

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 history relate to the concepts you are studying in your HIST 200 course.

Please read through all of the Reflective Questions prior to beginning your JEP assignment. The questions are related to and build upon one other. 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 to better master your history course material?

Week Two – Consider the eight-week plan that you completed with your mini-team. **What are the major themes in your history course that you plan to emphasize throughout the following weeks?** Why are these themes important to understanding the concepts you are studying in HIST 200? How will you go about developing lesson plans that get these points across? What are some of the activities you have been preparing for the students in order to emphasize these themes? Hint: Reviewing your HIST 200 syllabus will help you identify major course 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 American history?** Compare and contrast your experiences at your JEP site with your own K-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 learning about American History in K-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 history 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 does the experience of teaching in a mini-team help you better understand the subject matter in your history course? Provide a specific example from the material you've 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?

Week Seven -- As stated in the syllabus, one of the goals of this course is to “learn to situate contemporary society in a broad historical context and to think critically about the past and its relationship to the present.” In chapter 18 of *The Unfinished Nation: A Brief, Interactive History of the American People* you read about “The Age of the City.” **Based on your observations and experiences at the urban school, what elements of the urban environment of the late 19th and early 20th century still exist today?** Consider what you have heard and seen in the classroom and on the school grounds. For example, do you observe any urban technologies in terms of transportation and construction? Do you see any evidence of urban poverty or crime? Review chapter 18 in order to remind yourself of other elements of the urban city that will help you answer this question.

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 -- Describe a meaningful event or series of events (positive or negative) in which you were involved at your site, briefly describing the who, what, where, when, why, and how. Why does this event stand out as particularly important or meaningful to you? How has it affected your relationship to others at the site, your role there, and/or your perspective about your JEP assignment?

Option 2 -- Imagine you are a historian living at the turn of the 22nd century and studying the history of the neighborhood surrounding USC in the early 2000s. **What social, political, religious, demographic, and/or cultural phenomena would stand out as being central to understanding the history of this particular time and place?**