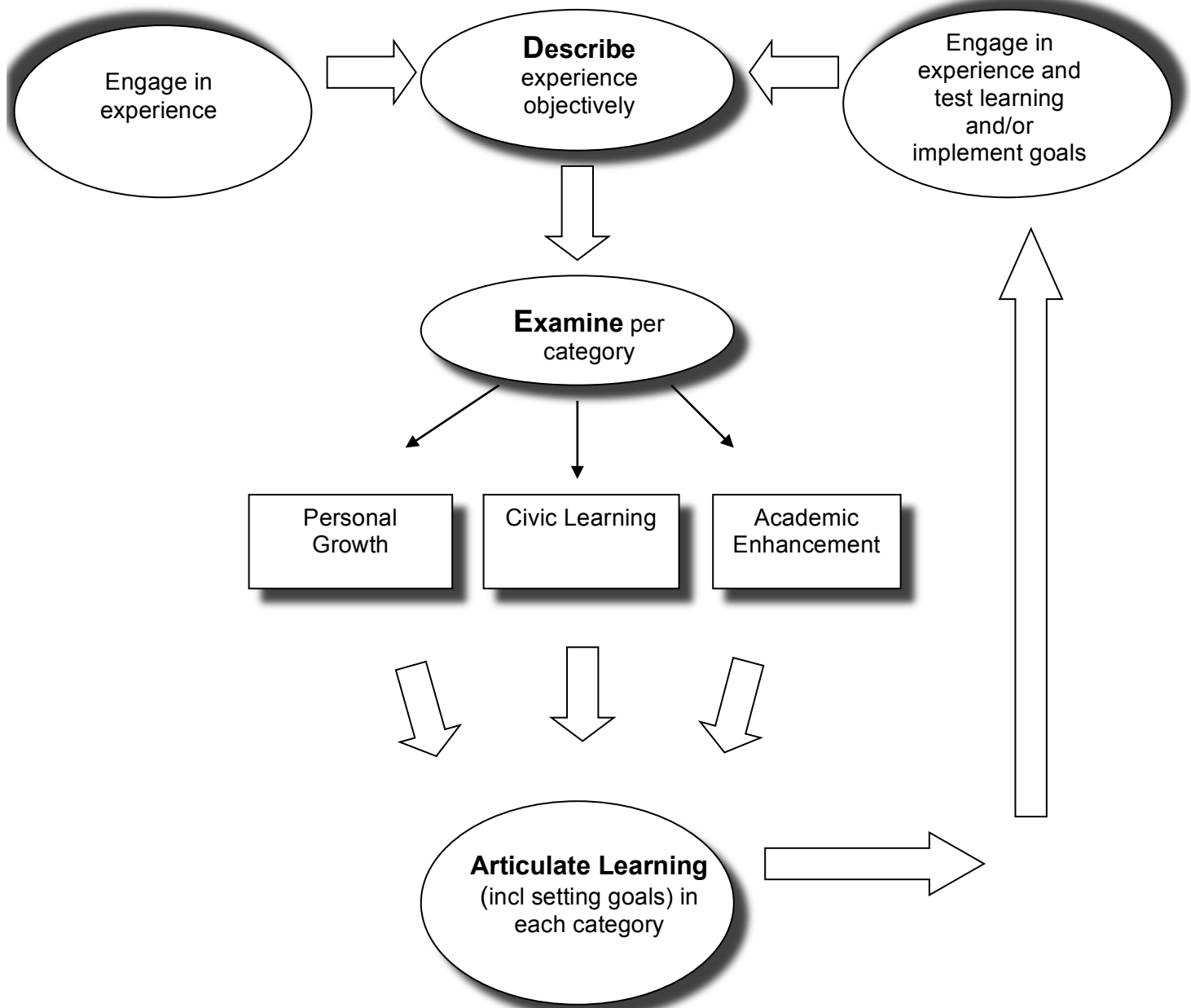


# DEAL Model for Critical Reflection

[Ash & Clayton, 2009; various]



## Critical Reflection Assignment (structured with DEAL) for Academic Learning (generic)

### Describe a SL-related experience (objectively and in some detail)

- When did this experience take place?
- Where did it take place?
- Who else was there? Who wasn't there?
- What did I do? What did others do? What actions did I / we take?
- What did I / we say or otherwise communicate?
- Who didn't speak or act?
- Etc.

### Examine that experience (academic learning)

- What specific academic material is relevant to this experience? Explain the concept, theory, etc clearly and concisely so that someone unfamiliar with it could understand it
- How did the material emerge in the experience (When did I see it or note its absence? How did or should I or someone else use it?) ?
- What academic (e.g., disciplinary, intellectual, professional) skills did I use / should I have used? In what ways did I / others think from the perspective of a particular discipline and with what results?
- In what specific ways are my understanding of the material or skill and the experience the same and in what specific ways are they different? What are the possible reasons for the difference(s) (e.g., bias, assumptions, lack of information on my part or on the part of the author / instructor / community?)

### Articulate Learning

#### *"I learned that" ...*

- Express an important learning, not just a statement of fact
- Provide a clear and correct explanation of the concept(s) in question so that someone not in the experience could understand it.
- Explain your enhanced understanding of the concept(s), as a result of reflection on the experience
- Be expressed in general terms, not just in the context of the experience (so that the learning can be applied more broadly to other experiences)

#### *"I learned this when" ....*

- Connect the learning to specific activities that gave rise to it, making clear what happened in the context of that experience so that someone who wasn't there could understand it.

#### *"This learning matters because" ...*

- Consider how the learning has value, both in terms of this situation and in broader terms, such as other organizations, communities, activities, issues, professional goals, courses, etc.

#### *"In light of this learning" ...*

- Set specific and assessable goals; consider the benefits and challenges involved in fulfilling them
- Tie back clearly to the original learning statement.

## EXAMPLE DEAL-Based Reflection Activity

*Learning goal: Participants will understand the key concepts discussed in this workshop*

### DESCRIBE

List concepts discussed in the workshop (write on the board; as a group)

### EXAMINE

Prompt #1: What does each of these concepts mean, in your own words (write on notecards; discuss in pairs)?

Prompt #2: Provide an example of each of the concepts as it does or could emerge in your teaching (discuss in pairs).

Prompt #3: Draw a concept map to represent the relationships between these concepts, with labels, arrows, etc. on the lines connecting the concepts to one another (draw on the board; in small groups).

Prompt #4: What new dimensions/nuances do you now see in any of the concepts? What questions does this lead you to (about any of the concepts) (discuss in small groups)?

Prompt #5: What is the most significant change in your understanding of the concepts (discuss in pairs)?

### ARTICULATE LEARNING (individually; in writing)

**I learned that ...**

**I learned this when ...**

**This learning matters because ...**

**In light of this I will ...**

## Example DEAL: Group Activity and Reflection (Meanings of Service)

[Excerpted from Clayton, P.H. & Moses, M.G. (2006). *Integrating Service-Learning: A Resource Guide*. Boston: Jumpstart.]

### Activity

Project the following two quotes:

- *“One who serves takes care to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, will they not be further deprived?” ~Robert Greenleaf*
- *“If I knew for a certainty that a man was coming to my house with the conscious design of doing me good, I should run for my life.” ~Henry David Thoreau*

Place a collection of items on a table in the room. Items might include: pens, coins, pieces of colored paper, a scarf, a bottle of water, fresh flowers, food (a plate of bagels, a bag of cookies, an apple), a book, etc. Virtually any collection of items will suffice, but you may be able to accomplish certain objectives through the materials you choose to include (e.g., if you want your students thinking about cultural associations with food, then include a food item that has cultural connotations; if you want your students thinking about issues related to reading, then include a book or other written document). Be careful to have some variety in the items (e.g., more than just 2 or 3 items) but also to avoid having too many items (e.g., more than 10).

Divide the class into two or more groups, depending on class size, and give them the following instructions: “In light of the two perspectives on service represented by these quotes, in your groups develop a plan to be of service using the materials provided. Present your plans to the other group(s). Be ready to move on to another activity in 15 minutes.” Do not warn the students when they are running out of time or answer questions about how they should approach their task. After 15 minutes, call the activity to and end. If the students have not completed the activity (including presenting to one another), at your discretion (depending on your objectives and constraints) give them additional time.

### Reflection on the Activity

Provide a worksheet with reflection prompts (such as those that follow) and ask the students to reflect collaboratively in their groups, with each student taking notes on his/her own worksheet, including any private thoughts he/she has but does not share with the group. Be sure to include prompts that focus their attention on the learning objectives you have for this activity.

1. **Describe** the activity, objectively and in fair detail (Who? Where? When? What? Who did what? How? Etc.)
2. **Examine** the activity:
  - i. PG:
    1. In what ways did I / we respond to the perspectives on service? To the task of producing a “service plan”? Why did I / we respond as I / we did (e.g., what previous experiences or expectations influenced me / us)?
    2. What skills or abilities did I / other members of my group use in accomplishing this task? What skills or abilities did I / they have but not use, and why? What skills or abilities did I / we not have that would have been useful, and how can I / we develop them?
    3. What assumptions did we make (e.g., about the instructor’s role, about the particular materials provided) and how did they influence how we undertook the task?
  - ii. CL:
    1. What roles were played by the various members of our group? Were there roles that should have been played that no one assumed? How did we determine who would play what role?
    2. To what extent were we successful in accomplishing the task we were given? Did we complete it on time? Did we present our plan effectively? What else might “success” mean, as we judge our efforts? How might we have approached the task differently, in order to be more successful?
    3. What alternative “service plans” might we have produced? Why did we produce the one we did? Is this the “best” plan we could have produced? What would have had to change in order for us to have produced a better plan?
  - iii. AE:
    1. What specific elements of our “service plan” emerged from our engagement with the perspectives on service? What did we agree with and try to adopt? What did we disagree with and try to avoid?
    2. In this activity and more generally, is it difficult to translate the perspective on service offered by Greenleaf into concrete action? Why or why not? Is it of value to try to do so? Why or why not?
    3. What questions about the nature of service does our engagement with these perspectives lead us to identify? In what ways might these be important questions as our service-learning project unfolds throughout the semester?
3. **Articulate** one or more specific **learnings** from this discussion.

Ask each group to share some of the most important learnings they achieved through reflection on this activity and then as a class set goals for future action.