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. They are intended to help you think about the practical applications of your course work in a ‘real world’ context. Please use these prompts as a framework for organizing your thoughts about your experiences in the community.

Please read through all of the Reflective Questions prior to beginning your JEP assignment. The questions are related to and build upon one other. In addition, some of the assignments depend on your observations over the course of the semester (vs. during a particular week). We encourage you to refer back to previous responses and to take your PA’s feedback seriously each week. Doing so will help you to learn more from your experiences.

Note that as you respond to the questions, you should concentrate on answering the main question(s) (i.e., questions in bold). The additional prompts are ‘focusing questions’ to help you identify critical factors related to the main 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? For instance, what are some of the notable social and physical characteristics of your JEP site (think of the number, age, sex, race, or ethnicity of the staff, faculty, and/or students; and the size, space, decor, noise level, etc., of the classroom, buildings, and grounds), and how do these characteristics make you feel? What are your goals for and expectations of the next eight weeks—in terms of your assignment and working with your mini-course team?

WEEK TWO
Describe the process of developing your mini-course, including the various factors you consider when developing your weekly lesson plans. What strategies have you identified for developing ideas about what to teach and how to teach it? What challenges are you facing (if any) in developing activities that can accommodate a wide range of levels and abilities? Describe the classroom dynamics and other features of your particular group of students. How have the unique characteristics of the class affected the direction of your mini-course? Be sure to use specific examples in your discussion.

WEEK THREE
Describe your early impressions of your mini-course team. How are you and your partners functioning as a group? Do you feel everyone is cooperating and making an equal effort? What strengths do you think each member brings to the table? What weaknesses are you concerned about, if any? What might improve the functioning of the team?

WEEK FOUR
Go to the Environmental Protection Agency’s homepage and look up data about the community in which you are working: http://www.epa.gov/epahome/commsearch.htm
Enter the zip code for your site’s address and explore the information in the various databases (e.g., “Envirofacts” or “Toxics Release Inventory”)

What kinds of potential environmental hazards are located near your JEP site? How many and what kinds of EPA-regulated industries are nearby? Are they located primarily on major thoroughfares or in residential areas?
What can schools do to eliminate environmental factors that contribute to disease and other health problems? Based on your knowledge and experiences this semester, what recommendations would you make to school administrators to eliminate environmental hazards and/or to improve the health of children at the site?

**WEEK FIVE**

Compare and contrast your experiences at your JEP site with your own K-12 (elementary and secondary) education. How is the JEP school, its science labs and other facilities, its approach to science education and teaching, etc., similar to or different from what it was like at your school? What factors could account for the differences? Finally, using specific examples, describe some of the unique strengths of the students, and of the school. Also, describe some of the challenges faced by the students, and by the school.

**WEEK SIX**

Go to the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services and review the report on “Key Indicators of Health (June 2009)”

How does the Metro Service Planning Area (SPA 6, which includes the area surrounding USC) compare to other regions of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County as a whole, in terms of the health of its residents? As you’ll see in the report, data are provided for many aspects of health including preventive care, health behaviors, and the prevalence of specific physical and mental health conditions. In your description of how health outcomes in SPA 6 compare to those in other regions of LA, provide a comprehensive picture of the health of SPA 6 residents that includes health promotion, disease prevention and prevalence information.

How does the information from this report relate to the overall health of the children at your school site? Have you observed any of the problems that are noted in the report? Drawing upon your experiences at the site, what do you consider to be the most significant health problem or risk for children at the school and why?

Compare the data with some of the findings from your Week Four Reflective Question in which you examined data through the EPA website. What connections can you establish between the Health Indicators (particularly the prevalence of physical conditions) and the EPA data you explored in Week Four?

**WEEK SEVEN**

To what extent does the experience of teaching a mini-course help you to better understand the subject matter of your BISC 102 course? Provide a specific example from the material you’ve covered in the mini-course thus far. How would your lesson plan have been different if you had been teaching to a different age group, either older or younger?

**WEEK EIGHT**

Review your journals for the entire JEP experience and then compose a summary of what you have learned and experienced over the last eight weeks. What kinds of things do you think the children learned from your mini-course? What did you learn in the process of teaching them (about teaching, about the subject matter, about the community, about yourself, etc.)? How did your experience in JEP correspond to the goals and expectations you had at the beginning of the semester in week one? Describe any special highlights from your experiences.