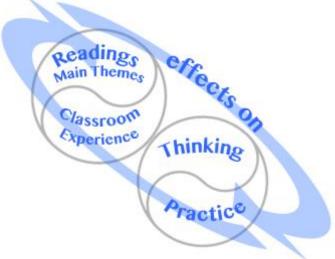


Reflection Paper Writing Tips

A reflection paper is...

- Your identification of the main themes of the readings integrated with your classroom experience and how both affect your thinking and practice.
- Your chance to add your thoughts and analysis to what you have read and experienced.
- Meant to illustrate your understanding of the material and how it affects your current ideas and potential future practice.



A reflection paper is NOT...

A rote repetition of the course readings, a
 "My Journey" diary, or a structure-free stream-of-consciousness essay.

Organizing it

- Jot down some notes on the reading material and class experiences that stand out in your mind. Decide why they resonate for you.
- You might use the Restorative Questions to explore your thoughts and feelings about the course experience.
- Use the first person singular ("I") to relate the readings and classes to your prior knowledge and experience.
- Consider if, and how, the things you have read and learned changed your thinking, and how they might affect your practice in both personal and professional settings.
- Review the readings and class notes to be sure you've included all possible relevant information and made all the connections you can.

Writing it

- Give your reflection paper structure with an opening paragraph, main body and conclusion.
- It may be helpful to write the body of the paper first, using the suggestions previously listed, and then decide what your opening paragraph should say. Your opener can be brief (only a sentence or two), but should offer an overall picture of your perspective based on what you've

learned (Before I read the articles for this leadership course, I had never considered that I was an authoritative supervisor; that is, someone who gives my staff firm direction, but little support.).

- In the **body**, you can then go on to describe which readings or class experiences affected your thinking, and why; you may disagree with some of them.
- The conclusion of your reflection can also be brief (I realize that I must learn how to be more supportive to get the best from my staff.). It is possible that your concluding statement may be uncertain (I don't agree with everything I read, but I will consider using some of the practices in future to see if they change my office environment.).
- Include in-text citations and a reference page, using APA style, for any sources that you cite.
 (See the <u>IIRP Graduate School Writing & APA Style Guidelines</u> for details.)

