomplishments. Where do you think you are making your biggest contributions? What do you think you are doing exceptionally well?
- **Comparison time.** In what ways is the community service experience like or unlike regular school experiences? Which “world” do you prefer and why?
- **Mid-point evaluation time (after completing 20 hours of volunteer work).** What do you think the teacher or supervisor would say about the job you are doing up to this point? Why would he or she say this? Would another volunteer student from Richmond Hill say the same or different things about your work?
- **Career thoughts.** If you are working in a school or social service agency, what educational background would you need to work in your supervisor’s position (*ask them!*)? Does the work that they do interest you? Would you want to choose it as a career goal? Why or why not?
- **Last day thoughts.** In what ways do you think you have experienced personal growth by participating in this program? What difference do you think you have made in the lives of the students you worked with? Will you continue volunteering at the school or agency after completing our forty hour requirement? Why?
- **Recommendations.** If you have decided that you will not continue on beyond the forty hours required for credit, what will you miss the most about this experience? The least? What advice would you give others who might like to do community service at your school or social service agency?