

This semester in our First Year Writing Service-Learning class, students submitted weekly reflections of their Rose, Bud and Thorns of the week prior. For this activity, the rose of service is meant to be the best part of service, the bud is something to look forward to next week and the thorn is what was a difficult component. By conducting reflections in this way, students were able to identify both the positive and negative aspects of service.

ROSE OF SERVICE- LEARNING

What was the best part of this experience/most valuable skill you gained?

"I really loved working one on one with students and I had a great time working with a young girl named Sophia, who continued to come back to the writer's room to work with me"

"Learned to handle kids tactfully and new tricks and tips to teach and work. Teaching them my culture from India was the best part of it"

"The best part of the service was by far and away interacting with the students. My group only went to the art and music classes, and in the art classes it was really fun to just sit down, talk, and interact with the students"

"I enjoyed working with the kids and getting to know them. I particularly enjoyed working with the first graders"

"I really liked meeting the kids and getting to work with them. They were all so adorable and eager to learn more about the college kids, so it was cool to be almost like a mentor to them. My favorite experience was definitely watching Harsh lead the lesson on Diwali!"

"This service was a good opportunity for me to see other walks of life. I get to serve the community and do my best to help younger students to learn and grow"

"I got better communication skills by working with some of the younger kids"

"The best part of working with the student in the Writer's Room at the BTU this semester was getting to bond with the students throughout my time there and getting to see them make progress in their confidence in their own ideas, and their willingness to participate in class discussions and activities"

"It was such a good experience working with all of the kids at 826. They were all really nice and it was really cool when they started to recognize me which helped me create a bond with them"

"The best part of service-learning was seeing how enthusiastic the kids were to receive one on one attention. The most valuable skill I've gained is patience and understanding"

"The best part of this experience was definitely working with the different kids and meeting the people in the Writer's Room"

"Getting to connect with people outside the campus bubble"

"I definitely learned how to deal with and teach kids. I have never really been a fan of little kids, but this definitely helped me understand how to handle them and point them in the right direction to get them to focus on the task at hand"

"I really enjoyed getting to help at BTU and working with young kids. I enjoyed that we got to know them over the weeks. I think it has helped me develop my communication skills and adapting what and how I say things in order to make it more understandable for the younger children. Also taught me a lot of patience"

"I really liked working with kids in the younger grades"

"The best part of this service-learning experience was forming relationships with the faculty and students at BTU Writer's Room. Surprisingly, much of my work at the school involved a lot of problem solving, particularly when working with the students. They all had different ways of learning and listening to instructions. Determining the best way to work with each individual student was incredibly enjoyable and made the time fly by"

BUD OF SERVICE- LEARNING

How will you apply what you learned as a participant in Service-Learning to your future academic/professional career?

“I really improved my communication skills by having to relay information to children and talk with them. I can utilize these skills for the rest of my life”

“I learned how to communicate with kids which will be helpful in the future”

“I will apply the tricks I learnt to handle loads of work”

““I will have more patience when working with people that I may not agree with, or simply work differently than I do”

“I will apply what I learned in terms of interacting with people, to my future career”

“This will help me in my career because I can use my skills of iterating with other people to better interact with people”

“I learned how to communicate better in creative ways which is important for engineering. Engineers need to be able to communicate their ideas effectively in order to do their job”

“I learned to not panic and exude confidence even when I’m unsure of the task”

“I will definitely apply what I learned during Service-Learning to my future academic/professional career because I have learned how to communicate effectively and how to work with a group. If I ever want to do consulting or teaching in the future I have definitely learned skills for that discipline”

“One of the other things that I learned through this is communication. Kids don’t always get the nuances of speaking so you have to be quite direct with them, something that could help in future technical writings”

“The time at service learning was short. I was getting more and more comfortable each time I went. Had we gone longer, I would have been a better tutor/aid. I have gained skills to work with others (younger and older) that I will be able to apply to my future”

“In terms of the future, I think the experience will be a good opportunity to talk to future employers about developing new skills”

““I hope to continue tutoring in the future and will try to take some of the lessons and apply them to tutoring in the future”

“I think service learning helped improve my communication skills, which is something that I will take with me into my future”

“The bud of service for me is working on my ability to prompt ideas without giving the sense of telling students what to do. I am also working on my skills in engaging uncooperative students”

““As a participant in this program, I learned the value of hard work and the rewarding nature of doing what you love. I credit these lessons to the amazing faculty at BTU Writer’s Room. Every single one of them genuinely enjoyed their time and committed themselves to helping the students. I hope that I can apply a similar passion to my future professional career”

THORN OF SERVICE- LEARNING

What do you wish you could have improved upon further during your time as a Service-Learning participant?

“I wish I was better prepared to inspire kids that don't want to do their work or don't feel comfortable being creative”

“Sometimes I was paired with kids who were very unmotivated so I wish I was more persistent with them”

“Traveling during the cold was a very bad experience”

“I wish that I could have worked with more students so that I could have learned how to work with a larger variety of personalities”

“Like I said in my “rose”, my group never did a whole lot when we were there. It sometimes felt like a waste of time because we would just be sitting in the writers room with nothing to do”

“The commute was terrible and service-learning took up the whole afternoon”

“A lot of times I felt kind of useless and like what I was doing wasn't really helping. I was just kind of there”

“I wish we didn't have to pay for our transportation there and back”

“I wish that I had been more confident and taken more leadership during the tutoring sessions, because there were definitely opportunities for us to talk to the students more and help out more, but I kind of took a backseat instead of jumping right in”

“I wish we could have spent more time in the classroom as opposed to admin work, but I understand that it is necessary”

“I feel as if some things we did at service had no point. While I understand paperwork is important (and I don't mind doing paperwork), I do not feel as if I am growing as a person while doing it”

“I wish we would have more time to be able to continue, I would have loved to carry this out for another semester but unfortunately I am on co-op”

“I wish I had a little more patience and ability to deal with younger kids”

“I wish we had more instruction when we were at the BTU. A lot of the time we would go into classrooms and not really know what to do, so I could have asked for more direction”

“The thorn of service-learning for me was watching students pick on each other and put each other down and feeling ineffective in my ability to stop the behavior”

“While working with the students, there were times that I was not able to completely convey how to improve on their writing. Every student learns differently. This was a challenge I soon discovered and struggled to deal with at times. As a result, I definitely could have improved my communication with the students”