

Guidelines for Reflective Writing

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To help you in writing critically reflective pieces, here is some information that may assist you.

First, a little background theory and information.

What is 'Reflection'?

- ❖ **Reflection is a form of thinking** that deals with more complex or unstructured issues in a considered manner. It is a matter of 'making sense of ideas, or 're-ordering thoughts' to achieve an outcome.
- ❖ **Reflection is an active process.**
- ❖ **Reflection takes into account the past, the present and the future.**

"Reflection is a form of mental processing – a form of thinking – that we use to fulfil a purpose or to achieve some anticipated outcome. It is applied to relatively complicated or unstructured ideas for which there is no obvious solution, and is largely based on the further processing of knowledge, understanding and emotions we already possess".

(Moon, 1999a, 23; Moon, 1999b, 10)

"Critical reflection is a deliberate process where the candidate takes time, within the course of their work, to focus on their performance and think carefully about the thinking that led to particular actions, what happened and what they are learning from the experience, in order to inform what they might do in the future." (QCA, 2001).

Why Reflect?

Reflection enhances the process of learning and makes it more meaningful because:

- It slows the pace of learning
- It develops and improves the process of learning to learn i.e. coping with the 'messy-ness' of learning as a process
- It develops a sense of ownership of learning
- It develops emotional intelligence
- It helps to make sense of new/unstructured material, linking it to what is already known and if necessary, modifying prior knowledge and understandings to accommodate the new ideas and generate new knowledge.
- We use reflection in order to learn from situations in which there is no curriculum – but where we have to make sense of diverse observations, new knowledge, ideas and data as well as personal research (eg by asking questions).
- By reflecting in a written form, in a sense it becomes new material of learning and we can reinforce the learning or check our understanding of it, using it as a feedback system.

Outcomes of Reflection

Reflection can be used to develop specific and tangible outcomes, for example:
(based on Moon, 1999)

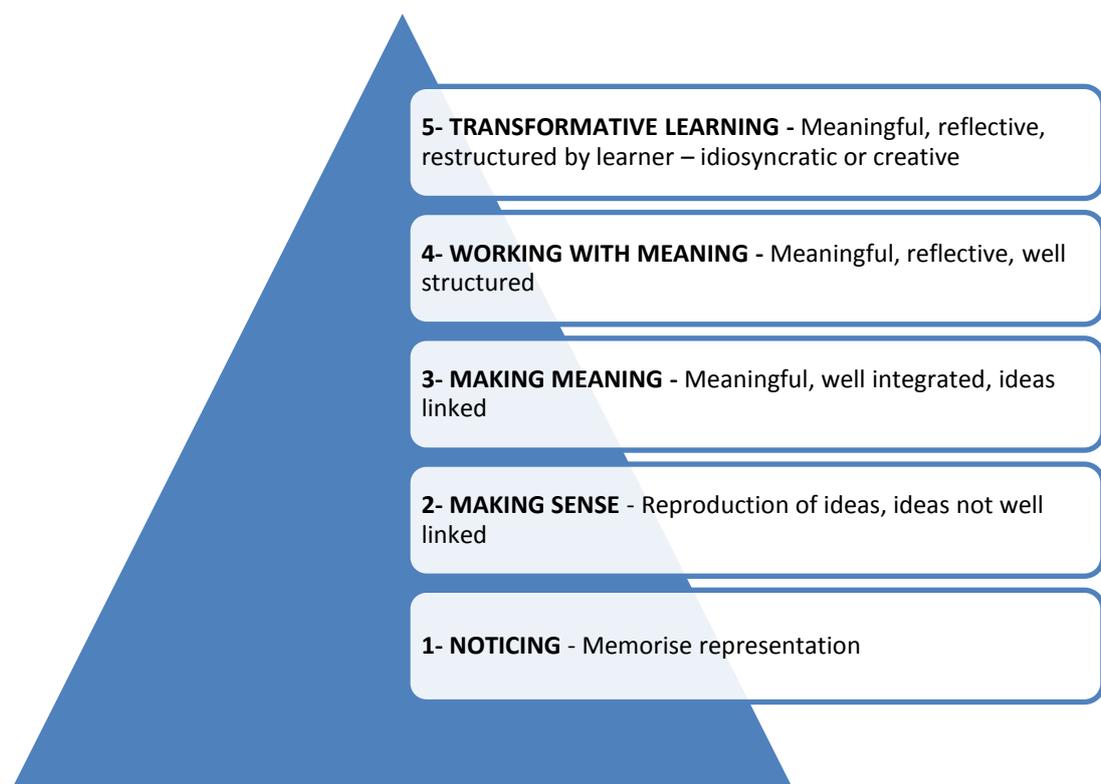
- ✓ Develop new knowledge/material for further reflection
- ✓ Formulate an action plan
- ✓ Construct a critical review
- ✓ Continuing personal and professional development
- ✓ Reflect on the process of learning or personal functioning (metacognition)
- ✓ Develop a theory
- ✓ Make a decision
- ✓ Resolve uncertainty
- ✓ Solve a problem
- ✓ Empowerment and knowledge about feelings and emotions leading to empowerment and emotional development
- ✓ Unexpected outcomes such as images, ideas (that could be solutions to dilemmas)

How Reflection links to Learning and Knowing

Developing the ability to reflect will help advance students along the stages of LEARNING and also along the stages of KNOWING.

5 Stages of Learning

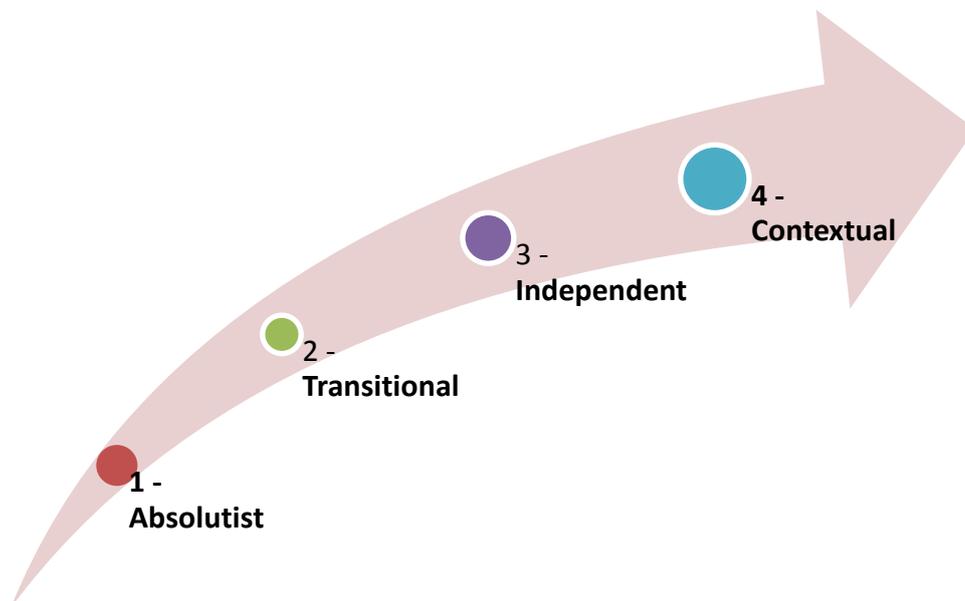
Moon (1999b) derives five stages of learning and indicates what she terms 'the best possible representation of learning' (BPL) which can occur at any one level. The table below shows her mapping, and how **the ability to carry out meaningful reflective learning is indicative of the highest level of deep learning i.e. transformative learning**. While students will be restricted in the BPL's they can demonstrate depending on the level of learning they have reached, exposure to progressively higher levels of activities will move students up through the levels until transformative learning is possible. One of those activities is the encouragement to be critically reflective. Most importantly this 'upgrading' of learning will require a deliberate and conscious intention on the part of the learner (Moon, 1999b, 149).



5 Stages of Learning

4 Stages of Knowing

There are factors in common between the ability to reflect deeply and the attainment of increasingly sophisticated stages of knowing. This exercise may help you to understand why reflection sometimes can be a challenging task (This is based on Baxter Magolda, 1992).



4 Stages of Knowing

Stages of Knowing	Description	Examples
<p><u>1 Absolutist</u></p> <p>Knowledge is certain or absolute</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The least developed stage. Knowledge is seen as certain or absolute. Learners believe that absolute answers exist. Uncertainty is because there is not yet access to the 'right' answers. Knowledge is a commodity and learners are there to 'get' it and teachers 'pass it over'. Formal learning is seen as a matter of absorption of the knowledge of the experts (eg teachers). Assessment is simply checking what the learner has 'acquired'. 	<p><i>I just like to listen – just sit and take notes from an overhead. The material is right there. And if you have a problem, you can ask the teacher and he can explain it to you. You hear it, you see it and then you can write it down (p 73)</i></p> <p><i>I like teachers who will give you as much as you need and not just leave you with a little small idea and have you talk it out. I like it when they give you a lot of information. Then you can discuss it (p31)</i></p>
<p><u>3 Transitional</u></p> <p>There is partial certainty and partial uncertainty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are doubts about the certainty of knowledge. Learners accept that there is some uncertainty. Authors in literature may differ in view because there is uncertainty. Learners see themselves as needing to understand rather than just acquire knowledge so that they may make judgements as to how best to apply it. Teachers are seen as facilitating the understanding and the application of knowledge and assessment concerns these qualities, and not just acquisition. 	<p><i>We'd start a class having read the material and then the lecturer would walk in and say something completely wrong. A shout would break out from the back of the class and we'd just start knocking at each other going back and forth at the same topic for the entire class period. Doing that just ingrains in your mind that no matter how right you think you are, you've got to hear somebody else out because they're to some extent right too (p105)</i></p>

<p><u>4 Independent</u></p> <p>Learning is uncertain - everyone has their own beliefs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The embryonic form of the more sophisticated stage of contextual knowing. • Independent knowers recognise the uncertainty of knowledge, and feel that everyone has her own opinion or beliefs. • The learning processes are changed by this new view because now learners can expect to have an opinion of their own and can begin to think through issues and to express themselves in a valid manner. • They have to make judgements and they also regard their peers as having useful contributions to make in helping them to make up their minds. • They expect teachers to support the development of independent views, and to provide a context for exploration. • They do not sufficiently contextualise their understanding and cannot yet see the role of context as having a bearing on the judgement. 	<p><i>I've decided that the only person that you can really depend on is yourself. Each individual has their own truth. No-one has the right to decide 'this has to be your truth too' (p136)</i></p> <p><i>It's funny. You read the same thing yet people see three different stories or three different meanings or interpretations. It helps you to reaffirm your own opinion, modify it or whatever is necessary (p50)</i></p> <p><i>I guess I take everything in and then I go home at night and kind of sort out what I want and what I don't want. Some things, I guess – maybe because of my morals and values – will sit better with me and will seem like fact for me. And other things, I'm just like "I don't really think so". And I throw them out (p141)</i></p>
<p><u>2 Contextual</u></p> <p>Knowledge is constructed and any judgement must be made on the basis of the evidence in that context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is understood to be constructed and any judgement must be made on the basis of the evidence in that context. • The way in which knowledge is constructed is understood to relate to the consideration of the quality of knowledge claims in the given context. • Opinions must now be supported by evidence and recognition of contextual influence. • The knower themselves and the reader/receiver of the knowledge are both seen as relevant to the process of knowing. • The view of the teacher is of a partner in the development of appropriate knowledge. • The learner sees themselves as a constructor of knowledge 	<p><i>As you hear other people's opinions, you piece together what you really think. Who has the valid point? Whose point is not valid in your opinion? And (you) come to some other new understanding. Even if it's the same basic belief, maybe (you will be) able to look at it from a more (multi)dimensional perspective (p173)</i></p> <p><i>I spent time getting a general feel for the topic as a whole before I made any generalisations. And then, after that, I started piecing together any general ideas that I believed in or general principles that I then tried to defend....And if it seemed like I was going against that principle too often or disagreeing with it too often, then I would sit down and reevaluate. Like maybe I'd learned something new that changed my way of thinking. So then I'd have to sit down and reevaluate that and then possibly change my mind accordingly (p174)</i></p>

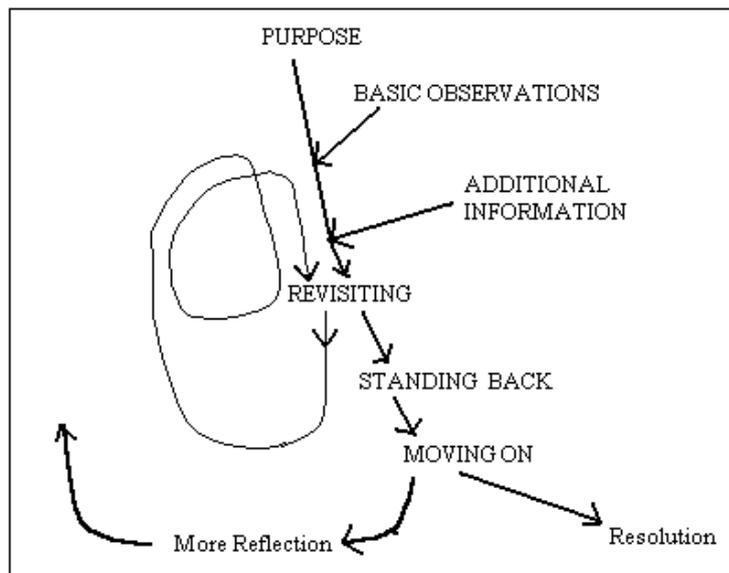
How to Develop Deep Reflection

Developing deep reflection takes some practice. Ideally, the deepening of reflection entails the following shifts:

- from description to reflective account
- from no questions to questions to responding to questions
- emotional influence is recognised, and then handled increasingly effectively
- there is a 'standing back from the event'
- self-questioning, challenge to own ideas
- recognition of relevance of prior experience
- the taking into account of others' views
- metacognition - review of own reflective processes

6 Steps to the Process of Reflection

There are 6 steps to Moon's model on how to being writing a reflective piece.



Steps to Reflection – simplified model adapted from Moon (1999a)

The first three steps are the basic steps required for later reflection:

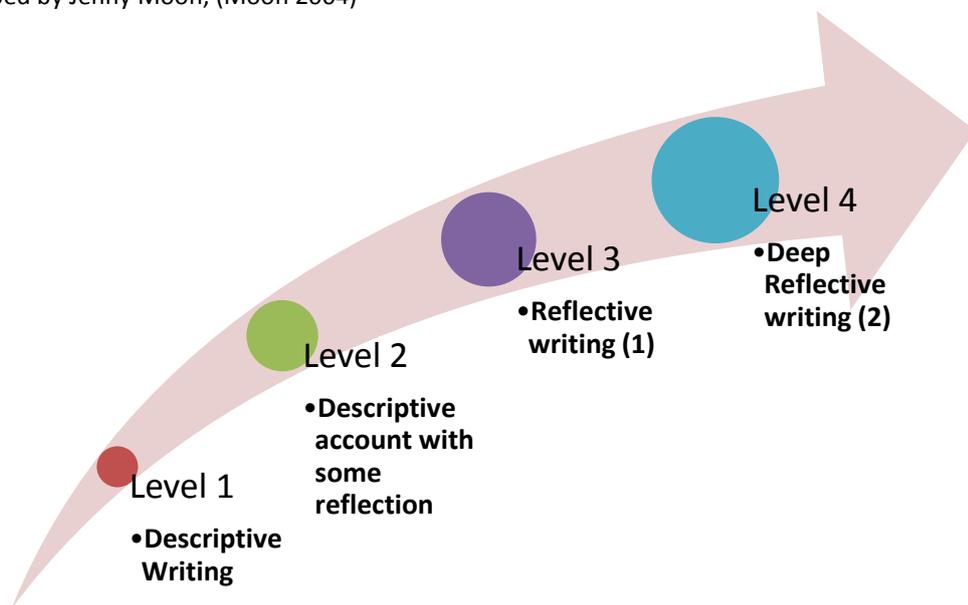
1. PURPOSE – an understanding of the purpose of the reflective activity
2. BASIC OBSERVATIONS – of the event
3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – the addition of further observations, new information etc.
4. REVISITING - The first true level of reflection. Earlier reflections are reviewed and there is a possibility for 'mulling over' issues and problems, so that it is possible to view an issue or event from a different point of view (Moon, 1999a, 107). Consideration can be given here to theorising and planning experiments or new actions.

5. **STANDING BACK** - takes the reflection to a new level as the experiments or new actions are tested and the results discussed (e.g. put yourself in someone else's shoes and reflect on they (might) see the situation). This can result in:
6. **MOVING ON** - 'something having been learned or solved ... there is a sense of moving on'. This may resolve the problem, or further possibilities for reflection may be generated, And the cycle of reflection starts again.

Reflection takes place in steps 4, 5 and 6. The quality and depth of reflection is revealed in the way it is structured and written, which generally falls into one of 4 levels.

4 Levels of Reflective Writing

Material developed by Jenny Moon, (Moon 2004)



Level 1 - Descriptive Writing

This account is descriptive and it contains little reflection. It may tell a story but from one point of view at a time and generally one point at a time is made. Ideas tend to be linked by the sequence of the account / story rather than by meaning. The account describes what happened, sometimes mentioning past experiences, sometimes anticipating the future – but all in the context of an account of the event. There may be references to emotional reactions but they are not explored and not related to behaviour. The account may relate to ideas or external information, but these are not considered or questioned and the possible impact on behaviour or the meaning of events is not mentioned. There is little attempt to focus on particular issues. Most points are made with similar weight. The writing could hardly be deemed to be reflective at all. It could be a reasonably written account of an event that would serve as a basis on which reflection might start, though a good description that precedes reflective accounts will tend to be more focused and to signal points and issues for further reflection.

Level 2 - Descriptive account with some reflection

This is a descriptive account that signals points for reflection while not actually showing much reflection. The basic account is descriptive in the manner of description above. There is little addition of ideas from outside the event, reference to alternative viewpoints or attitudes to others, comment and so on. However, the account is more than just a story. It is focused on the event as if there is a big question or there are questions to be asked and answered. Points on which reflection could occur are signalled. There is recognition of the worth of further exploring but it does not go very far. In other words, asking the questions makes it more than a descriptive account, but the lack of attempt to respond to the questions means that there is little actual analysis of the events. The questioning does begin to suggest a 'standing back from the event' in (usually) isolated areas of the account. The account may mention emotional reactions, or be influenced by emotion. Any influence may be noted, and possibly questioned. There is a sense of recognition this is an incident from which learning can be gained, – but the reflection does not go sufficiently deep to enable the learning to begin to occur.

Level 3 - Reflective writing (1)

There is description but it is focused with particular aspects accentuated for reflective comment. There may be a sense that the material is being mulled around. It is no longer a straight-forward account of an event, but it is definitely reflective. There is evidence of external ideas or information and where this occurs, the material is subjected to reflection. The account shows some analysis and there is recognition of the worth of exploring motives or reasons for behavior. Where relevant, there is willingness to be critical of the action of self or others. There is likely to be some self-questioning and willingness also to recognise the overall effect of the event on self. In other words, there is some 'standing back' from the event. There is recognition of any emotional content, a questioning of its role and influence and an attempt to consider its significance in shaping the views presented. There may be recognition that things might look different from other perspectives, that views can change with time or the emotional state. The existence of several alternative points of view may be acknowledged but not analysed. In other words, in a relatively limited way the account may recognise that frames of reference affect the manner in which we reflect at a given time but it does not deal with this in a way that links it effectively to issues about the quality of personal judgement.

Level 4 - Deep Reflective writing (2)

Description now only serves the process of reflection, covering the issues for reflection and noting their context. There is clear evidence of standing back from an event and there is mulling over and internal dialogue. The account shows deep reflection, and it incorporates a recognition that the frame of reference with which an event is viewed can change. A metacognitive stance is taken (ie critical awareness of one's own processes of mental functioning – including reflection). The account probably recognises that events exist in a historical or social context that may be influential on a person's reaction to them. In other words, multiple perspectives are noted. Self-questioning is evident (an 'internal dialogue' is set up at times) deliberating between different views of personal behaviour and that of others).

The view and motives of others are taken into account and considered against those of the writer. There is recognition of the role of emotion in shaping the ideas and recognition of the manner in which different emotional influences can frame the account in different ways. There is recognition that prior experience, thoughts (own and other's) interact with the production of current behaviour. There is observation that there is learning to be gained from the experience and points for learning are noted. There is recognition that the personal frame of reference can change according to the emotional state in which it is written, the acquisition of new information, the review of ideas and the effect of time passing.

An Exemplar Exercise on Reflection

(Exercise devised by Jenny Moon, Bournemouth University)

In the following exemplar exercise there are four accounts of an incident in a park. They are recounted by Annie, who was involved in the incident herself. The accounts are written at different depths of reflection. This exercise:

- Shows what reflective writing looks like
- Demonstrates that there are different depths in reflection
- Shows that deeper reflection probably equates with better learning.

As you read each of the four accounts, consider what features you think are reflective, and identify features of the reflection that progressively change through the accounts.

Incident in the Park



The Park (2)

I went through the park the other day. The sun shone sometimes but large clouds floated across the sky in a breeze. It reminded me of a time that I was walking on St David's Head in Wales – when there was a hard and bright light and anything I looked at was bright. It was really quite hot – so much nicer than the day before which was rainy. I went over to the children's playing field. I had not been there for a while and wanted to see the improvements. There were several children there and one, in particular, I noticed, was in too many clothes for the heat. The children were running about and this child became red in the face and began to slow down and then he sat. He must have been about 10. Some of the others called him up again and he got to his feet. He stumbled into the game for a few moments, tripping once or twice. It seemed to me that he had just not got the energy to lift his feet. Eventually he stumbled down and did not get up but he was still moving and he shuffled into a half sitting and half lying position watching the other children and I think he was calling out to them. I don't know.

Anyway, I had to get on to get to the shop to buy some meat for the chilli that my children had asked for their party. The twins had invited many friends round for an end-of-term celebration of the beginning of the summer holidays. They might think that they have cause to celebrate but it makes a lot more work for me when they are home. I find that their holiday time makes a lot more work.

It was the next day when the paper came through the door – in it there was a report of a child who had been taken seriously ill in the park the previous day. He was fighting for his life in hospital and they said that the seriousness of the situation was due to the delay before he was brought to hospital. The report commented on the fact that he had been lying unattended for half an hour before someone saw him. By then the other children had gone. It said that that several passers-by might have seen him looking ill and even on the ground and the report went on to ask why passers-by do not take action when they see that something is wrong. The article was headed 'Why do they 'Walk on by'? I have been terribly upset since then. James says I should not worry – it is just a headline.

The Park (1)

This piece tells the story. Sometimes it mentions past experiences, sometimes anticipates the future but all in the context of the account of the story. There might be references to emotional state, but the role of the emotions on action is not explored.

Ideas of others are mentioned but not elaborated or used to investigate the meaning of the events.

The account is written only from one point of view – that of Annie.

Generally ideas are presented in a sequence and are only linked by the story. They are not all relevant or focused

In fact – you could hardly deem this to be reflective at all. It is very descriptive. It could be a reasonably written account of an event that could serve as a basis on which reflection might start, though it hardly signals any material for reflection – other than the last few words

The Park (2)

I went to the park the other day. I was going to the supermarket to get some meat to make the chilli that I had promised the children. They were having one of their end-of-term celebrations with friends. I wonder what drew me to the playground and why I ended up standing and watching those children playing with a rough old football? I am not sure as I don't usually look at other people's children – I just did. Anyway there were a number of kids there. I noticed, in particular, one child who seemed to be very overdressed for the weather. I try now to recall what he looked like - his face was red. He was a boy of around 10 – not unlike Charlie was at that age – maybe that is why I noticed him to start with when he was running around with the others. But then he was beginning to look distressed. I felt uneasy about him – sort of maternal but I did not do anything. What could I have done? I remember thinking, I had little time and the supermarket would get crowded. What a strange way of thinking, in the circumstances!

In retrospect I wish I had acted. I ask myself what stopped me - but I don't know what I might have done at that point. Anyway he sat down, looking absolutely exhausted and as if he had no energy to do anything. A few moments later, the other children called him up to run about again. I felt more uneasy and watched as he got up and tried to run, then fell, ran again and fell and half sat and half lay. Still I did nothing more than look – what was going on with me?

Eventually I went on I tell myself now that it was really important to get to the shops. It was the next day when the paper came through the door that I had a real shock. In the paper there was a report of a child who had been taken seriously ill in the park the previous day. He was fighting for his life in the hospital and the situation was much more serious because there had been such a delay in getting help. The report commented on the fact that he had been lying, unattended, for half an hour or more. At first, I wondered why the other children had not been more responsible. The article went on to say that several passers-by might have seen him playing and looking ill and the report questioned why passers-by do not take action when they see that something is wrong.

The event has affected me for some days but I do not know where to go or whom to tell. I do want to own up to my part in it to someone though.

The Park (2)

In this account there is a description of the same events. There is very little addition of ideas from outside the event – reference to attitudes of others, comments.

The account is more than a story though. It is focused on the event as if there is a big question to be asked and answered.

In the questioning there is recognition of the worth of exploring the motives for behaviour – but it does not go very far. In other words, asking the questions makes it more than a descriptive account, but the lack of attempt to respond to the questions means that there is little actual analysis of the events.

Annie is critical of her actions and in her questions, signals this. The questioning of action does mean that Annie is standing back from the event to a small extent. There is a sense that she recognises that this is a significant incident, with learning to be gained – but the reflection does not go sufficiently deep to enable the learning to begin to occur.

The Park (3)

The incident happened in Ingle Park and it is very much still on my mind. There was a child playing with others. He looked hot and unfit and kept sitting down but the other children kept on getting him back up and making him play with them. I was on my way to the shop and only watched the children for a while before I walked on. Next day it was reported in the paper that the child had been taken to hospital seriously ill – very seriously ill. The report said that there were several passers-by in the park who had seen the child looking ill and who had done nothing. It was a scathing report about those who do not take action in such situations.

Reading the report, I felt dreadful and it has been very difficult to shift the feelings. I did not stop to see to the child because I told myself that I was on my way to the shops to buy food for a meal that I had to cook for the children's party – what do I mean that *I had to* cook it?. Though I saw that the child was ill, I didn't do anything. It is hard to say what I was really thinking at the time – to what degree I was determined to go on with my day in the way I had planned it (the party really was not that important was it?). Or did I genuinely not think that the boy was ill – but just over-dressed and a bit tired? To what extent did I try to make convenient excuses and to what extent was my action based on an attempt to really understand the situation? Looking back, I could have cut through my excuses at the time – rather than now.

I did not go over to the child and ask what was wrong but I should have done. I could have talked to the other children - and even got one of the other children to call for help. I am not sure if the help would have been ambulance or doctor at that stage – but it does not matter now. If he had been given help then, he might not be fighting for his life.

It would be helpful to me if I could work out what I was really thinking and why I acted as I did. This event has really shaken me to my roots – more than I would have expected. It made me feel really guilty. I do not usually do wrong, in fact I think of myself as a good person. This event is also making me think about actions in all sorts of areas of my life. It reminds me of some things in the past as when my uncle died – but then again I don't really think that that is relevant - he was going to die anyway. My bad feelings then were due to sheer sadness and some irrational regrets that I did not visit him on the day before. Strangely it also reminds me of how bad I felt when Charlie was ill while we went on that anniversary weekend away. As I think more about Charlie being ill, I recognise that there are commonalities in the situations. I also keep wondering if I knew that boy....

The Park (3)

The description is succinct – just sufficient to raise the issues. Extraneous information is not added. It is not a story. The focus is on the attempt to reflect on the event and to learn from it. There is more of a sense of Annie standing back from the event in order to reflect better on her actions and in order to be more effectively critical.

There is more analysis of the situation and an evident understanding that it was not a simple situation – that there might be alternative explanations or actions that could be justified equally effectively.

The description could be said to be slightly narrow (see The Park (4)) as Annie is not acknowledging that there might be other ways of perceiving the situation – other points of view. She does not seem to be recognising that her reflection is affected by her frame of reference at the time or now. It is possible, for example, that her experience with Charlie (last paragraph) – or her question about knowing the boy have influenced the manner in which she reacted. It might not just be a matter of linking up other events, but of going beyond and checking out the possibility that her frame of reference might have been affected by the prior experiences.

The Park (4)

It happened in Ingle Park and this event is very much still on my mind. It feels significant. There was a child playing with others. He looked hot and unfit and kept sitting down but the other children kept on getting him back up and making him play with them. I was on my way to the shop and only watched the children for a while before I walked on. Next day it was reported in the paper that the child had been taken to hospital seriously ill – very seriously ill. The report said that there were several passers-by in the park who had seen the child looking ill and who had done nothing. It was a scathing report about those who do not take action in such situation.

It was the report initially that made me think more deeply. It kept coming back in my mind and over the next few days - I begun to think of the situation in lots of different ways. Initially I considered my urge to get to the shop – regardless of the state of the boy. That was an easy way of excusing myself – to say that I had to get to the shop. Then I began to go through all of the agonising as to whether I could have mis-read the situation and really thought that the boy was simply over-dressed or perhaps play-acting or trying to gain sympathy from me or the others. Could I have believed that the situation was all right? All of that thinking, I now notice, would also have let me off the hook – made it not my fault that I did not take action at the time.

I talked with Tom, about my reflections on the event – on the incident, on my thinking about it at the time and then immediately after. He observed that my sense of myself as a 'good person who always lends a helping hand when others need help' was put in some jeopardy by it all. At the time and immediately after, it might have been easier to avoid shaking my view of myself than to admit that I had avoided facing up to the situation and admitting that I had not acted as 'a good person'. With this hindsight, I notice that I can probably find it more easy to admit that I am not always 'a good person' and that I made a mistake in retrospect than immediately after the event. I suspect that this may apply to other situations.

As I think about the situation now, I recall some more of the thoughts – or were they feelings mixed up with thoughts? I remember a sense at the time that this boy looked quite scruffy and reminded me of a child who used to play with Charlie. We did not feel happy during the brief period of their friendship because this boy was known as a bully and we were uneasy either that Charlie would end up being bullied, or that Charlie would learn to bully. Funnily enough we were talking about this boy – I now remember – at the dinner table the night before. The conversation had reminded me of all of the agonising about the children's friends at the time. The fleeting thought / feeling was possibly something like this:– if this boy is like

The Park (4)

The account is succinct and to the point. There is some deep reflection here that is self-critical and questions the basis of the beliefs and values on which the behaviour was based.

There is evidence of standing back from the event, of Annie treating herself as an object acting within the context.

There is also an internal dialogue – a conversation with herself in which she proposes and further reflects on alternative explanations.

She shows evidence of looking at the views of others (Tom) and of considering the alternative point of view, and learning from it.

She recognises the significance of the effect of passage of time on her reflection –eg that her personal frame of reference at the time may have influenced her actions and that a different frame of reference might have lead to different results.

She notices that the proximity of other, possibly unrelated events (the dinner-time conversation) have an effect either possibly on her actual behaviour and her subsequent reflection – or possibly on her reflective processes only. She notices that she can be said to be reconstructing the event in retrospect – creating a story around it that may not be 'true'.

She recognises that there may be no conclusion to this situation – but that there are still things to be learnt from it. She has also been able to reflect on her own process of reflecting (acted metacognitively), recognising that her process influenced the outcome.

one I did not feel comfortable with – then maybe he deserves to get left in this way. Maybe he was a brother of the original child. I remember social psychology research along the lines of attributing blame to victims to justify their plight. Then it might not have been anything to do with Charlie's friend.

So I can see how I looked at that event and perhaps interpreted it in a manner that was consistent with my emotional frame of mind at the time. Seeing the same events without that dinner-time conversation might have led me to see the whole thing in an entirely different manner and I might have acted differently. The significance of this whole event is chilling when I realise that my lack of action nearly resulted in his death – and it might have been because of an attitude that was formed years ago in relation to a different situation.

This has all made me think about how we view things. The way I saw this event at the time was quite different to the way I see it now – even this few days later. Writing an account at the time would have been different to the account – or several accounts that I would write now. I cannot know what 'story' is 'true'. The bullying story may be one that I have constructed retrospectively - fabricated. Interestingly I can believe that story completely.

Assessing Reflection – A Sample

Rubric Moon's 6 Steps of Reflection can be used as a basis for assessing reflective writing. The initial three steps attract a relatively low grade (perhaps D/E) with a satisfactory grade C for evidence of REVISITING, and higher grades A/B for STANDING BACK and MOVING ON. This is a basic foundation for assessment, as the ability to reach high levels of reflection depends to some extent on students giving themselves time to revisit earlier entries and build on them. This may not always be possible for all reflective exercises, however, student awareness of these higher levels may make their attainment more possible.

The reflective rubric for the Intercultural Management course (3004IBA) is included below.

Try it yourself: 12 Guiding Questions to help you develop Critical Reflection

(Burton, Kelley J. and McNamara, Judith (2009) Assessing reflection skills in law using criterion-referenced assessment. Legal Education Review, 19(1-2). pp. 171-188.

1. What happened that most surprised you?
2. What patterns can you recognise in your experience?
3. What was the most fulfilling part of it? And the least fulfilling part of it? What does that suggest to you about your values?
4. What happened that contradicted your prior beliefs? What happened that confirmed your prior beliefs?
5. How do you feel about that experience now compared with how you felt about it at the time?
6. What does the experience suggest to you about your strengths?
7. What does the experience suggest to you about your weaknesses and opportunities for development?
8. How else could you view that experience?
9. What did you learn from that experience about how you react?
10. What other options did you have at the time?
11. Is there anything about the experience that was familiar to you?
12. What might you do differently as a result of that experience and your reflections on it?

RUBRIC (3004IBA)	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
<p>Overall Summary of Quality and Depth of Reflection</p> <p>(10 marks)</p>	<p>Reasoning and Reconstructing.</p> <p>Critical Reflection. Includes not only an analytical discussion, but also a contextual awareness, noting multiple perspectives, moving beyond emotional past and personal perspective to consider the issues in context. There is clear evidence of self-questioning, the ability to stand back from an event, and recognition of emotion and experience in shaping behaviour/beliefs. Integrates observations into relationship with theoretical concepts/experience involving high level of conceptualization/ transformation.</p>	<p>Relating.</p> <p>Conversational Reflection. Writing has moved from descriptive to analytical writing, and reveals alternative ways of judging or explaining events, with reflection on emotions and or behaviour, but may show inconsistent reflections</p>	<p>Responding.</p> <p>Account is descriptive with basic reflection. Questions are responded to, providing some reference to alternative perspectives, and aspects where reflection could occur are identified. However, issues are generally considered on from only one perspective, and even though there is recognition of the worth of further exploring, it does not go very far.</p>	<p>Reporting.</p> <p>Account is descriptive. Reports/retells with minimal transformation or reflection. No added or alternative observations or analysis, where ideas tend to be linked by the sequence of the account / story rather than by meaning.</p>

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
<p>Purposeful Contextualisation</p> <p>Analysis of what is known in the light of experience and theory.</p> <p>(3 marks)</p>	<p>Seeks a deep understanding of why something has happened; explores or analyses a concept or event, asks questions, looks for answers. Description now only serves the process of reflection, covering the issues for reflection and noting their context. Solves inconsistencies between expectations from previous knowledge and experience in practice, with broad theoretical/scholarly consideration to label and better understand. There is recognition that prior experience, thoughts (own and other's) interact with the production of current behaviour.</p>	<p>Makes logical connections between new and previous knowledge. There is description but it is focused with particular aspects accentuated for reflective comment. There is a sense that the material is being mulled around. It is no longer a straight-forward account of an event, but it is definitely reflective. There is evidence of external ideas or information, with the material is subjected to reflection, and with some theoretical/scholarly consideration, though limited in its scope.</p>	<p>Sets out what happened and why it happened, with some addition of ideas beyond the event e.g. reference to alternative viewpoints, attitudes to others, comments etc. Some self-assessment, but observations or judgements are given superficial reasons. Surface understanding of relationships or connections to prior experience. Any questions asked show little actual analysis of events, even though there is some theoretical/scholarly reference.</p>	<p>Sets out what happened, with a focus on practical details rather than their significance. Any observations or judgment are made without detailing reasons for judgment. Rhetorical questions are posed with no attempt to answer, and without theoretical/scholarly consideration.</p>
<p>Personal development</p> <p>Assessment and Application of learning to development of existing knowledge, emotions, values, and beliefs.</p> <p>(3 marks)</p>	<p>There is evidence of critical awareness of one's own thoughts and beliefs and how these form and change. Self-questioning evidence ('internal dialogue') that considers different views and motives of one's own and others' personal behaviour. There is awareness of contextual considerations (historical, social, cultural, political) and underpinning assumptions that influence one's reaction. Recognises that one's personal frame of reference can change according to emotional state, new information acquired, the review of ideas and the effect of time passing.</p>	<p>Adapts or applies previous knowledge to a real world experience, showing analysis and with recognition of the worth of exploring motives or reasons for behaviour. There is some evidence of 'standing back' from the event, self-questioning, and a willingness to be critical of the actions of self or others, and also to recognise the overall effect of the event on self. The role and influence of emotion/behaviour is questioned with an attempt to consider its significance in shaping the views presented.</p>	<p>Approaches the experience and its rationale from a personal perspective. The questioning does begin to suggest a 'standing back from the event' in (usually) isolated areas of the account. May mention, note or question emotional/behavioural reactions, or be influenced by emotion/behaviour, but these are not expanded upon.</p>	<p>Identifies ideas or external information, but these are not considered or questioned. References to emotions/behaviour are mentioned, but the possible impact or the meaning is not mentioned.</p>
<p>Action and Implication</p> <p>Synthesising future learning actions/options/ solutions/ strategies to facilitate change.</p> <p>(3 marks)</p>	<p>Demonstrates rethinking and problem-solving. Recognises there is learning to be gained from the experience. Uses previous knowledge, experience and theoretical/scholarly consideration, to identify points for learning/action or options/solutions. Identifies strengths and weaknesses in previous understanding and suggests a way forward for dealing with weaknesses. Evidence of further research showing impact on thinking, personal philosophy or position on the issue.</p>	<p>There is recognition that things might look different from other perspectives, and that views can change with time or emotional state. Identifies strengths and weaknesses in previous understanding, and alternative options or solutions are considered but not analysed fully.</p>	<p>There is a sense of recognition this is an incident from which learning can be gained, – but the reflection does not go sufficiently deep to enable the learning to begin to occur. Follows practices because of habit, possibly considering strengths.</p>	<p>The account may mention past experiences or anticipate the future – but only in the context of the account and without theoretical/scholarly or experiential consideration.</p>
<p>Articulation</p> <p>Presentation, structure, expression and referencing (APA style).</p> <p>(1 mark)</p>	<p>Guides the reader with expertise throughout the whole account. Evidence of explicit links between philosophy and practice; a cohesive and logical structure. Excellent clarity of expression - ideas clearly and succinctly expressed. Few or no errors evident.</p>	<p>Clear links made between philosophy and practice within a logical structure, and good overall cohesiveness, with good clarity of expression. Only minor errors are evident.</p>	<p>Links are made between philosophy and practice, but lacking overall cohesiveness, with expression somewhat clumsy/unclear e.g. sections not well structured or relevant, ideas not always clearly and succinctly expressed, sources cited may be inaccurate. Commonly occurring errors.</p>	<p>Structure is poor or confusing, with few or no links between philosophy and practice. References are lacking or may be inconsistently cited. Expression is clumsy e.g. over-reliance on quotes; unclear ideas; sentences too short/ long. Numerous errors evident.</p>

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