

**Tried & True Critical Reflection Strategies
For Engaged Teaching & Learning:
Principles & Practice**

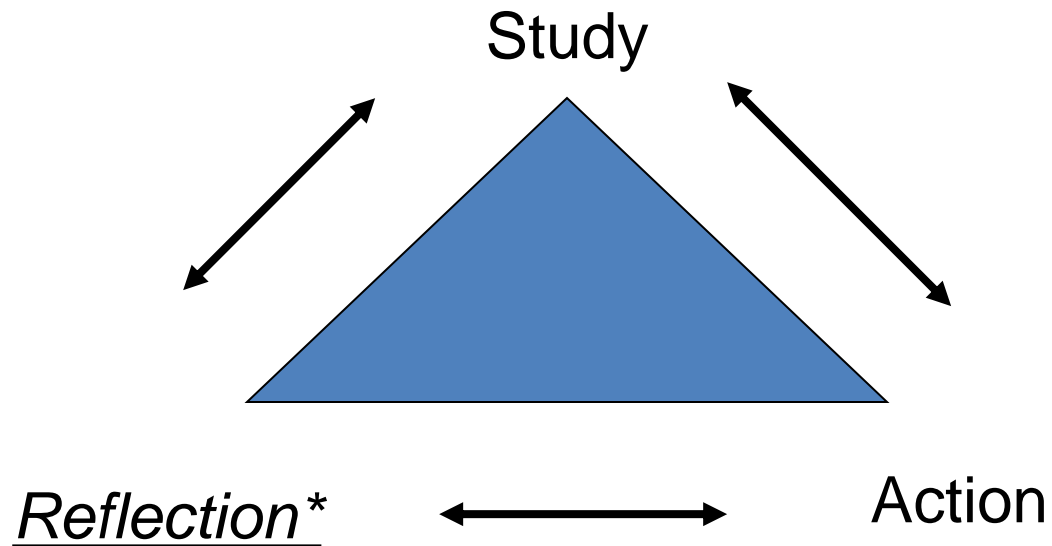
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- Half-day workshop in 50 minutes – apologies for warp speed!
- Define reflection
- Overview of terms & principles
- PRACTICAL methods
- Practical Application:
 - Goals
 - Formats
 - Techniques
 - Assessment

Reflection = Powerful Learning
Full Disclosure
AND Teaching Tool

Triangulation of Service-Learning




Reflection is....



The intentional
consideration of an
experience in light of
particular learning
objectives.

(Hatcher & Bringle, 1997).

Reports vs. Critical Reflection vs. Warbling

- Reports → *primary* audience is external
 - Instructor, consultant, board of directors, government agencies
- Reflection → *primary* audience is internal (the student) to make meaning of the experience + secondary audience (the instructor)
- Warbling:
 - Dear Diary entries
 - Warm fuzzies (this can & does happen – sometimes it is sincere...other times it's...well...)
 - I'll never be the same...
 - I'm so blessed...
 - I'm glad I got to help "these" people...they're so happy* 
- Critical reflection: "So What? + Now What?"
 - Challenge students' assumptions/stereotypes
 - Many times this is where the learning takes place
 - Rock their world (Shadow-side of Reflection)
 - Constructive & critical examination of self, society, and experience itself
 - Recognize the complexities of issues & action

Reflection can go beyond our technical definition to include things like...

- Reflection as assessing student growth
- Reflection as *teaching* tool
- Integration of theory and practice
- Integration of knowledge into personal life & action
- Consideration of the service-learning experience in the “bigger picture”
- Questioning our knowledge & understanding

Theoretical Foundations

Just a smattering of some theoretical models used in the strategies presented

- Dewey – Learning & Experience
- Kolb - Learning Cycle
- Schoen - Ladder of Reflection
- Yates & Youness - Levels of Transcendence
- Vygotsky – Constructivist Learning Theory
- Hondagneu-Sotelo & Raskoff - 3 Dimensions of Reflection

Methods of Reflection

- It's not *just* journaling.
- There is no “right” or “best” method...you don't have to use these if you don't want to.
- These techniques are “tried and true” and easy to use.
- Reflection has to be taught.*
- These methods can be combined and modified for various formats.
- Some work better in some situations and demographics than others.
- Reflection can be a teaching AND learning tool.
- Reflection is not JUST for service-learning.

SOME Methods of Reflection + Assessment

- Pre-flection
- ABCs
- Graffiti
- What? So what? Now what?
- Bradley's 3,2,1,0 Scoring Rubric

Rationale & Cautions for 3,2,1,0 Assessment Method

Adding points increases depth of responses
(vs. “Dear Diary” entries) + helps assess!

Students may “freak out” for getting a grade
for “reflection” based on past experiences
of “warbling”

There is ALWAYS a degree of subjectivity to
assessment.

3,2,1,0 Assessment Points

Based on Bradley's Gradient Assessment Method

- Level 1/1 Pt = cursory discussion without elaboration of “why” or “how”
- Level 2/2 Pts = deeper observation but still limited in context or application or interpretation
- Level 3/3 Pts = complex application, understanding & articulation
- 0 points for no discussion or incorrect response/info
- My personal practice → 9 point reflection entries about every two weeks → approx 15% of final grade

One Assessment Caveat

- The scoring procedures presented here focus on CONTENT....and NOT spelling, grammar, syntax, etc.

Pre – flection

- Powerful & simple technique
- Grounded in Constructivist Learning Theory
- Activates learners' existing knowledge and experience

Pre-flection: At the Beginning

- Students write down: (any or all of the following)
 - What their assumptions are a topic/term
 - What they think they' ll learn...(journal, written paper, index card, etc)
 - What they want to learn...
 - What they' re excited or anxious about
 - [My own experience in New Orleans]
- Collect, keep, redistribute, and re-flect

Pre-reflection: In Class

- Write down thoughts or definition of a key concept
 - Ex: What is service-learning?
 - Ex: What is intersectionality?
- Circulate definitions
- Pair up and share definitions
- Share what they've learned
 - (consider “recording/listing” these and collectively revisiting them later)

Pre-reflection: In Class

- Discover new perspectives
- Similar understandings
- Collect baseline data (see more below)
- Revisit their understanding/knowledge
- Assessment (optional):
 - 3,2,1,0 Scoring procedure
 - Another option = Dichotomous scoring
 - Did new discovery or knowledge occur? If “yes” ...1 and if “no” ...0
 - Calculate percentage rates of pre/post

Possible Application & Examples

- What are you excited or nervous about in preparing to work on this project?
- What is this project all about and why is it important?
- Going into this, what do you already know or understand?
- How can this project and/or setting help us grow as persons? As citizens?
- Terms/Concepts tied to a specific topic – EX: intersectionality
- Returning their pre-reflections at the end of an experience or course.

ABCs

Affect + Behavior + Cognition

- Oral or written reflection
 - Journal, graffiti poster for each
- Reflection framework
- Assessment and feedback
- Bridging and integrating engagement with learning

ABC

- Affect = Emotions, feelings, attitudes, assumptions + WHY
 - Gives students “permission” to grapple with cognitive dissonance
 - No points for “right” or “wrong” feelings
- Behavior = What have I done? What am I doing? What will I do?
- Cognitive connections to class content = *overt reference* to topic, term, skill
 - It’s NOT: “Oh, I learned about myself”

A Real Life Example...

- My community organizing SL course
- Topic = participatory democracy
- Activity = students developed evaluation rubric for “oral argument” in public hearings
- Tiani’s ABC response to this prompt:
 - As a class we spent time collectively creating an evaluation rubric for one of our assignments. AFFECT: What were you feeling during the process?
 - BEHAVIOR: Can you think of a time you had to work with others in a similar situation? What did you do? With new insight, how might you behave in the future?
 - COGNITION: What concepts/terms from class reflects this process and experience?

We were supposed to take some task that was really easy and define a very basic rubric. Well I was very frustrated with the whole process [AFFECT]. And it all made me see how a lot of people might think Communism is easier. First we were sitting there discussing and we found what I thought was a good rubric. Right? And all of the sudden one person raises his hand and says, “I don’t like this, it’s too much like this or that” and we spent at least half an hour trying to figure out something that was really easy. In the end, I think everyone just gave up and said, “you know what, I’m tired of talking about this, let’s just do it.” But as frustrated it made me feel, I actually understood much more about our government. [COGNITION] What we practiced in our exercise was what we could call an example of participatory democracy. The book says [quoting from the textbook] it is the idea that embraces active participation by the citizens in the community and workplace decision-making at a local level – it is rooted in the notion that whatever touches all should be judged by all. It requires much more than just voting for competing elitists. Through a process of decision, debate, and compromise, they link their concerns with the needs of the community.

It all sounds great in theory but when you actually try to and do it, it gets really frustrating. I don't even know if we had the best rubric that we could've had. I don't think anyone got what they wanted which could be bad or could be good. To contrast that with the democratic theory of elitism, I'm saying it is probably a whole lot easier if just did what a couple of people thought was OK. [Quoting from the textbook] The democratic theory of elitism theorizes that elites in power should make all the crucial decisions facing society and citizens should be rather passive in politics, generally participating for voting and competing elites, and periodic elections. Democratic elitists argue that the role expected of the citizen in a participatory setting is unrealistic and that too much participation will contribute to the instability of the political and economic system. This theory is normally something we look down on. And after doing this exercise and going over this, it really surprised me that I was like, "Yeah, we should do something more like that." So it really helped me see where a lot of our law makers are coming from when they don't want to listen to all these people – especially a lot of people I know in our class have a lot of views that aren't the most popular – it isn't what mainstream society is talking about.

We get really upset or get really frustrated when we go to talk to these politicians and we say, “Look, what about this?” and “Who cares about this little group of people over here?” We all get really frustrated when we feel the government is not addressing our needs. But when we did this exercise I could see how they view us. It’s that one person who raises their hand and they think they have the perfect policy or the policy they think will please a lot of groups and then there’s that one person who is the corner saying, “I don’t like it because of this.” [BEHAVIOR] I guess I’m normally that person – that one person who says, “No, no, you forgot about these people.” It really surprised me that when it happened in a big group, it was so easy for me to say, “Forget the little person, let’s just move on, let’s just do what everyone likes.”

It really surprised me how quickly I switched. It helped me understand why politicians do what they do. I learned how frustrating it can be. As I go and try to do more things I hope to take that understanding with me. I hope to try and show politicians that it's not just one person bringing up a concern that only effects a minor part of the population, but try and show them the idea that theses decisions benefit everyone, that helping the poor will make the whole community stronger. In addition to that, this spring I'll be doing an internship at the Capitol and I'm sure I'm going to get to see a lot of people and I'll probably get frustrated with all these people who care tourism in Provo City. I'm sure I'm going to get frustrated with all of these interest groups. But I hope to keep this exercise in mind. I want to have it help me have patience when I'm listening to these people. It just really blew my mind. I definitely think I have to take this when I go before Congress or push any issue that this will be very important to keep in mind. [BEHAVIOR]

- Explicitly teach the ABCs – students do not intuitively know how to reflect in these dimensions
- *Consider* providing a sample (pros/cons)
- Cognitive responses help determine students' understanding of critical concepts
- Over time, we've discovered the ABCs is a teaching tool as well as a learning tool
- Students began proposing their own reflection topics using ABCs as a framework

Explicit Prompts & Connections Between Learning + Service

- Pre-Nursing Course on Geriatrics – two students as companions to seniors in a nursing home visiting once a week
- Dementia & Cognitive Delays – During your next visit to your companion note any examples in speech/behavior that may suggest evidence of dementia as discussed in class. Otherwise, examples from elsewhere. Describe what you observed using concepts/terms from class [cognition]. Indicate how you responded or how you might respond had they occurred or if they occur in the future with a patient – this might include specific techniques discussed in class. How well did it work? Why/why not? Why did you choose this approach? What might you do differently in the future? [behavior]. Consider your own personal reaction to this behavior or similar moments you've experience from the past. How does this make you feel? How do you think family members of the patient themselves might feel in these circumstances? Why do you feel this way and why does it matters as a caregiver? [affect].

2 Things to Consider in Assessment of ABCs

- First – No right or wrong answer when expressing feelings
 - Not penalized for negative feelings
 - Articulate WHAT they're feeling and WHY
 - Some are uncomfortable/intimidated with this
 - Second – In COGNITION students must make overt references to content from the class
 - 3,2,1,0 pts – Affect
 - 3,2,1,0 pts – Behavior
 - 3,2,1,0 pts – Cognition
- (9 points possible → use to calculate percentages)

ABCs as Feedback

- Teacher's comments acknowledge student comments (and feelings)
- Tool to identify “issues” (negative stereotypes, power/privilege, etc.) to address in class or individually
- Note little to nothing articulated
- Explain why points were lost
- Encourage student to respond to all 3 components of the ABCs & re-submit (adjust grade as “first-time free-bie”)

Assessment Exercise

- Look at and score these two samples

ABCs -- Sample #1

We spent the last week reading and discussing cultural differences and behaviors. I have to admit that I wasn't all that into it when we first started going over this stuff and I even had a little trouble getting it. It didn't really make a lot of sense to me cause I hadn't seen examples. Well, this week I was tutoring in the after school program and I worked with this little boy from the Navajo reservation and I really saw this in action and I have a much better handle on all this stuff. He didn't make any eye contact with me. He kept his eyes down. At first I thought he was just shy or scared (or maybe a little bit of both) but I then realized he might have been showing respect. This was one of the things we read about....eye contact. Then when I asked him a question to check his reading comprehension, I expected a pretty basic and simple "yes" or "no" answer. Instead, he kind of went around and around with a lot of talking. First I thought he was just stalling or faking it. Then I remembered our class discussion about "story telling" in some cultures – how setting up history, characters, time, location and all that are important. We white Americans tend to just cut to the chase with abrupt responses. So now I have a better sense of at least two cultural communication differences based on my service project. This really helped me because I responded to him differently. Had I not known about this stuff, I might have treated him differently or thought he was just weird. I know there a lot of Native Americans around here [a reservation near by] and I see them a lot. Now I'll act or treat them better the next time I see or talk to them in my Dad's shop.

ABCs Sample #2

I really liked this project. It was lots of fun. I felt good knowing I helped these old people. They are not as creepy as I used to think. My grandparents are dead so I don't know about old people.

This is where & how reflection turns into a teaching tool.

Graffiti

- Public yet anonymous response to a topic
- Accommodates learning styles + engages “quiet” or non-participatory students
- Effective with a two-sided issue (but doesn't HAVE to be used this way)
- Poster paper placed on walls/tables
- Individuals or small groups rotate and respond in writing
- (My doc student's example + Saint Mary's College definition of SL process)

An Example...Sustainability In Environmental Science Course

■ Graffiti responses to...

- Advantages of hydrogen cells
- Disadvantages of hydrogen cells
- Advantages of solar power
- Disadvantages of solar power

■ Respond from various perspectives

- Oil company
- Environmental advocacy group
- Indigenous groups

Other Factors to Consider

- It can be simply listing ideas or examples (feelings?) without necessarily listing “pro or cons”
 - Example → Defining Service-learning
 - What is it? What is it not? What are best practice of SL? What are challenges/issues related to SL? (We did this with faculty at Saint Mary’s)
 - Later deeper development of ideas in journal or other methods to use 3,2,1,0 method
- It can be responding to a thought or quote or experience or art forms (e.g. photos, songs)
- It provides a “safer” venue for “shy” students to be actively engaged in a reflection activity

Going From Here

- Large Group Discussion
- Small Group or Dyads
 - Saint Mary's College faculty developed definitions & rubrics for Service-learning + Civic Engagement by distilling graffiti responses
 - What is it? What is it not? What are best practice of SL? What are challenges/issues related to SL?
- Deeper/continued reflection out-of-class in writing assignment (possibly using ABCs)

What? So what? Now what?

Campus Outreach Opportunity League (C.O.O.L.)

- **WHAT?** = Content...A topic or issue is identified, defined, presented, and discussed
- **SO WHAT?** = Rationale or importance of the topic or issue
- **NOW WHAT?** = Consider the next steps

More Thoughts on Assessing the WHATS

- Providing “what” information can be straightforward & not necessarily very rich
 - Surfing the web for factoids and/or “right answer”
- Exploring/articulating the “So what?” requires critical thinking & support for an idea or position...perhaps weigh this more
- ...*Keep in mind...you may not “agree” with this response...but is it “viable” or “correct”? –
Once upon a time at another workshop

What? So What? Now What?

Sample #1 – Jr. High Student's Written Journal Response

Bottled water is super bad! We learned in class that the bottles are made from oil which makes us even more dependent on oil. Also, people don't recycle plastic bottles so they just go in the landfills or trash up the place. On top of that, they have to be shipped from other places which also uses fossil fuels when all I need to do is walk over to the faucet which doesn't take any transportation by vehicles. Bottle water is not better for you. In fact, the plastic may be bad for you and cause cancer. The last thing is cost. We pay much less for water from the tap than we do for bottled water so why waste so much money on something we already pay for? Now I use an aluminum water bottle and just fill it up at the water fountain. I rag on my older sister who always buys bottled water at the "sev" [7-11 convenience store]. It makes me mad that a bunch of companies are making so much money on something we don't really need. I get even madder at the people who buy bottled water. I am going to tell all my friends and relatives to stop buying it. That's one thing I can do to help the environment and that makes me feel good. I know I'm making a difference and showing up my sister. I think we should make bottled water illegal. I am going to write a letter to my school newspaper about this.

This is the example where an instructor's personal politics came into play.

Actual Example

Social Work course on Geriatrics:

- WHAT are the new Medicare Part C regulations?
- SO WHAT are the implications for you as a Social Worker? For your clients?
- NOW WHAT are the next steps for you as you meet with your clients? What/how will you address this and educate them?
(this last part became part of their S.L. activity & assignment through application)

Two Assessment Ideas

- Most basic: dichotomous 0/1 scoring for each of the “Whats” – they either provided some correct/accurate response or they didn’t for a total possible 3 points < or >
- Gradient scoring for each of the “Whats” for a possible total of 9 points:
 - 3 = complex, complete, innovative
 - 2 = adequate presentation of ideas/information
 - 1 = marginal presentation of ideas/information
 - 0 = no presentation/articulateion of ideas/information

What? So what? Now what?

- Combine with journal entries or threaded discussions
 - In class discuss WHAT + SO WHAT with out-of-class assignment on NOW WHAT using the ABCs
- Pair-up students and go through all 3 steps – perhaps use Graffiti paper

Whew!

More Information

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Closing Reflection Activity: Putting It *ALL* Together

What...is reflection?

The intentional consideration of an experience in light of specific learning objectives.

So What?

What difference does it make (if at all) at knowing and/or using reflection?

Now What am I going to do with it and what I learned today (if anything)?

Take Aways???? Questions????

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