

Using Reflective Writing to Enhance Student Engagement, Critical Thinking & Learning Transfer

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Why Reflective Writing?

Freewrite:

- Why are you interested in this session?
- What do you hope to achieve in your classes?

Why Reflective Writing?



Why Reflective Writing?

1. Increase student engagement & investment
2. Make learning visible: help students “witness their learning”
(Yancey, 1998)

Why Reflective Writing?

3. Help students become agents of their learning (Yancey, 1998)
 - Facilitate Critical Thinking
 - Process recognition (Alrubail, 2015; Colley et al, 2012)
 - Strategies and solutions (Alrubail, 2015)

Why Reflective Writing?

4. Facilitate learning transfer
 - Influenced by relevance and learner motivation
 - Thinking and processes cross disciplines (Colley et al, 2012)
 - Reiterative Process: Learning is often not linear, so ongoing reflection can help students develop their own learning “frameworks” (Yancey, Robertson & Taczak, 2014)

Setting Goals

- Course Goals (1, 2, 3, 4): Continuously return to goals & achievement
 - Can include a formal reflection essay
 - Can be extended in a vertical curriculum
- Project Goals (1, 2, 3, 4)

Assignment Reflections & Annotations

- Project end notes (1, 2, 3)
- Project annotations (2, 4)

Ongoing Reflections

- Graded Reflection Journals (1, 2, 3)
 - Reading
 - Learning/Process
 - Self-assigned

Ongoing Reflections

- Research or Process Journals or Blogs (2, 3)
 - Instructor generated questions
 - Simple, direct Qs
- Reflecting on Journals (1, 2, 3, 4)
 - Reading, research, process, labs

Public or Private?



Public or Private?

- Access to other learners' reflections can be a powerful tool to collectively develop a conceptual understanding of a topic (Baggetun & Wasson, 2006)
- Journals led to more personal and emotional risks &
- Blogs led to more intellectual risks (Foster, 2015, p. 111-12)

Applications

- What are 1-2 ways that you might use reflective writing in your own class?
- Why? How would it help you achieve the goals that you set at the start?

Works Cited

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- <https://www.theodysseyonline.com/years-resolution-2016>