

with the needs of the community. It all sounds great in theory but when you actually try to do it, it gets really frustrating. I don't even know if we had the best rubric that we could've had. <audible heavy sigh> I don't think anyone got what they wanted which could be bad or could be good. To contrast that with the democratic theory of elitism, I'm saying it is probably a whole lot easier if we just did what a couple of people thought was OK. [Quoting from the textbook] The democratic theory of elitism theorizes that elites in power should make all the crucial decisions facing society and citizens should be rather passive in politics, generally participating for voting and competing elites, and periodic elections. Democratic elitists argue that the role expected of the citizen in a participatory setting is unrealistic and that too much participation will contribute to the instability of the political and economic system. This theory is normally something we look down on. And after doing this exercise and going over this, it really surprised me that I was like, "Yeah, we should do something more like that." So it really helped me see where a lot of our law makers are coming from when they don't want to listen to all these people – especially a lot of people I know in our class have a lot of views that aren't the most popular – it isn't what mainstream society is talking about. We get really upset or get really frustrated when we go to talk to these politicians and we say, "Look, what about this?" and "Who cares about this little group of people over here?" We all get really frustrated when we feel the government is not addressing our needs. But when we did this exercise I could see how they view us. It's that one person who raises their hand and they think they have the perfect policy or the policy they think will please a lot of groups and then there's that one person who is the corner saying, "I don't like it because of this." [BEHAVIOR] I guess I'm normally that person – that one person who says, "No, no, you forgot about these people." It really surprised me that when it happened in a big group, it was so easy for me to say, "Forget the little person, let's just move on, let's just do what everyone likes." It really surprised me how quickly I switched. It helped me understand why politicians do what they do. I learned how frustrating it can be. As I go and try to do more things I hope to take that understanding with me. I hope to try and show politicians that it's not just one person bringing up a concern that only effects a minor part of the population, but try and show them the idea that these decisions benefit everyone, that helping the poor will make the whole community stronger. In addition to that, this spring I'll be doing an internship at the Capitol and I'm sure I'm going to get to see a lot of people and I'll probably get frustrated with all these people who care about this or that. I'm sure I'm going to get frustrated with all of these interest groups. But I

hope to keep this exercise in mind. I want to have it help me have patience when I'm listening to these people. It just really blew my mind. I definitely think I have to take this when I go before Congress or push any issue that this will be very important to keep in mind. Thanks.

The student articulated her feelings and makes a concrete connection between what she experienced in class and course content. She also shared her past behaviors as an activist. More importantly, she indicated how she planned on using her new insight in the future as an intern. The result is a rich reflection that also allows the instructor to assess her understanding of the information.

Scoring the ABCs

I have used a 10-point scoring mechanism with the ABCs using an approach commonly used to assess students' written expression. The affect and behavior components each have a maximum of 3 points. Reflection entries that are articulated and organized well earn 3 points where as marginal responses earn 2 points, and a very cursory or shallow discussion earns 1 point. It is important to note here and to the students that they are not graded for the "right" feeling. I allow them to articulate any and all emotions, including anger or frustration. However, they must articulate WHY they felt the way they did. The cognitive portion of the reflection response is worth 4 points. Like the 3 points in the affect and behavior components, the 4 points for cognition range on a continuum of quality.

Incorporating a point system such as this had two immediate results. First, many students were surprised and even hostile about having their reflections "graded." Their prior experience allowed them to "warble" through emotional testimonials without documenting any cognition or application. In essence, they were used to playing the

game of generating what they thought the instructor wanted and assumed they would simply "earn" points. Second, once the rubric and point system was explained, students' reflections showed remarkable depth and richness. It turns out students are generally externally motivated.

On returning the first assignment, I clearly articulate what aspects of the ABCs were well done in written feedback to the student and awarded points accordingly. Likewise, I clearly indicate which segment was either lacking in detail or was missing entirely. Students are given the opportunity to resubmit their reflection entry after making revisions based on my feedback by a certain deadline to earn more points, or let the points stand. This was an important teaching and learning moment for students in a number of ways. First, they clearly saw that reflection was, in fact, an important part of the cognitive process that warranted a grade rather than a superfluous exercise. Likewise, they realized their reflection was more than just a "Dear diary" entry. Second, the feedback provided modeling so students had a better understanding of what the reflection process involved. This clarified the proverbial instructor's expectations that seem to always be a mystery to students.

Student Reactions and Use

While it was acknowledged above that students are often at a loss as to what and how to reflect, some students do not initially appreciate structured reflection such as the ABCs. This is generally due to a couple of reasons. First, many students assume reflection is unstructured "warbling" as described above. In this way, not a great deal of effort may be required and they can actually "fake it." Second, many students understandably like to incorporate a stream of consciousness that can reveal many deep

and profound discoveries and they fear the rubric is too restrictive. The ABCs can, in fact, facilitate this type of reflection, but within a modicum of structure, as was evident in the transcript of one student's response presented above.

Once students become familiar with the generic structure, they often become comfortable with it and may even incorporate the ABCs on reflection topics of their own choosing. This became apparent in one of my own classes when one student candidly and tearfully shared her frustration and personal revelations when working with the homeless population. After my assigned reflection topic was written on the board, the class asked to reflect on their peer's honest and brave confession instead. The result was much deeper, personal, and insightful reflection entries because the students had a personal interest and voice in the instructional process. They still utilized the ABCs and the integrity of the 3 components was maintained. The difference in this case was that they "owned" the topic. Since then, I have asked my students to create a menu of possible reflection topics that are relevant to the class discussions. Admittedly, many of the reflection topics generated by the students are much more interesting and provocative than mine.

The ABC123 Method

The ABCs rubric was combined with Yates and Youness'(1997) 3 levels of transcendence to create the ABC123 method. This hybrid approach was presented at a round table discussion at an international conference on the research of service-learning (Welch, 2002). Participants at the round table were given an overview of the method, followed by examples to practice their interpretation and application. They were then asked to use the method in their own classrooms and share their experiences through

threaded, on-line discussions. One of these applications incorporated quasi-experimental design incorporating treatment and comparison groups. The results suggested that students' reflection responses were richer and deeper when explicitly taught how to use the ABCs (Welch & James, 2007).

Level 1 is ego or self-centered. This is not pejorative description, but rather, concrete depiction of students' narrative that typically included "I" statements such as, "I felt this," or "I did that." Responses that reflect empathy or a sense of other-ness are considered to be at Level 2. Students' statements at this level typically step out of their own experience and perspective of the world to ponder the circumstances of others. For example, a white male may reflect on his interactions with young, single Latina mother and gain new insight into her life experience. Level 3 represents a deeper awareness of social, cultural, and political factors associated with what was experienced during the service activity. Students working in post-Katrina New Orleans often realize how classism and racism played a role in policy decisions.

I have primarily used this method to assess the depth of students' reflection. However, both I and colleagues of mine have actually used it to explicitly guide students into other levels or contexts of reflection. Here is an example from an environmental ethics course:

You have been working with a community partner to create an educational program designed to promote awareness of alternative energy. Based on our discussions in class on various factors and perspectives in a petroleum-based culture [cognition] choose to respond to the information that you have developed in your service-learning experience from one of two perspectives: a) from the perspective of a CEO of an oil company [Level 2] or b) consider the global political (military?) ramifications of creating alternative energy sources [Level 3]. Be sure to include how you would use [behavior] this information (e.g. in the media, report to board of directors or congressional committee) to support your

position and also include emotional arguments with the hope of persuading your audience [affect].

Assessing Depth of Student Reflection

There are 3 steps to using the ABC123 method to assess the depth of students' reflections (Welch & James, in press). It is important to note that this scoring process is NOT related to the scoring process of the ABCs described above.

Step 1 – Assessing the ABCs

Step 1 focuses on the ABC dimensions and is *accumulative* in nature as a student's reflection statement earns one point for each of the ABCs included. For example, if a student's reflection addresses only one of the 3 dimensions of the ABC, a single point is given. But reflections that address two of the ABCs (e.g. A and B or B and C or A and C) earn 2 points as shown in abbreviated the example below. Only a reflection that addresses all 3 components is eligible to receive 3 points.

Last week I learned [cognitive – 1 pt.] in class the method and importance of providing immediate corrective feedback when children read aloud. Initially, I was worried about this because I didn't know how my tutee would respond when I corrected him [affect – 1 pt] [2 out of 3 points were earned as there is no behavior described].

Step 2 – Identifying Levels of Reflection

Step 2 determines the level the student's reflection and is *delineative* in nature as only one level of awareness is identified and therefore delineated from the other two. Rather than accumulating up to 3 points as in scoring the ABCs, a numerical indicator represents a particular level of awareness in the reflection statement. Therefore, a

statement that depicts Level 1 earns an indicator of "1" and a statement reflecting Level 2 earns an indicator of "2" and finally, a statement at the third level earns an indicator of "3". The following abbreviated example illustrates a Level 3 response as the student addresses larger, systemic issues.

I began to see this child I was tutoring as a victim of poor teacher training and our society at large the more I worked with him. I started wondering if his teachers had received any training in cultural awareness because I saw limited sensitivity when she worked with him. Likewise, I realized I came into this situation with my own negative stereotypes because of the way our society and media portray his ethnic group along with his disability. It seems to me we need to address both teacher training and society's preconceived notions of race and ability. We should have classes for future teachers. Our media should start portraying individuals based on their ability and not on the disability, race, or culture.

Step 3 - Quantitative Rating

In Step 3 the accumulative score for the ABCs is multiplied by the delineative indicator of levels to create a 9-point scale to quantitatively determine a rating of richness and depth. For example, a student's reflective statement based solely at the egoistic level (Level 1) would only be eligible for earning anywhere from 1 to 3 points, depending on how many of the 3 ABC components it describes. If, however, the statement made a reference to global, systemic, cultural, or political issues, this would be characterized as being at Level 3 of awareness and thus earn an indicator score of 3. Multiplying the 3 points earned for addressing each of the ABCs by the indicator score of 3 representing Level 3 results in an overall rating of 9.

Affect + Behavior + Cognition/Content	3 x 1 = 3 pts.	3 x 2 = 6 pts.	3 x 3 = 9 pts.
	2 x 1 = 2 pts.	2 x 2 = 4 pts.	2 x 3 = 6 pts.
	1 x 1 = 1 pt.	1 x 2 = 2 pts.	1 x 3 = 3 pts.
	Level 1 Self/Egoistic (or)	Level 2 Other/Empathic (or)	Level 3 Systemic/Global

Squirm and Learn

Many students encounter significant discomfort or cognitive dissonance through their service-learning experience. This revelation often takes place during reflection, especially as they attempt to articulate what they've learned or how they feel about an experience. This can be a scary process given their history of learning has typically been a passive or benign experience. Students growing up in a culture of "happy endings" are unfamiliar with realities encountered and may even question whether they "should" feel what they're feeling. They may wonder if it is "OK" to question, ponder, or be uncomfortable. It has also been my personal experience in which students resent the instructor when this type of profound discovery takes place. I have been accused of "not protecting" the student when they saw poverty for the first time and experienced compassion and discomfort. It is much easier to read about these challenging issues than experience it.

This is the important "squirm and learn" process discussed in more detail in another chapter. It is critical for BOTH the student AND instructor to know this is part of

the process and to be expected. In fact, the most profound learning often takes place when students confront the smelly and dirty aspects of their experiences. Instructors should explicitly tell students this is bound to occur and prepare them. This assures the student that it is "OK" and part of the process. Keep in mind; this "messy" business is the exception rather than the rule for students. They are used to very "sanitized" and controlled environments in which their only responsibility is to take notes.

Faculty members need not concern themselves with taking the role of counselor or social worker. Instead, faculty members are there to reassure and support students in a safe environment that is conducive to exploring feelings and apparent contradictions. Service-learning can often create a cognitive dissonance on many levels. At times it is at an intellectual or academic level in which students are testing the theoretical constructs presented in class. Other times students are discovering aspects of their own personal beliefs, norms, or attitudes. This is and can be a scary enterprise. It is also an important aspect of critical thinking. Faculty members facilitate this process during reflection. When and if an instructor creates a safe learning space as discussed in other chapters, students are more likely to openly explore the messier part of learning.

Conclusion

These pages merely provide a brush-stroke of a handful of strategies and methods. They are, however, tried and true. There are many more approaches out there. Mix and match. The key here is to make sure whatever method is used to link it to instructional objectives at the beginning, during, and at the end of the course.