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. Throughout the course of the semester, you will observe and participate in the daily activities of those you meet at your JEP site, and you will write about your experiences on a regular basis. These JEP Reflective Questions are designed to help you focus your observations and critically reflect on your experiences in relation to what you are learning about in your ARLT 100 course.

REFLECTIVE QUESTION HINTS:

1. **Read the questions first.** Reading the question before you go to your JEP site is required in order to answer many RQs and having the questions on your mind when at your site will help focus your observations and improve your response to all RQS.

2. **Take notes.** As soon as possible after leaving your site, take a few minutes to quickly write down a few notes about your experience that day—difficult moments, things that surprised you, highlights from teaching, etc. Taking a few minutes to do this each week will save you time later and will provide the examples and observations you need to write an outstanding essay.

3. **Proof your work.** Like any college-level writing assignment, proof your work to make sure the writing is clear, error-free, and that you answer the question at hand.

4. **Read and respond to your PA's comments.** The questions are related to and build upon one other. So refer back to previous responses and to take seriously your PA’s feedback each week and respond to the feedback by following the PAs suggestions.

5. **Be respectful.** Show your respect by being mindful of the limits of your experience and knowledge. Avoid generalizations and psychological explanations of behavior; in other words, do not make arguments that assume you know how someone else thinks or feels or use these assumptions to explain the way people act or their circumstances.

6. **Use examples.** Focus on writing detailed and concrete accounts of people, social settings and conversations (including direct quotes, when possible). Never make claims without evidence or examples!

YOUR WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

The core parts of each Reflective Question (which you need to focus on) are highlighted in **bold**. Use the additional parts of the question to guide/supplement your answer. Please refer to the PA Agreement you received in training for instructions regarding due dates and format requirements. *Note that some essays require longer responses and are worth more points.*
ESSAY ONE – Social Responsibility (1 page, 10 points, due 2/14/2011)
Confucius and Mencius emphasize the importance of fulfilling the responsibilities and duties one has towards others in the role or station one occupies in life. Reflect on the responsibilities and duties you have as a JEP participant. To whom do you have these various responsibilities? What guidance can Confucius and Mencius provide as you approach each of your JEP roles and responsibilities?

ESSAY TWO – The Confucian Value of Education (1.5 to 2 pages, 15 points, due: 2/21/2011)
Confucianism and East Asian ethics in general attach great importance to getting an education. What have you learned about the students’ attitudes about learning and school? How do the student(s) respond to the learning opportunities that you provide them? How do the teachers encourage or discourage learning in the classroom? Consider your observations in relation to the Confucian idea that getting an education is essential to prepare one for effective participation in society and to cultivate one’s own virtue and capacity for sage judgment. Does this value seem to be present in the school/classroom in which you are working? How so or why not?

******************1:1 Chats: Discuss Questions, Issues, and Concerns******************
This week you will be meeting one-on-one with your Program Assistant to talk about your experiences in JEP. In place of a full-length journal assignment this week, we ask that you take a few minutes to write down any questions, comments or concerns that you have about your JEP assignment so far. For example, what are your tasks at the site and how are you adjusting to your new role? How are you relating to the people at your site? Are you having any problems with any of the logistical aspects of your assignment (e.g., schedule, transportation, Blackboard access, etc.)? Do not submit this writing on Blackboard, rather, take it with you to your one-on-one chat with your PA so you are prepared and remember to talk about any issues that need to be addressed.

ESSAY THREE – Taoism and “Going with the Flow“ (1 pages – 10 points, due: 3/07/2011)
Taoism focuses on not forcing things, going with the flow, succeeding by non-action (wu-wei), and respecting one’s natural inclinations, especially those of children. It also promotes the calm enjoyment of life in general. How might this Taoist perspective benefit you in your work at your JEP site? Are there any potential problems you might encounter at your site, as a result of adopting this perspective?

ESSAY FOUR – Buddhist Compassion (2 pages – 20 points, due: 3/21/2011)
Think about the significance of compassion, non-ego, and service to others in Buddhist practice and enlightenment. How has your JEP experience of helping others enhanced your own life? Do you think one can achieve ultimate fulfillment in life without some kind of service to others? Why or why not?

Zen meditation teaches one to be calm and controlled in all situations, and to keep one’s emotions in check. Is such practice valuable in your JEP experience? Have you experienced any negative emotions, like frustration, anger, or apprehension during your JEP activities? Were your reactions at all “Zen-like”? How might the insertion of emotions or your own problems into your JEP activity be unhelpful? Do you think meditation could help you do a better job? Why or why not?
ESSAY SIX – Ethical Dilemmas (1.5-2 pages, 15 points, due: 4/11/2011)
Have you observed any ethical dilemmas while working at your site? If so, please describe the circumstances and how they were addressed (if at all). If not, what might you imagine are some of the key ethical issues faced by the staff at your site? Discuss the moral considerations relevant to these issues. How might a Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist, Zen Buddhist, or Neo-Confucian approach such a moral or ethical dilemma?

Take a look back at the essays you have written (make sure to use Blackboard, so you can see your PA's comments), and think about what you have learned over the past few weeks. Research has demonstrated that one of the benefits of service-learning for participating students is “higher academic achievement.” For this final essay, we want you to focus on this particular outcome vis a vis your JEP assignment. First, consider the premise itself: how does participating in a service-learning program lead to higher academic achievement? When does it fail to do so? Do students’ outcomes vary by the subject matter of the course? Or do they vary by their experiences in the community? Describe what you think are the most important factors in a service-learning assignment that ensure “higher academic achievement” for university students.

Next, think about your JEP experiences in the context of your USC course: What is the most significant “academic” outcome of your JEP assignment? How has JEP affected your understanding of the course content? How has JEP helped you learn more about East Asian philosophy and ethics? Why do you think your professor is giving academic credit for JEP? What are his or her goals for you? In answering these questions, make sure to use specific examples from your course. Think broadly about the relationship between JEP and your course. Even if you believe there is no direct connection, consider how you could apply a course concept to help better understand or explain something you encounter in your JEP experience. You might focus on detailing a specific learning outcome (e.g., describing a particular theory and how it came to life through your experiences, or how teaching helped you to understand a particular course concept). Alternatively, you might reflect on how your experiences in JEP shed light on material you have learned in other courses at USC.

The goal of this assignment is for you to think critically about the academic outcomes of service-learning and describe what you learned from your experience. If you are struggling to make the connection, as an alternative, explain, in detail, how you think the course or JEP could be redesigned to foster a more meaningful connection between your course and a service-learning experience in the community.