

These JEP Reflective Questions are designed to help you reflect upon your experiences as a member of a mini-team so that you can make the most of your community teaching experiences. Additionally, these questions ask you to critically reflect on the ways in which your experiences teaching British literature relate to the concepts you are studying your English class.

Please read through all of the Reflective Questions prior to beginning your JEP assignment. The questions are related to and build upon one another. We encourage you to refer back to previous responses and to take seriously your P.A.'s feedback each week. Doing so will help you to develop your ideas and arguments over the course of the semester and to learn more from your experiences.

As you respond to the questions, you should **concentrate on addressing the main topic/question (the highlighted one)**. The subsequent prompts are focusing questions to help you identify critical factors related to the main question. Please feel free to go beyond the prompts and write whatever seems important to you about your experiences — especially when the topic is related to the issues raised in the main question. For all weeks except week eight, you may substitute one of the Alternate Questions on the last page when your JEP site does not allow you to adequately answer a Reflective Question.

***Please refer to the PA agreement you received in training for instructions regarding journal due dates and format requirements.**

Week One – Describe your initial experience at your JEP assignment. What are your most vivid impressions from your first day at your site? What are some of the notable social and physical characteristics of your JEP site (for example, the number, age, sex, race, and ethnicity of the people and the size, space, decor, noise level, etc., of the classroom, buildings, and grounds)? **What are your goals and expectations for the next eight weeks?** How do you think your teaching experiences will help you in your English literature course?

Week Two – The eight-week plan provided in your pick-up packet asks you to discuss particular genres and/or texts on particular weeks. However, you and your team are responsible for translating the material to the 6-12 students in ways they can understand. One of the ways you can do this is through emphasizing similar themes from week to week (i.e., love, anger, and revenge). **What are the major themes in your British literature course that you plan to emphasize throughout the following weeks?** Why do you think these themes are so prevalent in British literature? What are some of the activities you have been preparing for the students in order to emphasize these themes?

Week Three – Describe your impressions of your mini-course team. How well are you gelling as a team? What strengths do you think each member brings to the table? What weaknesses are you concerned about, if any?

Week Four – How would you categorize the students' attitudes towards British literature? Compare and contrast your experiences at your JEP site with your own 6-12 education. How is the JEP school, its facilities, its approach to education and teaching, etc., similar to or different from what it was like at your school? What are some of the unique strengths of the students, from your perspective? What are the students' weaknesses? Think back to any experiences you may have had with British literature in 6-12 settings: how would you have responded to lesson plans such as the ones you have been creating for your students?

Week Five – Identify one activity that worked really well and one activity that you will not be repeating. Why? How are you translating the complicated course concepts you are covering in your college British literature course for the younger students at your community school? How are the students responding to your efforts? Do you think that your presence is anticipated and/or appreciated by the students?

Week Six – To what extent has the experience of teaching in a mini-team helped you better understand the subject matter in your English literature course? Provide a specific example from the material you have covered in the mini-course thus far. Do you feel everyone is cooperating and making an equal effort? What have you taught others in your group? What have you learned from others in your group? Are the students in your team from different English literature courses? If so, how are you dealing with the material from both courses?

Week Seven – This week, you will be using the Modern Language Association’s Language Map in order to gather data to answer your journal question. Go to <http://www.mla.org/map_single> and learn about languages spoken in Southern California and the United States as a whole by following these directions:

--Under “Language” click on “English,” under “State” click on “Mainland USA,” and under “Show Data” click on “% by county.” Click on “Update Map” and make some observations. Which regions in the United States have the largest percentage of English speakers, and which counties have the smallest percentage of English speakers? Pay special attention to how Los Angeles county (and Southern California as a whole) compares to the rest of the country in terms of the percentage of English speakers.

--Now, under “Language” spend some time experimenting with languages you have heard spoken at your school site (or around Los Angeles in general) and leave the rest of the data the same (i.e., under “State” keep “Mainland USA” and under “Show Data” keep “% by county”). Click on “Update the map.” What has changed on the map? Again, pay special attention to how Los Angeles county (and Southern California as a whole) compares to the rest of the country in terms of the percentage of speakers of languages other than English.

British literature is taught in United States schools as a kind of “forerunner” to literature of the United States (for example, studying Shakespeare is considered to be important to understanding “our” literary heritage). **Given the percentage of speakers of languages other than English in Southern California (and the United States as a whole), to what extent is British literature an important aspect of United States literature and culture?** Drawing from the information on the Modern Language Association website, what literary traditions (for example, Spanish) are your students likely to be introduced to in other contexts (for example, in the home)? Why is it important for students to be introduced to British literary traditions in 6-12 settings?

Week Eight – (Note: You may not substitute an “Alternate Question” this week). According to USC’s mission statement, “The central mission of the University of Southern California is the development of human beings and society as a whole through the cultivation and enrichment of the human mind and spirit. The principal means by which our mission is accomplished are teaching, research, artistic creation, professional practice and selected forms of public service” (http://www.usc.edu/private/factbook/USCRole_and_Mission_Statement_1993.pdf).

Consider this statement in light of your experiences in JEP. Do you think public service — and specifically your service-learning experiences in the community via JEP — have helped to “cultivate” or “enrich” your “mind” and “spirit” and/or those of the community members with whom you worked? If so, how? If not, why not? Please describe in detail what you have gained from your experiences through JEP from an intellectual, spiritual and/or ethical perspective. How have your experiences in JEP compared to what you expected to get out of the experience?

Alternate Questions

Option 1 -- A good understanding of basic terms is necessary for any literature scholar. Pick a word that relates to the material you have been covering in your British literature course (for example, genre, poem, prose, play, stage) and look it up in your textbook and/or class notes. Now, look up the term in an “outside” resource – such as *The Literature Resource Center* (available through USC’s electronic resource page) or a copy of *The Oxford Companion to English Literature*. **How have your experiences teaching British literature in the community changed the meaning of this word for you?**

Option 2 -- **How does literature currently affect the students’ lives?** What special interests or hobbies do they have? How could reading be integrated into these activities?

Option 3 -- **Reflect on your role as a teacher and service provider at the site.** List one or two things that you have done that might benefit the children with whom you are working, either immediately or in the long run. Consider some of your personal limitations as a teacher. Was there something you could have done to benefit the children (as readers of British literature or otherwise) but did not do, perhaps because you could not do it?