

Reflective Teaching



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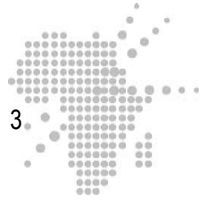
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I. Reflective Teaching

by Jane Ciumwari Gatumu

II. Prerequisite Courses / Knowledge

The prerequisite courses include:

- Philosophy of education
- Sociology of education
- Learning psychology
- Teaching methodology
- Educational communication
- Developmental psychology
- Educational management

III. Time

This module requires approximately 120 hours to be completed. The hours are distributed in the following way:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| • Unit 1: The nature of reflective teaching | 50 hours |
| • Unit 2: Peer mentoring | 20 hours |
| • Unit 3: Micro-teaching | 20 hours |
| • Unit 4: Self evaluation, action research and professional development | 30 hours |

IV. Materials

To learn this unit the following materials are necessary:

- Audio/video gadgets
- Writing material

V. Module Rationale

In a school setup, diverse issues requiring your attention emerge. At the same time, whatever you do everyday in the school needs to be given meaning so that it is worthwhile to you and your students. This module equips you with the



skills and knowledge relevant to your teaching practice. It empowers you to be an effective teacher who is critical, creative, heuristic and insightful about your day- to-day experiences in school. The module will enable you to acquire a new perspective towards the teaching profession and its practice.

VI. Content

6.1 Overview

This module is skill oriented; in that, you must be able to undertake reflective teaching. It focuses on aspects of reflective teaching at work. It attends to the nature of reflective teaching, self evaluation, action research, peer mentoring, micro teaching and professional development. These are contents you think about under the ‘what’ and ‘why’ questions, to ensure that your teaching is meaningful and that your students can learn. Engagement in questioning is an indication that you care about your teaching and students. The contents from these contexts focus on you not taking your teaching profession for granted. Thus, you will become critical of your teaching practice. The module provides you with an opportunity to make reflective teaching take place in your experience.

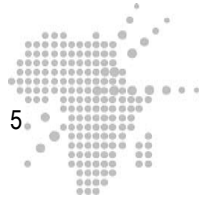
The specific contents are as follows:

Unit 1: Nature of reflective teaching

- Introduction
- What is reflective teaching?
- How is reflective teaching effected?
- Why reflective teaching?
- Challenges facing the implementation of reflective teaching.

Unit 2: Peer mentoring

- Introduction
 - The nature of peer mentoring
 - The rationale for peer mentoring
 - Importance of peer mentoring
 - The challenges in the implementation of peer mentoring



Unit 3: Micro-teaching

- Introduction
- Nature of micro-teaching
- Rationale of micro-teaching

Unit 4: Self evaluation, Action research and Professional development

- Introduction
- What is self evaluation
- Action research
- Professional development

6.2 The graphical presentation of the content

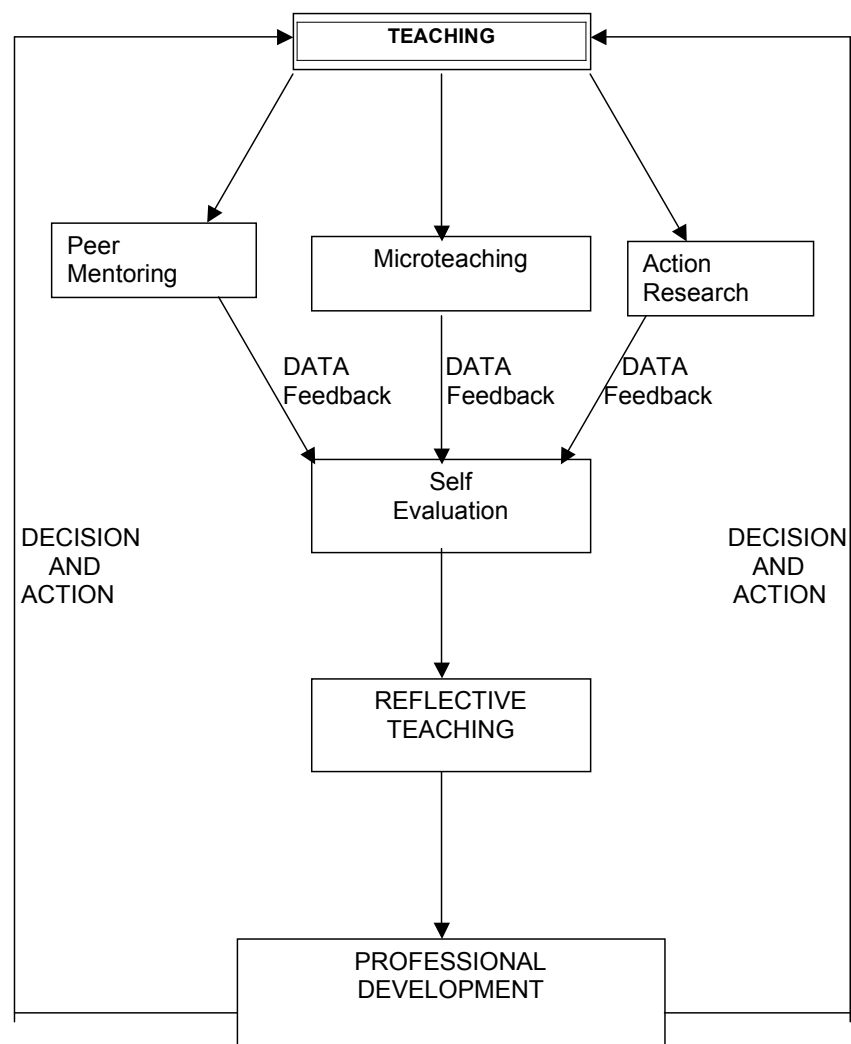
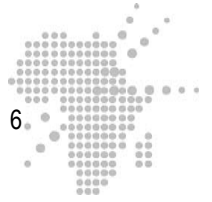


Figure 1



VII. General Objectives

The module has two main objectives:

- To equip you with knowledge and understanding of the nature of reflective teaching.
- To facilitate your practice of reflective teaching within the teaching.

VIII. Instructional Objectives

The specific objectives of this module are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Instructional objectives

Unit	Learning objective(s): At the end of the unit, you should be able to
1. Nature of reflective teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define reflective teaching. • Examine the importance of reflective teaching to your teaching profession. • Outline some concrete ways by which you can implement reflective teaching. • Highlight some challenges facing your implementation of reflective teaching.
2. Peer mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the importance of peer mentoring in your professional development. • Describe how you can make use of peer mentoring to improve your practice through reflective teaching. • Acquire skills of promoting peer mentoring among students in a school environment. • Highlight the challenges which face the use of peer mentoring as source of information for reflective teaching
3. Microteaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an understanding of microteaching as a skill oriented to integrate theory and practice for reflective teaching. • Establish the value of micro teaching in reflective teaching • Identify how feedback is crucial in reflective teaching



4. Self evaluation, action research and professional development

- Describe theories/models attributed to peer mentoring.
- Highlight the importance of self evaluation to your teaching profession.
- Establish the importance of action research to reflective teaching.
- Examine your role in your professional development.



IX. Pre-assessment

9.1 Rationale

The pre-assessment multiple choice items are designed so that you indicate what you already know about reflective teaching, peer mentoring, self evaluation, action research, professional development and microteaching

Your answers to these items are an indication of your level of knowledge of the subject matter covered in this module.

INSTRUCTIONS: In each of the following multiple choice items, select your response from A, B, C, and D by a tick (✓).

1. The best way for a student to sort out problems of settling down in a new school are:
 - A. Contacting the parents
 - B. Keeping to himself/herself
 - C. Reading sacred writings
 - D. Consulting an older student in the school.
2. Schools do not promote peer mentoring because:
 - A. They encourage people to mind their own businesses
 - B. It is a waste of time
 - C. They lack knowledge about its value
 - D. They are not bothered.
3. The following is what I can do immediately I get stranded in my class:
 - A. Consult my students
 - B. Consult a book
 - C. Rush out to my colleagues
 - D. Think critically.
4. My practices in the classroom can be improved mainly by:
 - A. Inputs of parents
 - B. Students inputs
 - C. My colleagues inputs
 - D. My self analysis.



5. I want to professionally develop so that:
 - A. I have a better salary
 - B. I relate well with other teachers
 - C. I can care better for my students
 - D. Get promoted.
6. I find self evaluation difficult because:
 - A. I do not like talking about myself
 - B. It is not development oriented
 - C. It is time consuming
 - D. I do not know what it is.
7. I can manage my teaching without colleagues' support because:
 - A. I know myself better
 - B. They have their things to do
 - C. They do not care
 - D. I have a narrow perspective of my colleagues.
8. Reflection is about:
 - A. Meditating about life
 - B. Being in a prayerful mood
 - C. Thinking about an issue already experienced
 - D. Minding my own business.
9. To be reflective I need:
 - A. Other people
 - B. Books to read
 - C. A lot of time
 - D. Information to think about.
10. My mind can be productively used in the following way:
 - A. Assuring me all is well.
 - B. Assuring me that I have my instructions
 - C. Solving problems
 - D. Listening to others.



11. Major concerns as a teacher are:
 - A. Parents to send their children to school
 - B. Children to come to school
 - C. Students be in class.
 - D. Teach to impact a permanent change.
12. The following is important about my contribution to students learning:
 - A. My name
 - B. My parents background
 - C. My relations
 - D. My abilities.
13. My students are important in my profession because:
 - A. They do what I say
 - B. They are never late for their classes.
 - C. They provide me with feedback
 - D. They talk well about me.
14. Microteaching lessons made me
 - A. Busy all the time
 - B. Improve my skills
 - C. Mind my own business
 - D. Understand other my peers
15. The anxiety I have of microteaching can be reduced through:
 - A. Avoiding to talk about myself
 - B. Talking about myself
 - C. Reading relevant books
 - D. Self searching.
16. Which of the following is a reason for research:
 - A. Collecting data
 - B. Analyzing data
 - C. Organizing data
 - D. Evaluating data.



17. Action researches deal with:
- A. Something about my work
 - B. The kind of a person I am
 - C. Something about my students
 - D. Answer to a problem in life.
18. I can progress in my teaching profession through:
- A. Co-operating with other teachers
 - B. Being friendly to my students
 - C. Doing a lot of reading
 - D. Implementing my thinking about students work.
19. Getting feedback from colleagues is rather discouraging because:
- A. They do not mean well
 - B. They are out to show off
 - C. I do not understand its values
 - D. They are out to undermine me.
20. I am not sure whether I am doing a good job in my teaching because:
- A. My students do not talk
 - B. I mind my own business
 - C. I do not evaluate my work
 - D. The school does not care.

9.2 Answer key

- | | |
|-------|--------|
| 1. D | 11. D |
| 2. C | 12. D |
| 3. D | 13. C |
| 4. D | 14. B |
| 5. C | 15. B |
| 6. D | 16. D |
| 7. D | 17. D |
| 8. C | 18. D |
| 9. D | 19. C |
| 10. C | 20. C. |



9.3 Pedagogical comment about performance

This criterion test shows where you are in terms of the basic aspects of this module on reflective teaching. It highlights your entry point to the unit. The score you have obtained will help the instructor to plan based on your level of readiness. These scores are in a continuum and each one of us has a motivational device to move to the next level. Your certificate is not based on these scores whose purpose is to diagnose your strengths and weaknesses. Your score only serves as the instructor's source of data for preparing you on what follows.



X. Learning activities

Learning Activity One: Nature of Reflective Teaching

Summary

Activity one is geared towards your understanding of the nature of reflective teaching under the following themes: What is reflective teaching? What is the essence of reflective teaching to your teaching? How is reflective teaching undertaken in the context of your teaching profession? And, What are challenges facing implementation of reflective teaching? Richards (1990) and Bailey (1997) present the mind as a powerful tool to allow you access your teaching in a critical, creative, heuristic and insightful manner. Your mind gets involved in a conscious response to certain situations of your teaching profession to let what you do be meaningful.

The unit will enable you to:

- Define reflective teaching.
- Examine the importance of reflective teaching to your teaching profession.
- Outline some concrete ways by which you can use reflective teaching.
- Highlight some challenges facing you as you apply reflective teaching.

Key terms

Reflection
Critical thinking
Teaching
Learning
Change

Relevant reading list

Appendix 1: http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_13: The Reflective practitioner

Appendix 2: http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_8: Forms of thinking associated with classroom learning.

Appendix 3: http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/Chapter_8: How to keep a journal.



Useful links

<http://www.ttjournal.co.uk/Towards> reflective teaching. The Teacher Trainer

<http://www.eric.ed.gov/Reflective> teaching: situating stories. Asian journal of English language teaching,7, 1-9

<http://Isn.curtin.edu.au/tlf1997/hall1>. Forms of reflective teaching practice in higher education by Susan Hall.

<http://books.google.com/books>: Reflective Teaching: Evidence-informed professional development by Andrew Pollard, Janet Collins, Mandy Maddock, Neil Simco, Sue Swaffield, Jo Warin and Paul Warwick

<http://www.clt.uts.au/scholarship/> Reflective journal

Detailed description of the activity

Introduction

The term reflection may be used to refer to deliberate thinking about something that has already taken place. Reflective teaching has to do with a deliberate examination of how we teach and learn. It fits in the interpretivist view of teaching and learning, a move towards critical thinking of the way we teach and learn. It is a kind of teaching strategy which has to be viewed in terms of what you can do for yourself and your students to ascertain productivity in your teaching and students' learning. In this extent, reflective teaching is a call to let you combine theory and practice to maintain and sustain your teaching profession.

What is reflective teaching?

Reflective teaching means looking at what you do in the classroom and giving it a meaning by attaching the why question to what you go through. You also empower your students to ask these why questions to their classroom experiences. You start by recognizing that you and your students are key persons in learning environment. Your being in the classroom must make sense to you and your students. Your relived/recalled experiences as a teacher and those of your students are explored and evaluated to let you fulfill your mission and vision in the teaching profession.

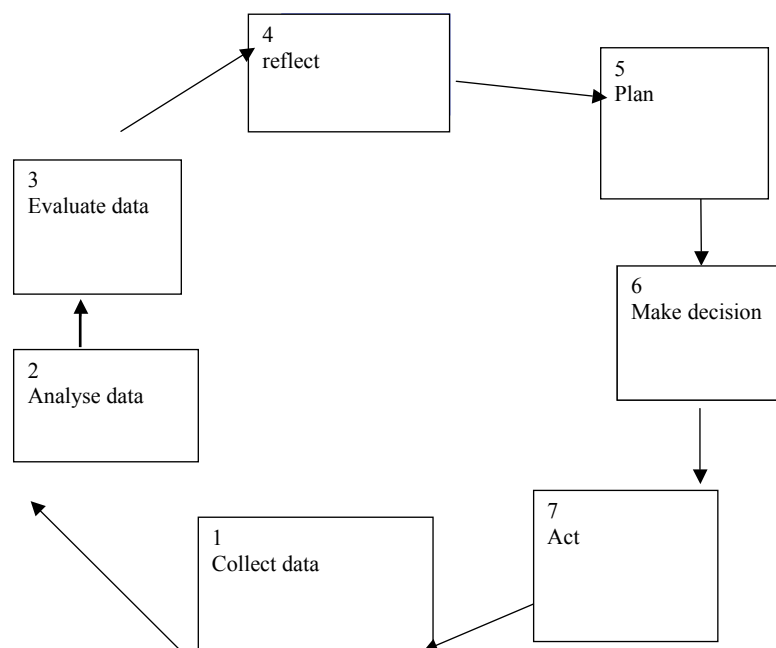
Richards (1990) argues that reflective teaching is a move beyond the ordinary to a higher level of awareness of how teaching and take place. This demands that you and your students be involved in a process of self observation and self evaluation. Thus, you and your students must gather information on your practice and experiences. This information is organized, analysed and interpreted to identify what beliefs, assumptions and values are attached to your practices and experiences.



You and your students end up recognising, examining and ruminating what you do as a teacher and students, respectively.

We may envision what is happening in Figure 2. You and your students must place yourself at every step of the figure because what is happening is about you and your practice and experience.

Figure 2: Cyclic flow of reflective teaching



Pollard and Tann (1989) regard reflective teaching as cyclic process by which the teacher interprets his/her classroom practice. Figure 1 suggests that the teacher is able to move from the known to the unknown by making use of recalled experiences in a critical manner. Similarly, the student can go through the same process.



Learning activity

- Define reflective teaching

Why reflective teaching?

Reflective teaching informs you that you are in charge of your teaching/learning and that you have a major contribution to make towards its success. This is why your behaviour must not be taken for granted as it needs to be continuously evaluated to let your practice and experiences be meaningful. To you the teacher, reflective teaching is a deliberate move to allow you think critically of your teaching practice so that your students can maximize their learning. Thus, through a change oriented activity, you contribute highly to your professional development. Richards (1990) argues that experience alone is insufficient for professional growth, but experience coupled with reflection is a powerful impetus for teacher development.

Reflective teaching is a mark of a concerned teacher who is skilled enough to examine his/her beliefs, values and assumptions behind the teaching practice. The insights derived from this exercise are used to improve your practice. According to Bailey (1997) reflective teaching is about a skilled teaching of knowing what to do. You examine your work so that you consider alternative ways of ascertaining that your students learn. This takes place through searching for deeper understanding of your teaching. So, you are able to monitor, critique and defend that which you implement and how you implement it.

It is possible that reflective teaching may turn you to be a researcher because of its dimension of self inquiry. Through self inquiry, much of what is unknown becomes clear so that you end up improving your practice and planning. Thus, your personal experiences are turned into stories which can be shared with your peers. In this manner, reflective teaching is a professional alternative to action research. It is a personal means of conducting your own ongoing professional life by solving problems in a systematic manner.

What are you doing in reflective teaching? You are integrating theory and practice. By making use of constructivist approach you address issues which emanate from your practice and experience. You are able to do this because you care about your profession which prepares young people for life in the society. Is this your self fulfilling prophecy? If so, then reflective teaching is an intrinsic motivational device to your work.



Learning activity

- **From Appendix 1:** [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational Psychology/Chapter 13](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_13): The Reflective practitioner, **read about reflective practitioner and then in 500 words write about the importance of reflective teaching to your teaching profession.**

How is reflective teaching effected?

In the first place there must be something which calls for your reflection. Attention to the issue of concern is important. The expectation is that you must gather information on what is of concern. This is step one of reflective teaching. There are various ways of collecting the information. They include:

- Keeping of a journal which is a form of diary of your experiences. You will need to keep a record of experiences which have happened. This makes it be phenomenological in nature. It has to be done consistently if the information will be of any worth. It is an activity whereby the teacher takes notes of the situation he/she is undergoing. These notes are in form of personal statements focusing on feelings, opinions and perceptions about others with whom the teacher comes in contact with during the course of his/her practice (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1992). What one records is not for public access. It is a personal record of letting out ones feelings and skills keeping them private. They are generally put down on daily basis for purpose of hoping to improve practice by later consultation of the records.

Journal writing is an opportunity for you to use the process of writing to describe and explore your teaching and learning practices. According Fraenkel and Wallen (1992) journal keeping is one of the tools under use to promote teachers development of reflective thinking. The writing engages you in a deeper level of awareness and response to teaching than you would obtain by merely discussing teaching in terms of teaching procedures and lesson plans.

- Peer mentoring takes form of you observing a mentor's practice or the mentor observes your practice and a record is made for feedback purposes (Arther, Davision and Moss, 1997). The focus of attention may be on how to keep students lively in a class discussion. One way of doing it is by being a non participant observer of classroom practice. This is an act of attending to an area of interest by being present to look at and listen to what is happening in a focused manner. This is opposite to participant observation where you penetrate the class to learn what is there to be learnt. In non participant observation you just observe without getting involved;



the observation is done from sidelines. You describe the scene in your own way; the students, the teacher and the dialogue events without ignoring the obvious. You do all that to attach meaning to the teacher's practice.

- Recording of your lessons through either audio or video or even by use of paper and pencil. For instance, you can use a tape recorder to tap the types of questions students pose in a mathematics lesson. These recorded experiences become the focus of what to reflect upon.
- Feedback from your students. This can be done through ordinary questioning. It may be a little advanced by you giving questionnaires to students. Their responses become data targeting their perspectives towards what you may have to choose as a way forward.

The other steps which follow each other are:

- Critically think about the patterns arising from the specific record. You are engaged in searching for understanding by asking questions about what and why practices. These questions let you not take anything in the classroom practice for granted. Together with critical thinking are dimensions like heuristic, creative and insightful thinking which stress on how you solve and deal with issues at hand. Insightful thinking lets you to be rationally informed of what is happening, while creative thinking is about imaginative and original ideas and ways of doing things by identifying alternatives.
- Refer to an expert who may be a peer or a mentor to have a discussion with him/her about emerging issues of your practice. This lets you be open minded to broaden your perspectives as you pose to him/her questions which make the stories memorable.
- Read as a way to find out more about the patterns emerging from the collected information. This keeps you informed.
- Associate with colleagues in a meeting, seminar, conference or workshop.
- Attend seminars, workshops and conferences which provide new perspectives to emerging issues about your practice.

The final step is about you deciding on what to do. The aspect of decision making seems to suggest that there are alternatives and their implications. Implement the change if need be as a way of enhancing your professional development. At this point, the process of reflection begins again, as it is cyclic.



Learning activity

- **Read Appendix 3:** [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Chapter 8: How to keep a journal](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/Chapter_8:How_to_keep_a_journal). **Using 500 words, summarise the main steps in keeping a meaningful journal.**

Where does your student fit? Students have to be accountable and committed to their learning. A reflective teacher empowers his/her students to be reflective about their learning experiences. This suggests that you have a responsibility and commitment towards ascertaining that your students are reflective in their learning. How do you do this?

The essence of being reflective is asking why questions of what one goes through. You will need to teach your students to be critical, creative, heuristic and insightful thinkers of their experiences and practice. To achieve this, you require to use teaching methods which are liberational in nature. These are methods which make your students not take anything for granted. For instance, through use of questioning technique, the student will be able to address his/her practices and experiences in a critical manner. Thus, he/she manages to challenge beliefs, assumptions and values attached to certain practices and experiences. He/she gets liberated from narrow mindedness and moves towards positive evaluation of what is encountered in the learning. In this extent, learning becomes meaningful as rational judgement is attached to it.

The students become key partners in your effort to be an effective practitioner. Their reflective capability becomes a major ingredient towards your professional development. They have a contribution to give towards your meaningful teaching.

Challenges facing the use of reflective teaching

The whole process of reflective teaching is complex because of its diverse players like the self, the students, the school and society at large. You are expected to have knowledge of all these, which many times is not easy. This becomes more complicated when the solution to the issue of concern may not be feasible and one has to keep on trying. Time management becomes a factor as reflective teaching is time consuming in terms of the fact that one is not only a professional teacher, but there are other life issues which may demand some urgency and thus end up competing with ones professional development.

Reflective teaching is more of an intrinsic motivation device towards professional development. This makes it fit in the self fulfilling prophecies. The challenge here is that anxiety and frustrations may creep in making you get discouraged.



However, one will have to go on bearing in mind that challenges are part of moving on towards professional development.

The diverse characteristics of the students may make it difficult for you to teach them how to be reflective learners. Each student has to be handled as an individual with unique learning styles. This becomes a challenge because of the multiple intelligences, interests, needs and backgrounds of the students. You will need to apply multi tasks organization to address students' individual differences.

Formative evaluation

1. In 200 words, describe two challenges you are likely to encounter as a teacher enthusiastic about reflective teaching
2. In reference to the above detailed description of activity one, write a 300 words essay to explain how reflective teaching is useful to your teaching profession.
3. Using 100 words, explain how to make your students be reflective about their learning.
4. Using 300 words, justify two ways you can use to collect data for your reflective teaching.

Feedback

The scoring of this formative evaluation is based on your understanding of:

- What reflective teaching is
- The importance of reflective teaching
- Teaching your students to be reflective
- Basic ways of effecting reflective teaching
- Challenges facing your use of reflective teaching

Now you are ready to move to other aspects of reflective teaching



Learning Activity Two: Peer Mentoring

Summary

Activity two addresses the importance of the support that others offer towards providing evidence to use in critical thinking to make your teaching effective. The peer support emerges from others who have the experience, expertise, confidence and care about students' learning. The objectives of this unit are to enable you to:

- Examine the importance of peer mentoring in your professional development.
- Describe how you can make use of peer mentoring to improve your practice through reflective teaching
- Acquire the skills of promoting peer mentoring among the students in a school environment.
- Highlight the challenges which face use of peer mentoring as source of information for reflective teaching

Key terms

Mentor

Mentee/Protégé

Support

Relevant reading list

Appendix 4: <http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Mentoring> handbook: Why mentoring? What's in it for me?

Appendix 5: <http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social> and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Second edition/2, 7.3: Learning from others.

Appendix 6: <http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social> and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Second edition/9, 2.3: Observing classroom activities

Appendix 7: <http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social> and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Edition 3/2.7: Learning from others



Detailed description of activity three

Introduction

The mentor is known to be an expert and manifesting a large amount of confidence and warmth to let a new teacher/student fit and appreciate his/her work. The mentee (student/ teacher) is assisted towards her/his professional development by a mentor who is capable of introducing him/her into a nurturing relationship of guiding, counselling, role modeling, information providing and opening the door for him/her to fit into the teaching system. The mentor does it in a discursive manner (dialogue), other than pragmatic alternative manner.

Nature of peer mentoring

Mentoring has been a matter of concern of human society since time immemorial. Children were entrusted to older persons to lead them towards mastering aspects of life in the society. In fact, the term pedagogy has this connotation of having a pedagogue educate a child to the ways and expectations of the society. In traditional African societies, a young boy/girl would be linked to an elder who would expose him/her to the aspirations of the society. For instance, in farming communities, the young person would be given a small digging stick to imitate what the elderly person would be doing during planting or weeding activities. Also, it is known that during initiation ceremonies, the initiates were attached to specific men and women of the society who would provide a deepened understanding of the society's norms. It was not just any man or woman. The person to undertake and demonstrate this apprenticeship was respectable, accountable, responsible and honest (Mwaniki, 1972; Mbiti1969,). Quintillan (35-92 AD) outlines how the elders were to be educated so that their children would imitate them, and especially, their language usage. The purpose of all this was to ascertain that a person grows and develops to fit in the wider society.

The term mentoring has its origin in Greek culture where the mentor was the one to provide the needed support and induction to the young person. Thus, mentoring refers to the process of supporting new-comers in a social system through using the already existing experiences so that they get self motivated towards better performance and greater growth and development. The social system can be a family, school, university and place of work, among others. The assumption is that an individual can reach his/her higher potential of personal growth and development through others. One is guided to become greater and more successful in the specific system and even beyond. In this extent, mentoring looks beyond a specific simple system to other systems and supra systems where the individual has to be accountable and responsible.



This definition tends to suggest that the mentee is assisted towards his/her personal growth and development by a mentor who is capable of inducting and introducing him/her into a nurturing relationship of guiding, counselling, role modeling, information provision and opening the door to fit into life systems. It is implemented through either formal or informal programme in place to facilitate that which is to be done, how it is to be done and who is to do it in the system (Gurallnick, 1997).

In the context of a secondary school, all the participants need some form of mentoring. However, the following participants are of special interest:

- **New comers to your secondary school life.** They may be students in the subject you teach. They bring with them backgrounds which are so diverse. These students have to fit into the school's vision and mission so that by the end they become accountable and responsible persons to contribute to the country's aspirations. Thus, the available form of mentoring programme assists them towards successful transition into the secondary school life and beyond. You may make use of older students and peers to help younger students cope with challenge of peer pressure in school life.
- **New teachers joining the teaching profession from other different systems.** The new teachers have personal ambitions and potential which have to be utilized to the full for their personal growth, development and survival and also for the school vision and mission. The availability of mentoring programme will thus provide positive experiences to these new workers who have to be inducted and introduced into effective performing. For instance, experienced teachers can assist their newer colleagues in the department with orientation and relevant updates.
- **Student teachers in their initial training towards their profession.** This is particularly noticed during teaching practice when experiences of model teachers are important to a student teacher. Micro-teaching skills can be modeled during this time.

You have to note that mentoring is a human endeavour which has to operate under concerns of privacy and confidentiality, respect and dignity, equality, accountability, responsibility, transparency and professionalism. Both the mentor and mentee/protégé have to be guided by these concerns for each of them to benefit. Also, the available gathered information by you either as mentor or mentee/protege has to be critically used to improve practice.



Learning activity

- Define peer mentoring

Rationale for peer mentoring

It may be assumed that new teachers/student teachers/students will fit into the school life because they have the required qualifications. It is evident that human nature needs a support system to function effectively (Simons, Kauchman and Santrock, 1994). Though mentors are important, there are some areas of one's growth and development which a mentee can manage very effectively without a mentor. This has to be understood in the context of zonal proximal development advocated by Vygotsky (1978). The implication is that the uniqueness of each person influences his/her personal growth and development and survival. However, a number of theories are applicable to the rationalization of peer mentoring in the teaching. Some of these theories are:

- System approach theory
- Social learning theory
- Motivational needs theory

The system approach theory advocates that an institution is a system with members having individual differences and all have to function towards the system's goals. A newcomer to this learning institution has to be facilitated into its life. The concern is that for the institution to be productive, it needs all members. Thus, the new-comer must be empowered if he/she has to contribute to the vision and mission of the institution. This is because he/she is part of the whole.

The key issue here is that any learning/teaching system has its complexities. A readily available person to reduce the tension and anxiety usually pays off. The new comer masters the new environment faster and this contributes to the individual's growth and development.

Mentoring has also to be viewed in the context of the needs of an individual which have to be realized. An individual gets to a teaching profession with certain expectations. Maslow's (1970) theory of needs suggests that each person has specific desires which must be assisted to be fulfilled. This has to be viewed in the context of a person's potentiality. Being aware of this makes mentoring be that support which contributes to the attainment of a person's growth and development. Mentoring allows this to take place as there is a mechanism to acquaint a new-comer with the available resources and opportunities. A mentor becomes



a critical friend who assists by organizing the environment for this to take place. When properly done anxiety, anger, frustrations and wasteful disruptions are reduced. The mentor may provide guidance and support in relation to what the mentee has to excel on. It is done under the spirit of the act that mentoring will come to an end. The mentee learns how to prioritise and focus on the job at hand. This in itself provides satisfaction which in essence is a motivational device. Thus, one is able to grow in the profession and specific activities through a continuous plan and undertaking by others.

Bandura's theory of social learning (1977) fits very well with the rationalization of mentoring of new comers into teaching profession/learning environment. This theory postulates that an individual is exposed to certain behaviour which he/she observes and imitates. Thus, the theory stresses on the essence of mentors so that they display that which can be observed and imitated by the mentees. The effectiveness of observation will depend upon the type of the mentor and the mentee's personal characteristics. Of course, one has to emphasise that the mentee must:

- Pay attention on what the mentor does.
- Remember what the mentor did.
- Convert what is learned into his/her own action.

An effective mentoring programme benefits the mentor, mentee/protégé and the school. In situations where you are the mentor, the phenomenological situations benefit you in the following ways:

- Having satisfaction for fostering the professional development of a mentee.
- Enhancing development of new professional contacts coming from the mentee/protégé.
- Getting exposed to new ideas through interaction with mentee/protégé.
- Having an opportunity to improve the coaching and counseling skills
- Having increased knowledge, experiences and broadened perspectives arising from encounters and interactions with the mentee/protégé.
- Attaining professional enrichment from apprenticeship experiences.

The lived experiences arising from the relationship between the mentor and mentee/protégé have the following benefits:

- You develop a career direction coupled by some amount of concern and care.
- You have increased confidence in the work/learning setting.
- You are in a position to receive key information on the teaching profession
- An opportunity is available for you to develop a relationship with a person who is a role model.



- Chances are there for you to develop new professional/progressive contacts.
- One gets exposed to new ideas
- There is greater understanding of one's role in the students' learning.
- There is reduction of frustration, anxiety and stress as one works/learns.

Through mentoring, the school benefits in the following ways:

- There is effective communication of the school's vision and mission by the mentor.
- The mentor works towards having an environment conducive to greater productivity.
- There is increased interaction among the teacher and students
- The teacher becomes exposed to new knowledge areas, perspectives and ideas.
- Better integration of new teachers/students into the school life is set.
- The school saves money in terms of the fact that those who mentor are not paid for it.
- The school participates in having students/teachers who are patriotic to their country.

Learning activity

Read Appendix 4: <http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Mentoring> handbook: why mentoring? What's in it for me? **Using 400 words explain why you need to be mentored to in a new school.**

Mentoring skills

The mentor and the mentee have to manifest certain characteristics to have a successful mentoring programme. According to Pollard and Triggs (1997), major mentoring skills include:

- Preparation and induction skills to allow the mentee fit in the new environment.
- The skill of helping the mentee observe. One is a mentor because he/she has something unique to model for others to observe. He/she has a breadth of practical experience to expose the mentee. This is to suggest that the mentee will learn by observing. In observing the mentee can play both the role of a participant and non participant.



- Observing and giving feedback skill. This requires the mentor to undertake both formal and informal observation to have feedback for the mentee. Feedback will need to have positive and corrective dimensions.
- Collaborative teaching skill where both the mentor and mentee are partners in planning what is to be done and why it is to be done. This calls upon the mentor to be open-minded in his/her encounters with the mentee.

These four skills imply that not any person can be a mentor. It is a responsibility accompanied by commitment and expertise in the area to mentor a person. Remember, the mentor is not a supervisor. He/she provides a support service to let the mentee perform and self fulfill himself/herself. This requires the mentor to understand that the mentee in a new environment has to grow and develop professionally. Thus, the focus of mentoring is to have a reflective practitioner.

The mentee will also need to have certain characteristics. These characteristics include:

- The skill of observation so that he/she can be attentive to what is in the new environment.
- Insightful skill of being aware of what is happening in the environment.
- Experiential skill of moving from known to the unknown.
- Collaborative skill to work with others as partners.
- Heuristic skill of searching for the unknown and solving problems.
- Creative skill to adjust to new alternatives

Challenges in the use of peer mentoring

The key challenge in peer mentoring lies in the fact the key participants have to appreciate that they have to work as a team in fulfilling the school's goals. This is always not easy because of the individual differences among the key players. It requires a school manager who integrates the diversities among teachers for their benefits and those of the students.

The pedagogical principles to apply in peer mentoring are often difficult to implement because they are time consuming and require commitment and responsibility. There are times when ethical concerns may be violated. To this extent, the mentor and mentee/protégé have to set clear guidelines which are goal oriented.

Important to note is the fact that the school has a role to play as a socializing and empowering agent to stimulate its new comers towards effective performance (Tickle, 1994). Having individuals who are accepted by the school through use



of others pays off. How well a person teaches or learns can be influenced by availability and implementation of a mentoring programme.

Question/Learning Activity

- **Read, Appendix 7 [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Second edition/2, 7.3](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/Second_edition/2,7.3): Learning from others, then in 300 words write an essay on benefits of peer mentoring to a teacher**

Formative evaluation

1. In 300 words, describe three situations in a secondary school which may necessitate a peer mentoring programme.
2. In a 100 words paragraph, indicate four ways by which you benefit from peer mentoring as a new teacher in a secondary school?
3. You are setting a peer mentoring programme for a new teacher joining your teaching department, what problems are you likely to encounter and how do you address them. Present this in 500 words.

Feedback

In question 3, focus on:

- Challenges from the school
- Challenges from the characteristics of the new teacher
- Challenges from the members of the department
- Your own personal characteristics' challenges
- External challenges

The solutions to these challenges are based on the end results of a mentoring programme.

You are now ready to move to the next unit



Learning Activity Three: Microteaching

Summary

The focus of this unit is the skills of microteaching. The nature of micro teaching in the context of reflective teaching is presented under three phases; diagnostic, prescriptive and evaluative. The unit will enable the student to:

- Have an understanding of microteaching as skill oriented to integrate theory and practice for reflective teaching.
- Establish the value of microteaching in reflective teaching
- Identify how feedback is crucial in reflective teaching

Key terms

Feedback
Audio/video recording
Critical thinking
Discussion

Relevant reading list

Appendix 7: <http://en.wikipedia.org/Microteaching>

Appendix 8: <http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social> and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Chapter 14/2,3: Why is feedback important

Detailed description of the activity

Introduction

Microteaching has a history which dates back to 1963. The teacher education programme at Stanford University was the first to implement microteaching. It proved to be useful in the pre-service training of teachers. It has been useful in other professions like in the medical and counselling fields. Microteaching can be defined as miniature teaching scaled down in terms of time, class size, task and skill. It may be referred to as contrived experience, yet it is real teaching.

Nature of microteaching

Microteaching is a tool for training that allows the teacher to apply a combination of theory and practice in a classroom setup. It is a kind of system where the teacher is at the centre of effecting the basic practices under the supervision of an instructor who provides both positive and corrective feedback to promote



learning. The teacher's behaviours are organised around a certain practice which he/she has to demonstrate as a sign that he/she is responsible and accountable.

The major components of this type of teaching are:

- A model performance of a teaching skill generally by an expert. The demonstration is put into a discussion for analysis by the observers who in many cases are the student teachers/peers/students. The teacher is directed towards understanding the underlying pedagogical principles of the skill.
- Plan, teach and record stage where the teacher prepares and teaches a lesson of 5 to 15 minutes. The emphasis at this stage is on a particular skill.
- Play back and critique stage where the teacher's performance is re-played so that he/she receives the feedback from the expert/peers and the participating students. During this time the discussion is evaluative. The teacher also gives his/her perspective of the taught lesson. The focus is on what did you do and why and whether there are alternative ways of doing it.
- Re-plan and re-teach session when the teacher follows the given feedback towards change. The focus is on improving the practice.
- Give feedback and critique based on the new performance. Feedback is information about current behaviour that can be used to improve future performance. According to Eggen and Don Kauchak (2004) feedback has to be immediate, specific to performance and has a positive dimension. It is viewed as a key step in micro teaching whereby a particular skill is demonstrated and the student teacher tries it out and in the third step, he/she receives a feedback on his/her performance. It is a systematic reinforcement given to the teacher to allow consistency and improvement. He is involved in identifying his/her weaknesses and strengths which are talked about by the mentors and the colleagues.

These five steps suggest to us the dimensions of reflective teaching at work. The diagnostic dimension emerges through all the five steps as the questions of what and why have to be answered in terms of normal experiences and practices of the pedagogical principles. The critique in step three is about understanding what is happening so that a decision can be reached. It is during this prescriptive phase that change to act upon is suggested. Prescriptive phase is about what to follow. In step four, decision is made and change is implemented. This is the evaluative phase for your teaching to improve. And since reflective process is cyclic, the practice is repeated.



Learning activity

- In 200 words, explain the extent to which microteaching conforms real teaching situation

Rationale of microteaching

Micro teaching fits into the objectives of the practical component of teaching. It integrates both theory and practice. The training programme expects you to have achieved certain knowledge, values, skills and practices. Some of these skills include: stimulating students, diagnosing students' performance, utilizing media, handling different kinds of knowledge and communicating with students. Microteaching allows your behaviour to be observed, analysed, evaluated and modified to fit these expectations. Thus, micro teaching is organized to let you achieve these expectations.

To achieve the stated expectations you must be involved. This lets you show concern to teaching and not just take it for granted as there are pedagogical principles to be put into practice. Your commitment and responsibility to your practice are given a chance as teaching is a profession. You can access your own feedback to direct your improvements.

Other people feature in your practice. They include, your peers, students and mentors. They observe what you do and come up with evidence that gives meaning to your practice. This evidence is the feedback. Their feedback to how you practise broadens your perspectives towards professional development.

We cannot forget the role of media highlighted in microteaching. That which you practise can be video or audio recorded. The observer can also record the experiences by use of print media. This makes media be an important component of your practice. The essence of recording your experiences is that data can be accessed any other time by you and others.

Micro teaching is not limited to pre-service training. It can be undertaken after graduation as a measure to improve practice for your professional development. By making use of key actors in your school, you can always employ your students and mentors to provide you with feedback for desired results. This becomes an open minded characteristic for a teacher who has to give the best to his/her students.



Learning activity

- **Read Appendix 8:** [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Chapter 14/2, 3](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/Chapter_14/2,3): Why is feedback important. **In a 100 words paragraph write about importance of feedback.**

Formative evaluation

1. Using 500 words, justify an inclusion of microteaching in your training
2. In a 100 words paragraph, indicate how reflective teaching features in a microteaching lesson.

Feedback

Answer to question Two:

- Sources of evidence for reflective teaching:
- Peer observers' feedback
- Students' feedback
- Your own perspectives
- Audio/video records



Learning Activity Four: Self Evaluation, Action Research and Professional Development

Summary

Learning activity four combines contents of self evaluation, action research and professional development. The focus of this unit is that the obtained information of your practice as a teacher becomes a basis for your self evaluation, solving problems through action research, and hence, your professional development. At the end of this unit you will be able to:

- Highlight the importance of self evaluation to your teaching profession.
- Establish the importance of action research to reflective teaching
- Examine the importance of portfolio for professional development.

Key words

Evaluation
Evidence
Public opinion
Scientific method

List of relevant reading list

Appendix 9: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teaching>

Appendix 10: http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_psychology/Chapter_13: Types of resources for professional development

Appendix 11: http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_10: Performance assessment.

Appendix 12: http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/edition_3/9.2.2How should personnel be evaluated?

Appendix 13: http://en.wikibooks.org/Social_and_cultural_foundations_of_American_Education/chapter_14/: What role does action research play?



Detailed description of activity two

Introduction

Becoming a teacher does not end with your pre-service training. You can be engaged in activities of self evaluation and action research to promote your professional development. Self evaluation and action research let you search for ways to ascertain that you have concern for your students and that you are interested in ensuring their learning takes place.

What is self evaluation?

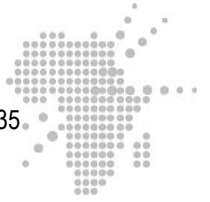
Evaluation is a key component of instruction. It is a process of determining the extent to which instruction has taken place. To undertake evaluation, data must be collected and assessed. This suggests that evidence must be there. It is the collected and assessed evidence which must be judged/evaluated. It may require a brief record so that it can be accessed. Journal keeping may be a way of ascertaining that you have a record. A journal is a kind of notebook where you record on daily basis the experiences you go through in your teaching. As you do this, you do not forget to record even the reactions of your students

Evaluation can be done in many ways, ranging from individual to peers and the school at large. Our concern here is that as teacher you can evaluate your practice. Your individual judgement of your work is what is referred to as self evaluation. Your information about your classroom practice is accessed to give it meaning. The passing of judgement on what you are doing is a way of moving forward.

What you are doing has value, in that you are able to identify your strengths and areas of improvement and then make decisions about them as a way forward. This undertaking is important in the following ways:

- It is an indication of being in charge of what is happening in regard to practice.
- As a teacher you manifest your concern and commitment to students' learning.
- You get encouraged by the strengths.
- You are able to plan for areas needing improvements by identifying the way forward.
- As a teacher you can set success criteria which can be shared with your colleagues. You end up enriching others.

It is not easy to self search about your strengths and areas needing improvement. More so, areas needing improvement may lie in our non comfortable zones which at times are intriguing and demanding. We may be interested just on the basic performance of ourselves and our students. However, since teaching is a



profession, we are all called upon to better ourselves for the sake of our students, the future human resource.

Learning activities

- **Define self evaluation**
- **From Appendix 11: [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational Psychology/Chapter 10: Performance assessment](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_10:Performance_assessment), write a 100 words paragraph about importance of self evaluation to your teaching**

Action research

Action research can be defined as a systematic way of solving a problem in life for change to be effected. It is a deliberate move to deal with the issue at hand systematically. This requires you to have a careful analysis of the situation at hand. Data about your practice must be collected and analysis made to draw conclusions for the way forward.

Chilisa and Preece (2005) refer to action research as experiential learning. It is a problem solving investigation whereby you make careful observations and analyse the data collected to improve practice. According to Bailey and Nunan (1996) action research is a systematic approach to investigate one's own situation by following the steps of planning, acting, observing, reflecting and replanning to develop local understanding and long about improvement. This can be undertaken by an individual or in collaboration with other teachers doing the same in the systematic way of collecting data which is later organized, analyzed and interpreted to address the issue at hand.

The evaluation you undertake may suggest a practical action to resolve the issue at hand. Action research allows you to be the agent of whatever the change the practice may demand. By nature, action research is change oriented, to improve practice (Best and Kahn, 1993).

The daily journal records may be the beginning of collecting data of the issue at hand. The video or audio recordings may be another source of data of what is to be investigated. The feedback remarks by peer mentors and students become another evidence to be used in sourcing on how to deal with the issue systematically.

Why do all this? The concern is to improve practice and plan better for your teaching. Action research lets you not solve issues at hand by reference to common sense. It lets you apply scientific approach to handle your classroom practice and



experiences. That which you will implement will be logical and intersubjective. When done you have a contribution to the solutions that may be shared with your colleagues so that they can improve their practice.

Action research links self evaluation and professional development. You are a participant observer merged in the naturalistic situation to which evaluation must be made. Your personal reflections about these situations in the given evidences allow your solutions and suggested changes to have some form of validity and reliability, characteristics of scientific method. The reflections are about evaluations with changes to improve practice.

Learning activities

- **Read Appendix 13:** [http://en.wikibooks.org/Social and cultural foundations of American Education/chapter 14/](http://en.wikibooks.org/Social_and_cultural_foundations_of_American_Education/chapter_14/): What role does action research play? **Then write a 200 words essay on importance of action research to teaching profession.**
- **In a 100 words paragraph, write down two comments you would give about the statement: “I am a teacher not a researcher”.**

Professional development

Teaching is a profession and a teacher can develop in his/her profession. Craft (1996) argues that “being professional means taking responsibility for identifying and attempting to meet the professional needs of oneself and one’s institution” (p.7). This is important for self job satisfaction. Reflective teaching is a process to inform you that as an individual at personal level you have a contribution to give to your professional development. All the evidence you will have collected about your practice is directed towards change which is professionally oriented. These evidences will give to you areas of concern in terms of your personal qualities as teacher. You have your professional dimensions which also need attention as you have to improve your performance skills and implement necessary changes.

Professional development will let you change your awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, beliefs, assumptions and values. This takes place in a continuous manner as change is a process that takes place over time and it requires you to mesh together professional development experiences over time. Professional development is a process of change towards the betterment of practice. This change has to be experienced by the teacher and students. The connotation of being professional has to do with describing how a teacher moves forward in knowledge, skills and values to ensure that students learn. It is used differently from other types beyond the point of initial training (Craft, 1996, p 6). This development



can take place through personal reflection of what one does through receiving on the job coaching, mentoring, action research and experiential assignment like micro teaching.

You may not experience professional development because of both personal and school factors which are intertwined. But taking reflective teaching seriously will lead you to some measurable self fulfilling changes in your teaching profession. Thus reflective teaching becomes the motivating tool towards your professional development.

You are to be practically involved in planning for your professional development. What are your achievements? You have to collect all materials which cumulatively record and reflect your practice as a teacher to make a “filing system”. This filing system presents an evidence of your professional development. Technically this filing system is known as portfolio for professional development. The records to be cumulatively collected and filed include:

- Your curriculum vitae
- Records about your knowledge and understanding
- Classroom management records.
- Personal development records
- Students progress records
- Professional development plan.
- Use of technology records
- Assessment records
- Research experiences records
- Records of feedbacks from peers and students

It is important to put together these records for the following reasons:

- They enhance your self evaluation.
- They promote your efficacy.
- Other people can access it especially for job applications and interviews.
- They encourage you to improve your practice.

It is important to note that it takes time to put all your achievement records together. This becomes difficult when you have to keep on updating them. Also they may detract you from your teaching. In addition, they may give the inaccurate picture of your professional development.



Learning activities

- **Read , [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational psychology/Chapter 13](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_psychology/Chapter_13): Types of resources for professional development and in a 200 words essay, explain the relationship between reflective teaching and professional development.**

Formative evaluation

1. Using 200 words explain how self evaluation contributes to your professional development.
2. In a 200 words paragraph, describe four records you would include in your portfolio for professional development.
3. Using 500 words, justify four aspects of your teaching profession which may need action research.

Feedback

Answer to question Three:

- Classroom management: discipline
- Teaching/learning strategies: Students' attention
- Use of technology: Effectiveness of computers
- Students' performance: Students' learning challenges



XI. List of Key Concepts

Action research

A systematic way of solving an issue which interferes with normal practice.

Critical thinking

It is a process of occupying the mind to judge what is right, true, appropriate, sensible, reasonable and worthwhile. This requires you to be rational and self fulfilling in your classroom practices.

Feedback

It refers to readily available information based on a person's performance for acting upon.

Journal keeping

A consistent record keeping of experiences one goes through in a specific profession.

Learning

It refers to a process through which experience causes a relatively permanent change of behaviour. This makes the student be in charge of what goes on, while teachers activities are just some of the variables which contribute towards learning. This necessitates the teacher to reflect on his/her classroom practice.

Microteaching

It is a skill which gives you an opportunity to try out that which you have to do in your profession at a small scale.

Non-participant observation

Being at the scene of action or behaviour to understand the situation without one taking part in what is going on.

Peer mentoring

This process has its origin in Greek culture, where a mentor provided support and induction to a young person. It is a process in which a teacher/student is provided with support through insights and example to get motivated to the aspired task of teaching/learning.

Professional development

A conscious growth of what is happening to one in his/her profession. This makes you think and plan for it.

**Reflective teaching**

It is a dynamic cyclical process in which teachers continuously monitor, evaluate and revise their teaching practice. The major steps in this process are gathering information, organizing and analyzing the data and evaluating data for decisions to be made to improve the teaching profession. As a process it lets the teacher be open minded, responsible and accountable to his/her work.

Self evaluation

This refers to students' professional ability to attach meaning to that which they do in their teaching practice. This meaning is attached to their practice by being able to identify their strengths and weakness, by which decisions are made on how to perform. This has to be done by analyzing the data. It may be a difficult exercise and this is why a student teacher needs his/her colleague and mentor to lead him/her through a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses in self evaluation.

Teaching

That which the teacher does for the purpose of changing student's behaviour.



XII. Compiled List of Compulsory Readings

Reading 1

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational Psychology/Chapter 13:](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_13)
The Reflective practitioner

Abstract

This chapter highlights the importance of a teacher's experiences towards becoming a reflective practitioner. Teacher's experiences are occasions for his/her to learn about his/her profession. Students also benefit from teacher's experiences. However, one needs to be a reflective practitioner to derive meanings from these experiences. Different techniques to employ to become a reflective practitioner are given. Action research features because of the way research findings benefit not only the teacher and students, but other teachers and professionals.

Rationale

The chapter is a challenge to that teacher who is enthusiastic about his/her teaching profession. The ingredients of becoming an enthusiastic reflective practitioner are provided. We have no choice, but crave and work towards being reflective practitioners of teaching profession.

Reading 2

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational Psychology/Chapter 8:](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_8) Forms of thinking associated with classroom learning.

Abstract

The power of the mind to contribute towards making teaching and learning meaningful is the focus. Various forms of thinking like critical thinking, creative thinking and heuristic thinking are dealt with as important components of effective teaching and learning strategies. The writer argues that for effective decisions about strategies to be made, both the teacher and students have to pose the what and why questions. These are questions whereby whatever takes place in the classroom is not taken for granted. It is through raising these questions that both the teacher and students fulfill their purposes for being in the classroom. Thus, the teacher should use those teaching and learning strategies which promote these high levels of thinking.

**Rationale**

The concern here is that as the teacher becomes a reflective practitioner, even his/her students should be facilitated to be reflective in their learning.

Reading 3

<http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social> and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Chapter 8: How to keep a journal.

Abstract

The writing is about how a journal is kept to be used for thinking of past experiences which have an impact on our lives. The focus in this presentation is that journal keeping can be an important component of classroom practice, though teachers differ in their ways of implementing it. The article makes it clear that the keeping of a journal is a personal responsibility and commitment. However, whatever each person records is about the experiences of relevance. At the same time, one must be consistent in keeping the record if it is to be of meaningful use. A well kept journal contributes towards change of what we do.

Rationale

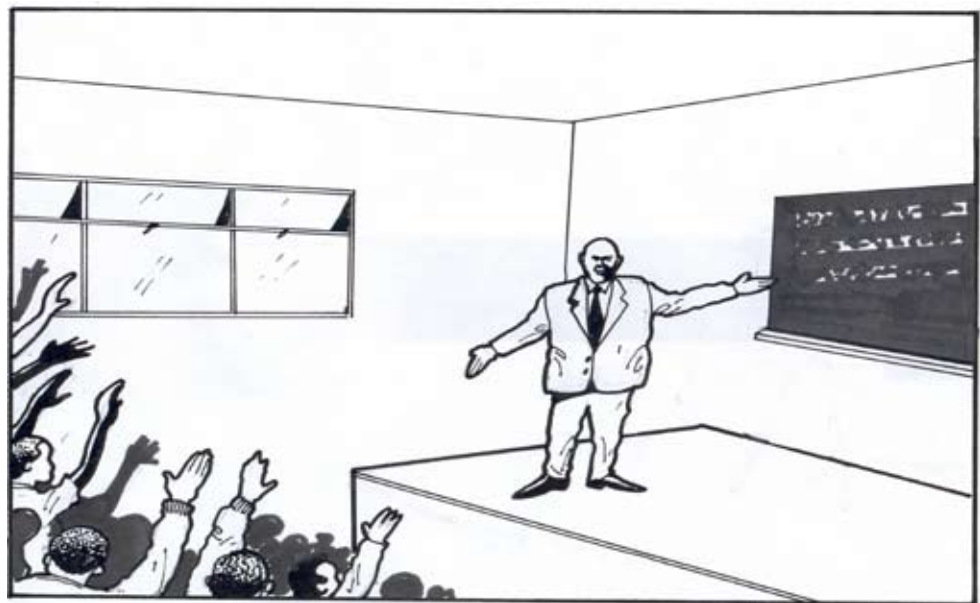
It is a reading that shows us that reflective teaching can work. Through journal keeping, meaningful conclusions can be made to improve practice. However, it is a personal commitment towards making effort to understand your teaching experiences.



XIII. Multimedia Resources

Resource 1

Source of data for reflective teaching: the classroom. (By Jane C. Gatumu)



Abstract

In this image, the teacher makes effort to get feedback from the students through question and answer. The involvement of students is a way of sourcing data to get answers to 'what' and 'why' questions so that decision can be made to improve the practice. Your students form an important component of the meaning you give to teaching and their learning. What does democracy in class show?

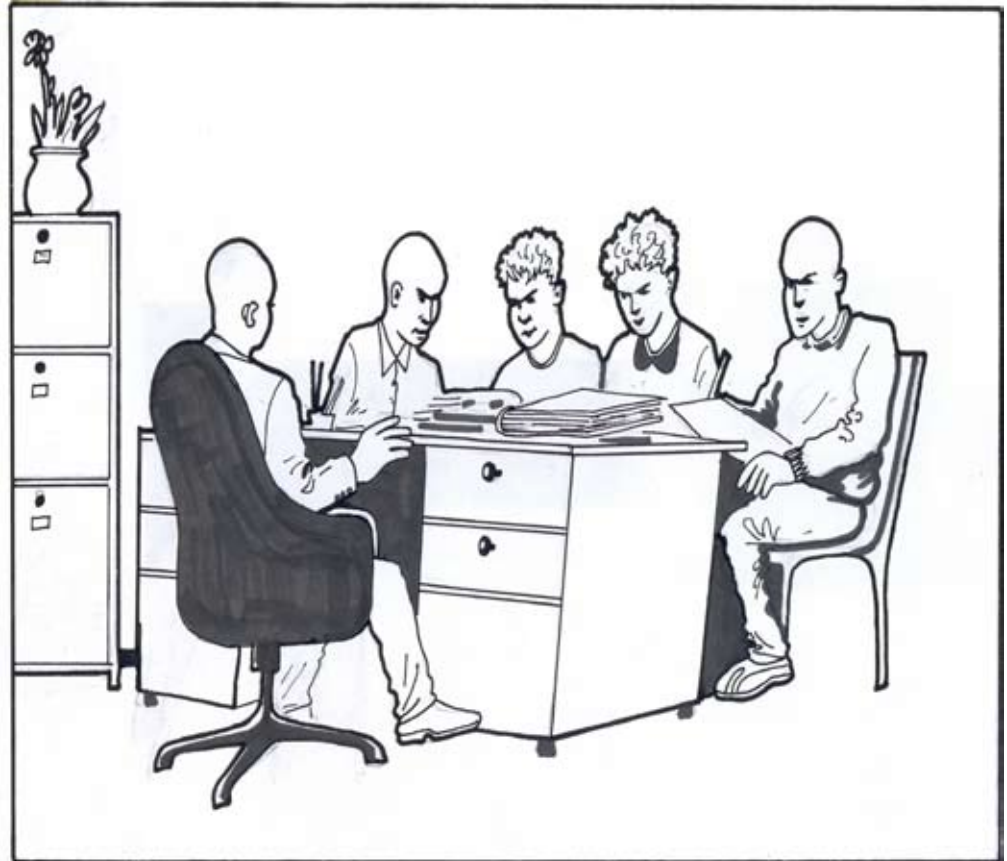
Rationale

This is an ordinary classroom setup, where your profession is shaped by the kind of effort you put towards student learning. The scenario is for both the teacher and students to think of how best teaching and learning can take place.



Resource 2

Collaboration with the mentor and colleagues: (By Jane Ciumwari Gatumu)



Abstract

This is an image to illustrate that you are not an island in teaching profession. You have an opportunity to scrutinise your journal record with your colleagues and the mentor. This gives you chance to evaluate yourself and others give you their feedback. This is a moment to have professional dialogue which improves you and others in your classroom practice. It is easier to talk about your strengths and weaknesses based on the constant record in your journal. Though personal, it is a source of data to enhance your critical thinking.

Rationale

The choice of this drawing is based on African philosophy expressed by John Mbiti (1969, p114) when he writes: “I am because we are and because we are, therefore I am”. Dialoguing allows you room to clear misunderstandings and express your views. Also, confidence develops by interacting with others.

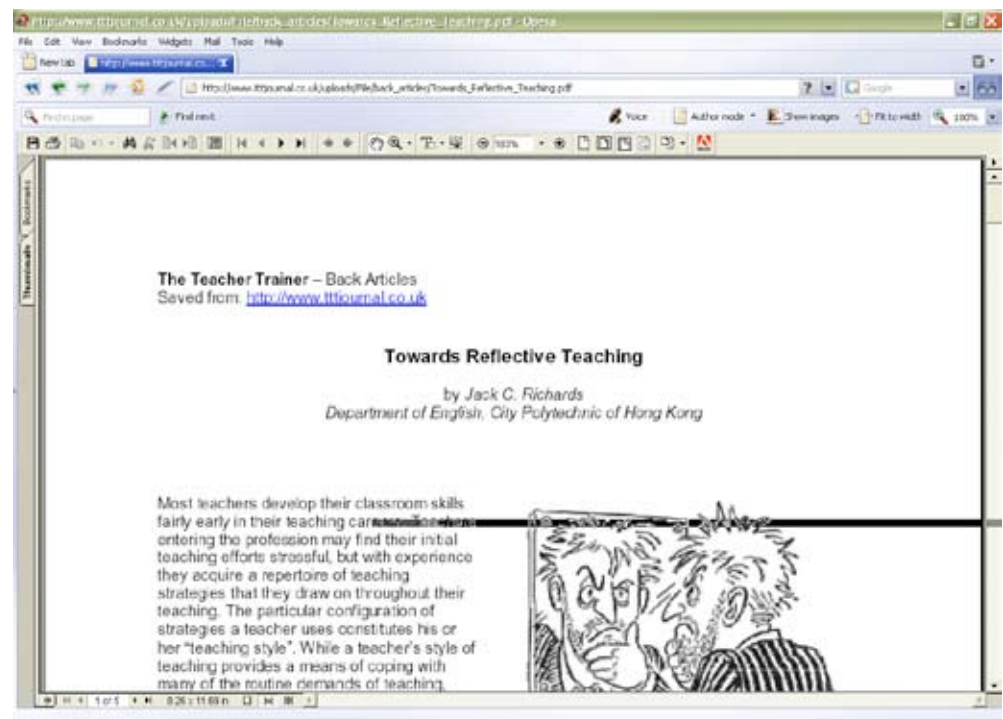


XIV. List of Useful Reading Links

Useful link # 1

Title: Towards Reflective Teaching

URL: <http://www.ttjournal.co.uk>



Description

To Richards, reflective teaching is an experience to which the whatness and whyness are searched for through not taking anything for granted because in a teaching environment, students have to be facilitated to learn. The reading outlines various techniques to employ in facilitating reflective thinking in our classroom experiences. Some of these techniques are peer observations, journal recordings and video/audio recordings of a lesson. The key point from this article is that there must be a deliberate move to understand the classroom environment by sourcing for information about what is going on to keenly search for understanding.

Rationale

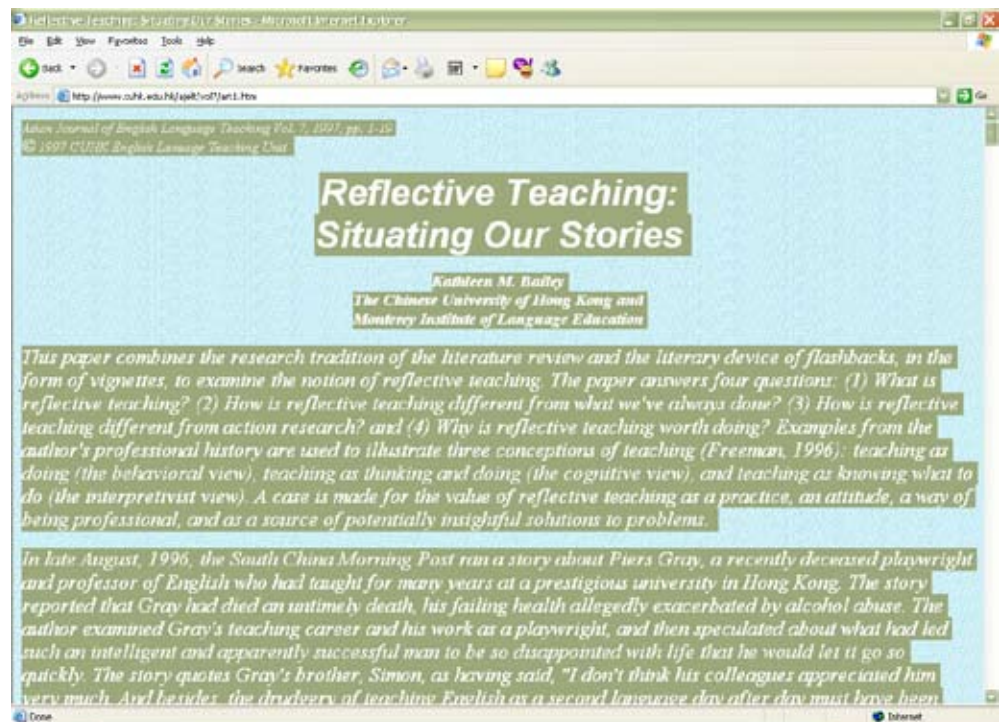
This reading calls upon us not just to be actors, but to be teachers who understand what is happening. To be creators of experience alone is not sufficient for our professional development. Reflective thinking is about moving to the next step.



Useful link # 2

Title: Reflective teaching: Situating our Stories

URL: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/>



Description

Bailey presents reflective teaching as a process by which a classroom teacher makes his/her teaching productive by getting concerned with searching for answers to 'what' and 'why' questions of every day practice. She presents this by direct context of a real classroom situation. The focus of the presentation is that the teacher has a responsibility towards ensuring that students learn. She emphasizes that the teacher has to critically think of the classroom practice by searching for meanings from his/her beliefs, attitudes, assumptions and practices. This can be done by sourcing for information from observations, journal keeping, action research and discussions.

Rationale

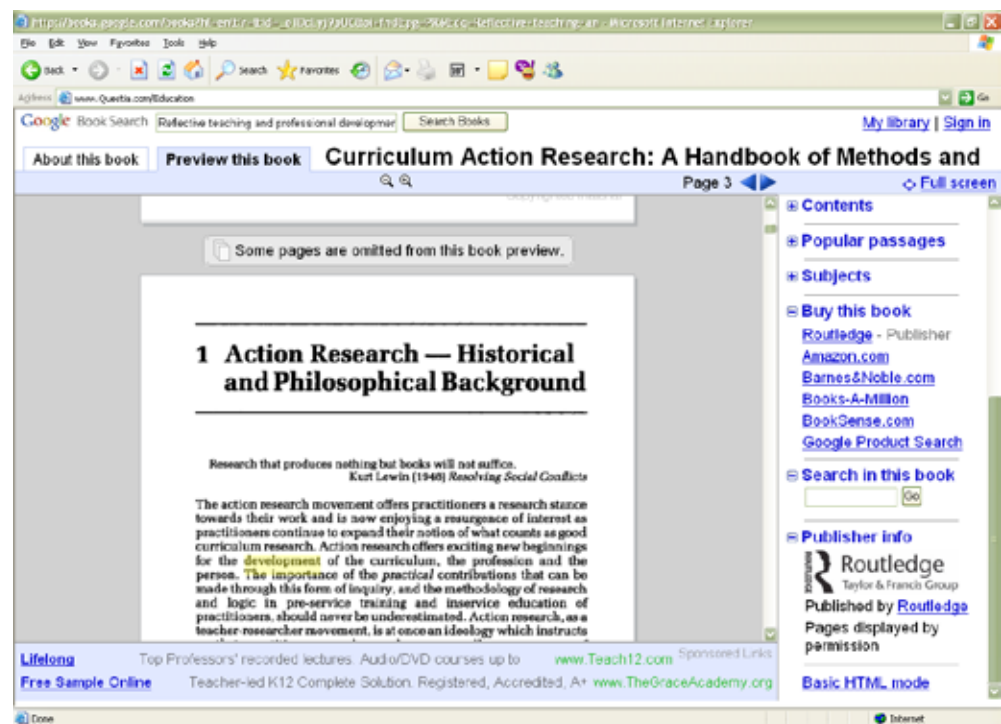
The classroom setting appeals to the reader in that you become a participant of the given experiences. She manages to have your attention all through as the students under the facilitation of the teacher are active thinkers. The image of a caring, committed and responsible teacher features.



Useful link # 3

Title: Action Research

URL: <http://books.google.co/>



Description

James McKernan presents action research as a practice through which a teacher can undertake reflective teaching of his/her practice. The skill of researching should be a component of a professional training programme so that the teacher is able to solve issues of teaching practice systematically. When effectively done the teacher grows and develops in his/her profession. At the same time, others professionals benefit from this form of inquiry.

Rationale

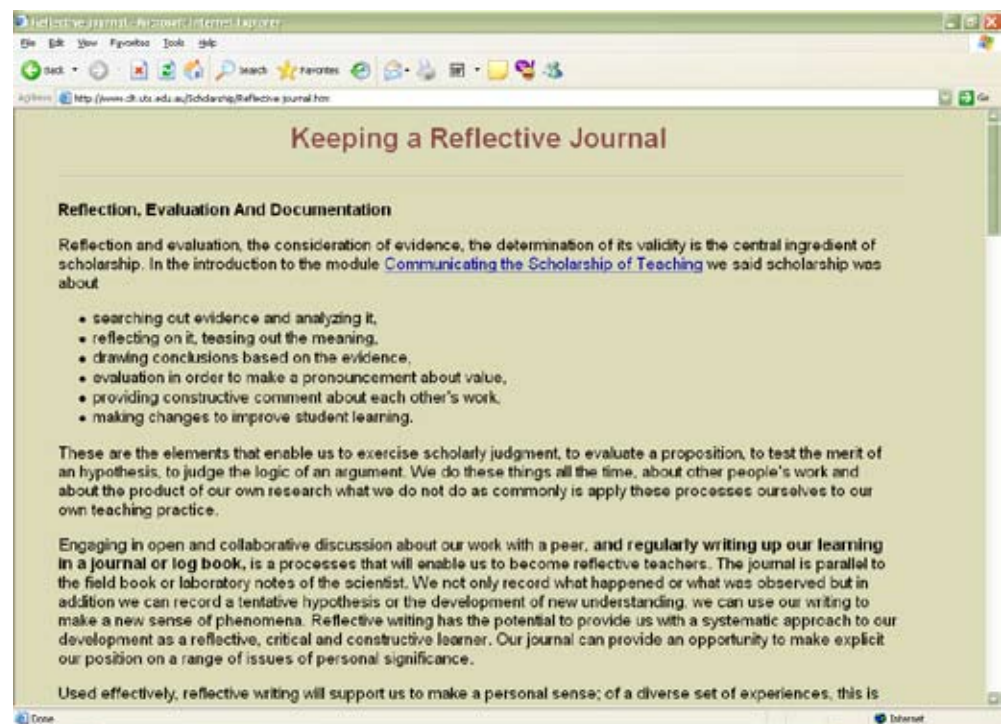
The power of action research rests on the fact that, it strengthens your inquiry mechanism in the understanding of classroom life.



Useful link # 4

Title: Keeping a reflective journal

URL: [http://www.cl.t.uts.au/Reflective journal](http://www.cl.t.uts.au/Reflective%20journal)



Description

The whole process of reflective teaching is summarised by this activity of journal keeping. The process when effected benefits you as an individual and other colleagues. It is very clear that journal keeping can lead to undertaking an action research, a systematic inquiry approach to problem solving. The whole process is presented as a contribution to reflective writing. The passage highlights the benefits of journal keeping and techniques of how to do it in a creative manner. The major focus here is that evidence obtained from journal recordings forms the basis for evaluation.

Rationale

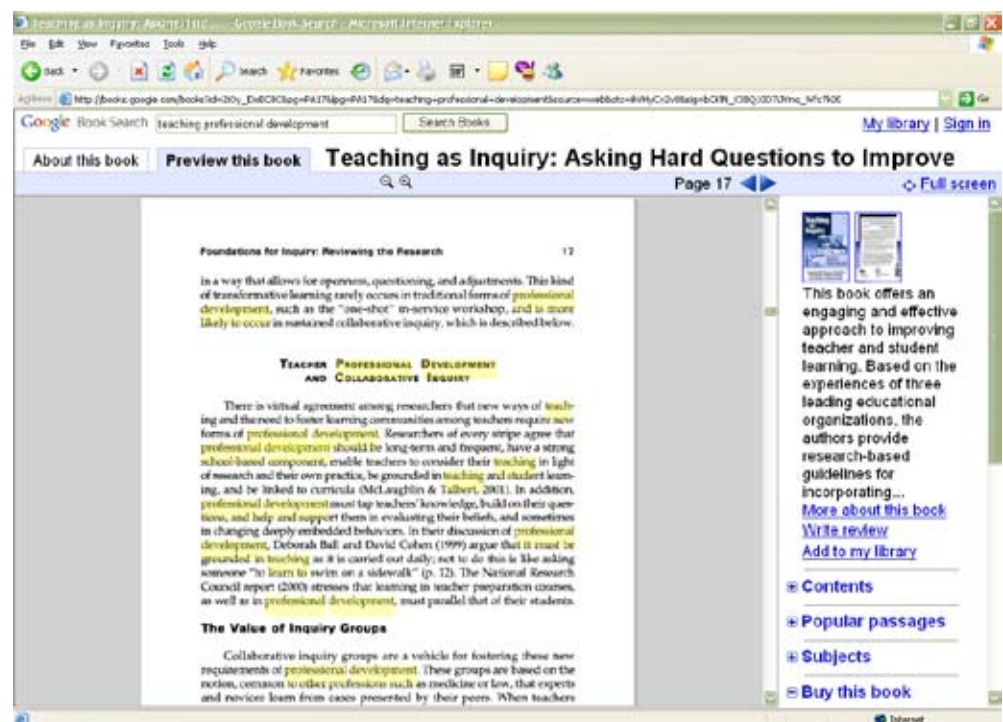
There are benefits in journal keeping, as an activity of reflective practice.



Useful link # 5

Title: Teacher professional development and collaborative inquiry – from: Asking hard questions to improve practice and student achievement

URL: <http://books.google.com/books>



Description

The authors of this book target the inquiry approach as a way of improving practice. The inquiry process becomes effective when undertaken in a collaborative manner

Rationale

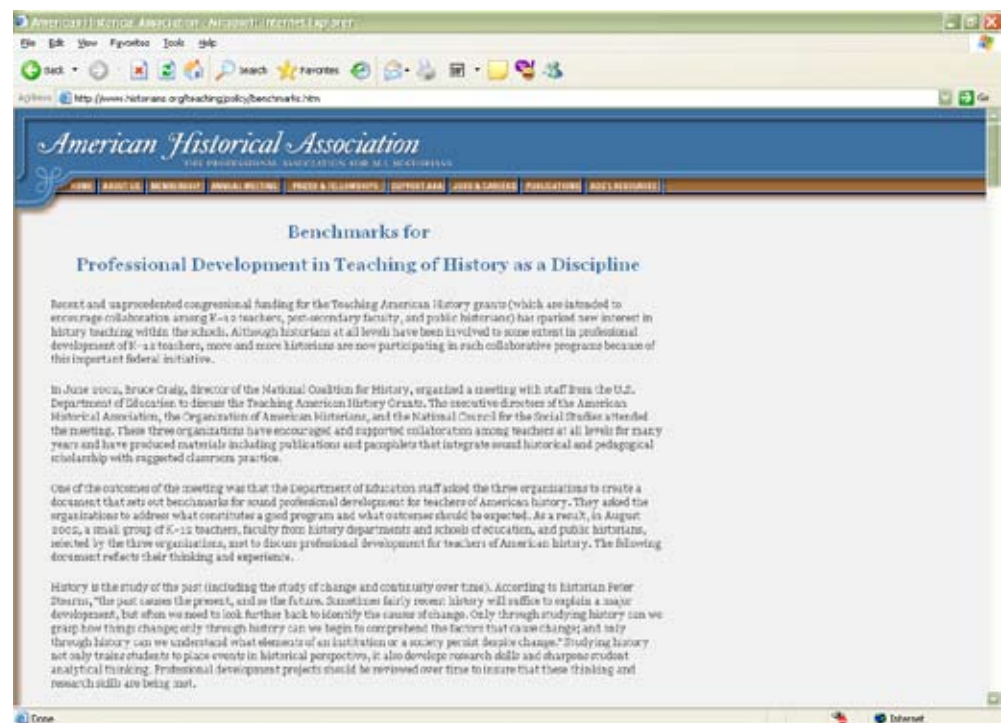
As a teacher, there is always something you can do to improve your practice and students' performance



Useful link # 6

Title: Benchmarks for professional development in teaching of history as a discipline

URL: <http://www.historians.org/teaching/policy/Benchmarks> for professional development in teaching of history as a discipline



Description

This article suggests what teachers of history have to do towards their professional development. History as a discipline, has its aims which promote analytical skills and research experiences central in ones professional development. This necessitates regular projects to ascertain that analytical and research skills are maintained.

Rationale

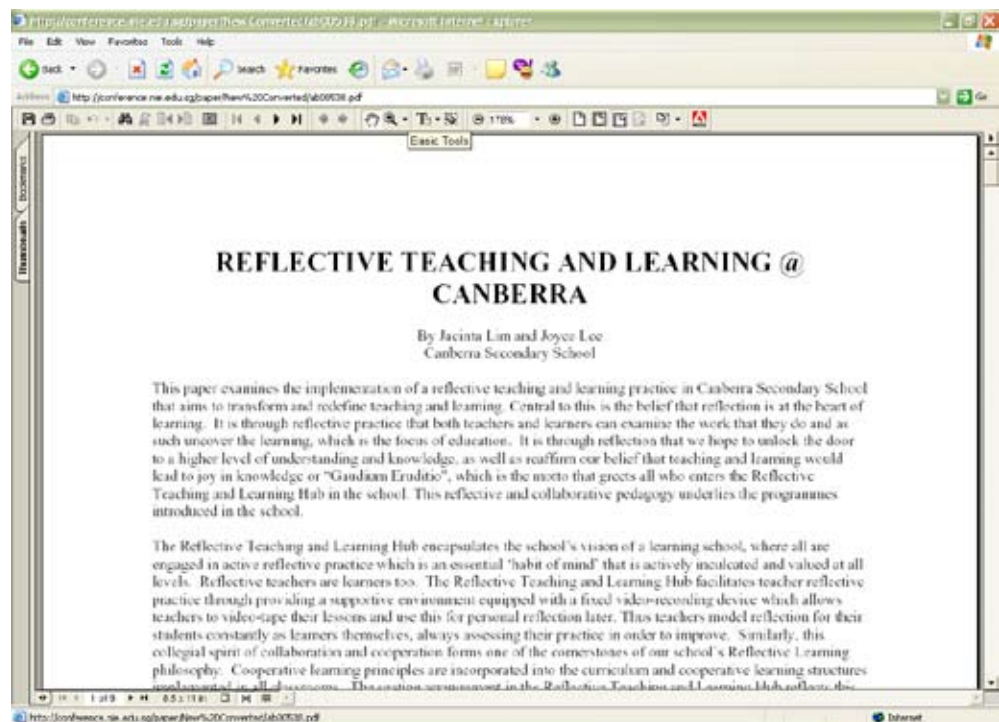
What is true to history can be applied to various teaching disciplines so that every teacher grows in his/her profession. This implies that it is in our specific disciplines that we exercise reflective teaching.



Useful link # 7

Title: Reflective teaching and learning @ Canberra

URL: [http://conference.nie.edu.sg/Reflective teaching and learning @ Canberra](http://conference.nie.edu.sg/Reflective%20teaching%20and%20learning%20@%20Canberra)



Description

Reflective teaching is presented as central to learning and teaching in Canberra secondary school. The process allows examination of what both teachers and students do. The impact of video recording is highlighted so that in a collaboration effort, the recorded evidence about performance can be discussed to support each other. At the same time the teachers record their lessons for students to evaluate. The team spirit in teaching and learning is advocated through implementation of reflective teaching programme.

Rationale

This is an article which shows the importance of peers and students towards the improvement of one's practice. The team spirit contributes towards the attainment of the institution's goals as all key role players are working towards a common goal. If it has succeeded in Canberra secondary school, it can work in other schools.



Useful link # 8

Title: The process and challenge of online peer mentoring

URL: <http://we.tesol.org/ProductDetail.aspx>

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the TESOL website. The page title is "The Process and Challenge of Online Peer Mentoring". The article is from TESOL Matters Vol. 6 No. 2 (April/May 1999) by Jynell K. Bowman. The article discusses an online peer mentoring project involving 10 teachers. It describes the process of setting up the project, the challenges faced, and the benefits of the program. The article includes a list of questions that were asked of the participants and a summary of the responses. The TESOL logo is visible in the top left corner, and the Essential Teacher logo is in the top right corner. The page also features a search bar and a navigation menu.

Description

Through use of e-mail service, teachers are presented supporting each other through sharing of experiences which they reflect upon to improve their practice. The experiences are based on common areas of interest to which they address and then after some time they share out the experience through online. Such an enterprise requires commitment and responsibility.

Rationale

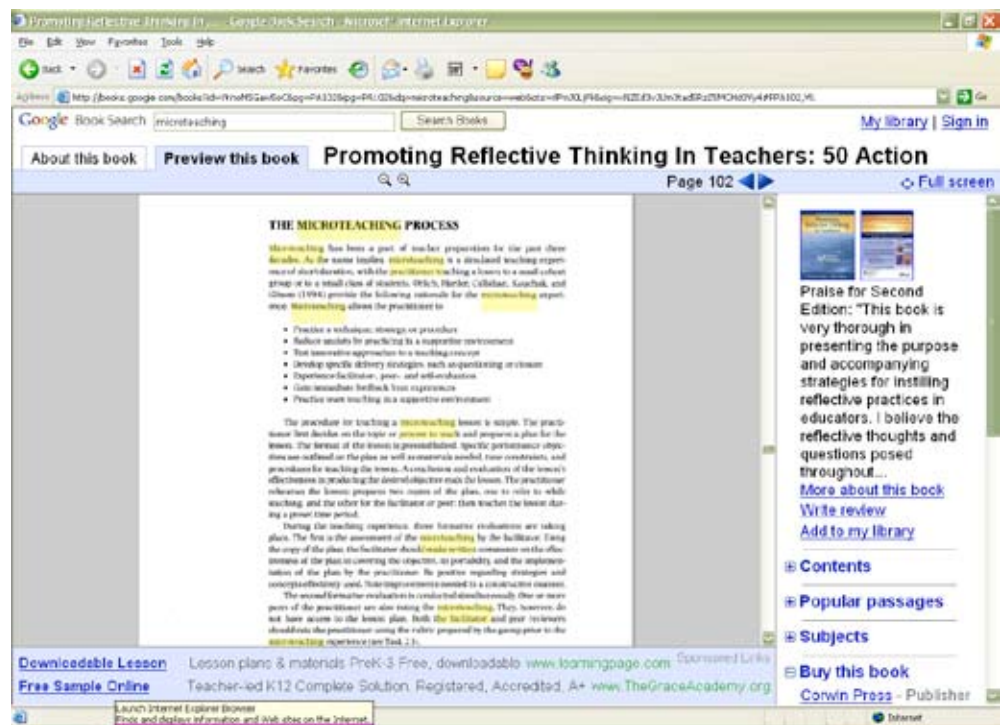
Getting into a group encourages the team to work towards the improvement of practice. Modern technology makes it easier these days. The chat face is an example of how you can improve your practice by working and relating with other colleagues for support.



Useful link # 9

Title: The microteaching process - from: Promoting reflective thinking in teachers 50 strategies.

URL:<http://books.google.com/books>



Description

Germaine Taggart and Alfred Wilson focus on microteaching as one of the 50 strategies to promote reflective teaching. The feedback component enables the teacher to have evidence upon which strengths and areas to improve can be identified to enhance individual's professional development.

Rationale

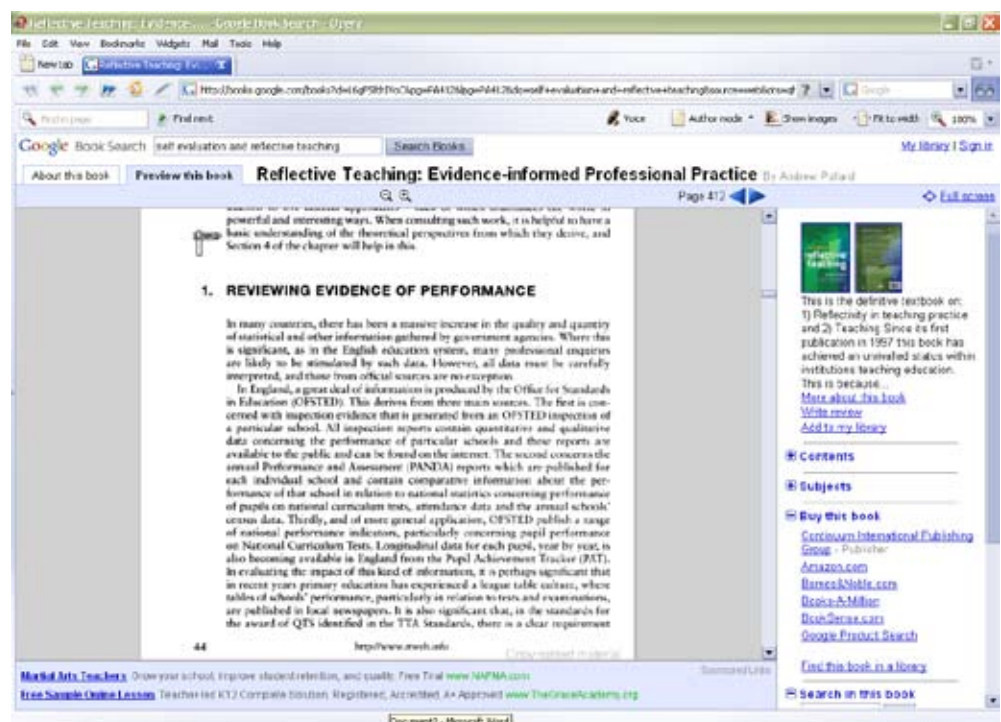
Feedback is key to reflective teaching as it is the evidence upon which change can be given to ones practice.



Useful link #10

Title: Reviewing evidence of performance- from: Reflective teaching: evidence-informed professional development

URL: <http://books.google.com/books>

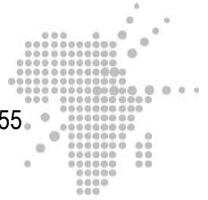


Description

Andrew Pollard and his co-authors present reviewing of evidence as central to reflective teaching. The focus is on self evaluation which leads to identification of strengths and areas of weakness to be acted upon to improve one's profession. Different sources of evidence for evaluation are presented. Similarly, there are different forms of evaluators. The key point is that whatever source of data must be interpreted for decision to be made.

Rationale

This section of Pollard's books helps us to have an understanding of evaluation in reflective teaching.



XV. Synthesis of the Module

The focus of the module is on how you attach meaning and understanding to what you do in the classroom situation by being critical, creative, heuristic and insightful of your practice. The module contributes towards your understanding of the nature of reflective teaching in terms of it being a dynamic cyclic process which lets you collect data about your practice, organise and analyse data and finally undertake the evaluation which leads to decision making.

The module is practical in nature in that you must put reflective teaching into practice. Through the activities of self-evaluation, monitoring support, action research, journal keeping and microteaching you are able to access your classroom experiences to identify your strengths and weakness. All this is possible because of care, accountability and responsibility emanating from you as required in the teaching profession.

Thus your effort towards improving your practice is a paramount step towards your own professional development which is evidenced by students' learning. This is particularly influenced by action research which is a systematic investigation of issues in the classroom.



XVI. Summative Evaluation

- a. Using 100 words, describe an issue which can arise from your classroom during teaching practice.
- b. Write a 900 words essay to justify three procedures you would use to collect data for self evaluation over the described issue in (a) above

Answer Key

a) The selected issue will come from that which concerns your teaching practice

b) Procedures

- Journal keeping
- Peer mentoring
- Microteaching
- Feedback
- Action research
- Keeping of portfolios

Your essay must address the following aspects of what reflective teaching is able to fulfill under the specific procedures.

- Enhancing critical thinking
- Providing meaning to teaching practice
- Allowing collaboration with colleagues and mentors
- Manifesting commitment, care and accountability to teaching
- Enhancing job satisfaction
- Promoting some amount of motivation
- Empowering problem solving
- Enhancing emotional attachment to what one is doing
- Promoting use of media gadgets to improve teaching
- Highlighting the classroom as a key area of concern
- Enhancing the teacher not to take his/her teaching for granted
- Showing the strong relationship between teaching and learning

Submit your essay by e-mailing it to the instructor.



XVII. Student's Feedback of the Module

Kindly respond to these questions concerning how you rate this module. Put a tick next to what you really think

1. Did you find the module
 - A Boring
 - B Interesting
 - C Very Boring
 - D Very Interesting
2. Did you find the content
 - A Too easy
 - B Just right
 - C Too hard
 - D Too easy in some parts but too hard in others
3. Did you understand the instructions given by the instructor
 - A Not at all
 - B Quite a bit
 - C All the time
 - D Not always
4. Did the instructor know the subject matter of the module
 - A Some of the time
 - B All the time
 - C Not at all
 - D Hardly ever
5. How do you rate this module in your teaching profession?
 - A Not relevant
 - B Relevant
 - C Just a bit relevant
 - D Very relevant



6. Has the module changed your thinking about the teaching profession

- A Not at all
- B Quite a lot
- C A lot
- D Not sure

7. Do you recommend this module to other students

- A Not at all
- B Just a bit of it
- C All of it
- D A lot of it

8. Do you view this module contributing to student's learning

- A Not at all
- B Quite a lot
- C Just a bit
- D A lot of it

9. Does the module make you a better teacher.

- A Not at all
- B Quite a bit
- C Quite a lot
- D A lot

10. Is this module a repetition of other modules

- A Not at all
- B A bit of it
- C Quite a bit of it
- D A lot of it



XVIII. References

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Appendices

Appendix 1

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational Psychology/Chapter 13](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_13)
The Reflective practitioner

From Wikibooks, the open-content textbooks collection

The experience in reflective teaching is that you must plunge into the doing, and try to educate yourself before you know what it is you're trying to learn.

Donald Schön (1987)[1]

Donald Schön, a philosopher and educational researcher, makes an important observation: learning about teaching often means making choices and taking actions without knowing in advance quite what the consequences will be. The problem, as we have pointed out more than once, is that classroom events are often ambiguous and ambivalent, in that they usually serve more than one purpose. A teacher compliments a student's contribution to a discussion: at that moment she may be motivating the student, but also focusing classmates' thinking on key ideas. Her comment functions simultaneously as behavioral reinforcement, information, and expression of caring. At that moment complimenting the student may be exactly the right thing to do. Or not: perhaps the praise causes the teacher to neglect the contributions of others, or focuses attention on factors that students cannot control, like their ability instead of their effort. In teaching, it seems, everything cuts more than one way, signifies more than one thing. The complications can make it difficult to prepare for teaching in advance, though they also make teaching itself interesting and challenging.

The complications also mean that teachers need to learn from their own teaching by reflecting (or thinking about the significance of) their experiences. In the classrooms, students are not the only people who need to learn. So do teachers, though what teachers need to learn is less about curriculum and more about students' behavior and motivation, about how to assess their learning well, and about how to shape the class into a mutually supportive community.

Thinking about these matters helps to make a teacher a reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983)[2]—a professional who learns both from experience and about experience. Becoming thoughtful helps you in all the areas discussed in this text: it helps in understanding better how students' learning occurs, what motivates students, how you might differentiate your instruction more fully, and how you can make assessments of learning more valid and fair.



Learning to reflect on practice is so important, in fact, that we have referred to and illustrated its value throughout this book. In addition we devote this entire chapter to how you, like other professional teachers, can develop habits of reflective practice in yourself. In most of this chapter we describe what reflective practice feels like as an experience, and offer examples of places, people, and activities that can support your own reflection on practice. We finish by discussing how teachers can also learn simply by observing and reflecting on their own teaching systematically, and by sharing the results with other teachers and professionals. We call this activity teacher research or action research. As you will see, reflective practice not only contributes to teachers' ability to make wise decisions, but also allows them to serve as effective, principled advocates on behalf of students.



Appendix 2

Forms of Thinking Associated with Classroom Learning

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational Psychology/Chapter 8:](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_8)

Forms of thinking associated with classroom learning.

Forms of Thinking Associated with Classroom Learning

Although instructional strategies differ in their details, they all function to encourage certain major forms of learning and thinking, each with distinctive educational purposes. The forms sometimes overlap, in the sense that one form of thinking may contribute to a student's success with another form. To see what we mean, look first at three somewhat complex forms of thinking that are common goals of classroom learning:

- critical thinking,
- creative thinking, and
- problem-solving.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the mental skill for analyzing the reliability and validity of information, as well as an attitude or disposition to do so. The skill and attitude may be expressed or displayed with regard to a particular subject matter or topic, but in principle it can occur in any realm of knowledge or living (Halpern, 2003; Williams, Oliver, & Stockade, 2004)[1][2]. A critical thinker does not necessarily have a negative attitude in the everyday sense of being critical of someone or something. Instead he or she can simply be thought of as astute: the critical thinker asks key questions, evaluates the evidence for ideas accurately, reasons about problems logically and objectively, and expresses ideas and conclusions clearly and precisely. Last (but not least), the critical thinker can apply these habits of mind in more than one realm of life or knowledge, though he or she may not always do so in fact.

With such a broad definition, it is not surprising that educators have nominated a wide variety of specific cognitive skills as contributors to critical thinking. In one study, for example, the researcher found that critical thinking about a published article was stimulated by annotation—writing questions and comments in the margins of the article (Liu, 2006)[3]. In this study students who were initially instructed in ways of annotating reading materials. Later, when the students completed additional readings for assignments, it was found that some students in fact used their annotation skills much more than others—some simply under-



lined passages, for example, with a highlighting pen. When essays written about the readings were later analyzed, the ones written by the annotators were found to be more well-reasoned—more critically astute—than the essays written by the other students.

But the skills comprising critical thinking are not just written ones. In another study, for example, a researcher found that critical thinking can also involve oral discussion with classmates of personal issues or dilemmas (Hawkins, 2006)[4]. In this study, students were asked to describe to classmates a recent personal incident that disturbed them. Classmates then discussed the incident together in order to identify the precise reasons why the incident was disturbing to the individual, as well as the assumptions that the student had made in thinking about the incident. The original student—the one who had first told the story—then used the results of the group discussion to frame a topic for a research essay. In one story of a troubling incident, for example, a student told of a time when a store clerk has snubbed or rejected the student during a recent shopping errand. Through discussion, classmates decided that an assumption underlying the student's disturbance was her suspicion that she had been a victim of racial profiling based on her skin color. The student then used this idea as the basis for a research essay on the topic of "racial profiling in retail stores." The group discussion thus stimulated critical thinking in the student and the classmates, but it also relied on their prior critical thinking skills at the same time.

Notice that in both of these research studies, as in others like them, what made the thinking "critical" was students' use of metacognition—strategies for thinking about thinking and for monitoring the success and quality of one's own thinking. This is a concept that we discussed in Chapter 2 as a feature of constructivist views about learning. There we pointed out that when students acquire experience in building their own knowledge, they also become skilled both at knowing how they learn, and at knowing whether they have learned something well. These two defining qualities of metacognition are part of critical thinking as well. In fostering critical thinking, then, a teacher is really fostering a student's ability to construct or control his or her own thinking and to avoid being controlled by ideas unreflectively.

How best to teach the skills of critical thinking, however, remains a matter of debate. One issue is whether to infuse critical skills into existing courses or to teach them through separate, free-standing units or courses. The first approach has the potential advantage of demonstrating how critical thinking relates to students' entire educations. But it does so at the risk of diluting students' understanding and use of critical thinking simply because critical thinking takes on so in many different forms—its details and appearance varying among courses and teachers. The free-standing approach has the opposite qualities: it stands a better chance of



being understood clearly and coherently, but by the same token its connections to other courses, tasks, and activities may not be as clear to students. This is the issue—again—of transfer, discussed earlier in Chapter 2. Unfortunately, research to compare the infusion versus free-standing strategies for teaching critical thinking does not settle the matter; it suggests that either approach can work as long as it is implemented thoroughly and the teachers are committed to the value of critical thinking (Halpern, 2003)[5].

A related issue about teaching critical thinking is about who needs or should learn critical thinking skills the most. Should it in fact be all students? This goal seems the most democratic and therefore appropriate for educators. Surveys of teachers have found, however, that teachers sometimes favor teaching of critical thinking to high-advantage students—the ones who already achieve well, who come from relatively high-income families, or (for high school students) who take courses intended for university entrance (Warburton & Torff, 2005)[6]. Presumably the rationale for this bias is that high-advantage students can benefit and/or understand and use critical thinking better than other students. There is little evidence to support this idea, however, even if it were not ethically questionable. The study by Hawkins (2006) described above, for example, achieved good success teaching critical thinking even with students usually considered low-advantage.

Creative thinking

Creativity is the ability to make something new that is also useful or valued by others (Gardner, 1993). The “something” can be an object (like an essay or painting), a skill (like playing an instrument), or an action (like using a familiar tool in a new way)....(read more...)

Problem-solving

Somewhere between open-ended, creative thinking and the focused learning of content lies problem solving, the analysis and solution of tasks and situations that are somewhat complex or ambiguous and that pose difficulties, inconsistencies, or obstacles of some kind...



Appendix 3

How to Keep a Journal

<http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social> and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Chapter 8: How to keep a journal From Wikibooks, the open-content textbooks collection Contents

Some Ways to Keep a Meaningful Journal

Anyone, at any moment, could walk up to you and tell you the meaning of life. For everyone it may be different, but regardless of this fact, if the very next person you were to hold a conversation with were to divulge to you the secret meaning of the universe, chances are you probably wouldn't understand it at the time. Meaning is a product of contemplation, and contemplation is something of an aging process; things that start out as simply memorable mature into encounters that are truly meaningful.

A good journal is like a roadmap, a golden thread through the labyrinth of one's own personal past. A journal that is kept well and tended well will be fruitful, whereas one that is neglected and kept up out of a false sense of obligation, without any real thought put into it, will not yield any fruit to its writer.

In any Barnes & Noble, Border's, or even artsy boutique, blank books are a popular item for sale. People like blank books, people buy blank books, but do people use blank books? For me, getting to the very last page of any sort of notebook, no matter what it's filled with, is a very special moment. At that moment, I come to the realization that what's in the front of the book is probably mature, so that I can read back over what I've written in the beginning and see how my attitude has changed. A good journal will be rewarding in the writing process and also (especially!) during the re-reading process. Remember, a journal is for you, and no-one else but you! So, there's no excuse not to be as honest as possible!

Keeping a journal can improve your happiness, according to academic research, although what you write is important. Negative events in your life may be best written about in analytical fashion, i.e. as an attempt to identify why events unfolded as they did (because writing analytically will increase awareness about external factors that caused the negative event, and thus suppress negative personal feelings). Positive events, on the other hand, might be better off when left unanalyzed, because analyzing could give the journaler awareness of external factors which



contributed to the success). It might be better instead for the writer to simply record the feelings of the moment and attempt to relive the positive events.

One of the most important things for a prospective journaler to remember is that the real value of a journal is the record being created; a proper journal can serve as a set of minutes to life, and so it comes down to the writer to decide what events are worth noting. Even entries that seem incredibly mundane, filled with details that don't seem to change much from day to day can be interesting years later, and the real key can be establishing a habit of introspection and recollection at the end of each day. That way, when something that is out of the ordinary and calls for real consideration occurs, the writer already has a set time and method to confront the issue.

Exercise

Now that everyone is good and inspired, here are a few tips to get started: At the end of each day, pick one thing that sticks out in your mind. This thing can be a situation, a person, a feeling, or any other kind of observation. Pick something that is meaningful to you, and reflect honestly on it—half a page is a good starting length, but eventually you'll come to have a certain sense of when an entry is completed. At first this may seem difficult, but there are only 2 key points here- being perceptive, and being honest.

The writing part of keeping a journal is not a time-consuming ordeal-- IF the entry is something that you keep at the back of your mind throughout the whole day. The cultivation of this attitude is one more beneficial side effect of keeping a journal. Every day is at least a little bit different, and it is these differences, and moreover our reactions to these differences, that shape how we live life and experience the world.

Keeping a diary

In order to keep a diary, you must set aside time each day to do so. An ideal time to do this is just before you go to bed. As well as adding the events of the day to your journal, the most important things you could write are your feelings and how events have made you feel. This can be useful to look back upon, and honest, open diary entries can help you through difficult times.



Appendix 4

Why mentoring? What's in it for me?

<http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Mentoring> handbook: why mentoring? What's in it for me?

Why mentoring? What's in it for me?

It is difficult to aim to instill learning motivation and self motivation in others without reflecting on your own learning motivation and self motivation. A pupil in the role of a pedagogically trained mentor should consequently experience an increase in his or her own learning motivation and self motivation as a direct result.

Likewise it is difficult to help others to act according to higher-order volitions without reflecting on your own higher-order volitions.

Whatever a mentor does for his or her protégés is likely to increase the understanding and the horizon of the mentor in return, especially when the mentor is still a teenager himself - or herself.

A mentor finds him - or herself in a responsible position (with potential consequences for his or her own school career) and in an area of conflicting interests between protégés, parents, teachers and tutors. This situation could be seen as valuable training for social skills and especially for diplomatic skills. The role of a pedagogue should also be beneficial for a mentor to develop an extensive active mental vocabulary for metacognition and adequate social goals towards his or her protégés.

Last but not least it is difficult to help others to find and to organize sensible leisure time activities without expanding your own horizon in this area, which can also be fun.

Why do I need higher-order volitions and metacognition?

The text in its current form is incomplete.

The human brain is quite good at repeating previous behaviors that have proven to be successful and it is capable to create (random) stimuli that surface as the desire to do something, usually to repeat an action that has previously proven to be successful. The higher brain functions are not necessarily involved or are not involved to a degree that creates an intellectual challenge. Consciousness and emotions occur primarily when the telencephalon is presented with problems it



has not yet an established solution for. In that case the cerebral cortex builds new neuronal networks under the guidance of the limbic system and on the basis of past experiences. Consequently what you might want to sustain and to expand your intellect is intellectual stimulus and training for introspection.

Higher-order volitions allow you to follow goals that are not primarily influenced by external stimuli or lower-order volitions with a strong tendency towards repetitive actions. Metacognition allows you to analyze your own (or somebody else's) thinking and to make informed choices about the factors that influence it. One could argue that both are necessary to give the human brain a degree of self-control it does not otherwise possess but which it is commonly assumed to possess. One could also see both as necessary to establish free will. [Higher-order volition]

Following the categorical imperative it seems only reasonable that you might want to provide what you would like to receive. Following the categorical imperative you would probably also not wish for a society in which people had not established their higher-order volitions and learned to apply a sufficient degree of metacognition, consequently mentoring would become a moral obligation and recruiting protégés as future mentors could also be seen as a moral obligation (in the best interest of the protégés).

What's an active mental vocabulary? You made that term up.

Tell it to me - and I will forget.

Show it to me - and I will remember.

Make me participate - and I will understand.

attributed to Confucius and Laozi

The text in its current form is incomplete.

Many papers and proofs begin with a definition of terms; making a term up does not by itself discredit the term. In this case the meaning is pretty generic. The difference between an active vocabulary and a passive vocabulary is the difference between being able to phrase something and being able to understand the phrase when it is used. Words that do not suggest themselves are not part of your active vocabulary but they do belong to your passive vocabulary when you can deduce the meaning. The brain contains a vast amount of associations that may, to a telepath, appear as the vocabulary in which you can be addressed. Parts of that vocabulary are more active and other parts are less active, meaning they do not suggest themselves as easily. Inert knowledge could also be seen as a less active part of one's mental vocabulary.



To train your active mental vocabulary you could decide on a higher-order volition to prefer certain behaviors over others and to view each successful application of that higher-order volition as a success. Behaviors that train quite desirable aspects of your mental vocabulary are mentoring and teaching.

Computer games and, to a lesser degree, other media can create an overabundance of perceptions of success. Consequently another higher-order volition could be to limit artificially created success situations in order to avoid a slippery slope towards addiction (as a worst case) and to preserve more of a sense of achievement for goals chosen by higher-order volitions.

Of course children should be given the opportunity to experience success in learning situations and to derive motivation from it, but at some age a protégé may need encouragement to occasionally prefer intellectual motivation over pleasure. The emphasis is on occasionally, because an intermediate position may be desirable; to generally prefer intellectual motivation could, for instance, lead to lack of socializing.

Protégés may be old enough to analyze their own motivations and to give precedence to intellectual motivation where appropriate. The ability develops gradually and not at a certain age at once. How can you measure the ability of a protégé to analyze his or her own motivation properly and to prefer intellectual motivation?

What mental vocabulary do I need when I know my higher-order volitions?
The text in its current form is incomplete.

Where does the idea to consider higher-order volitions originate? You can only follow higher-order volitions when your active mental vocabulary suggests to analyze how a lower-order volition relates to higher-order volitions and to do that you again rely, to a degree, on random associations, not on a strict algorithm.

In more day-to-day words: Reminding yourself to reconsider your higher-order volitions may require training like any other skill. The skill is trained when you help others to reconsider their goals and volitions and to plan how to reach their goals. This could be seen as better training because the task to help somebody else tends to be intellectually more challenging than reflecting on your own goals and volitions. One could also see this as over-training a crucial skill for your own benefit. It also isn't uncommon that the teacher learns something about what he teaches, which is metacognition in this case.

The ability to work with people also requires training and to educate other people is among the best training you can aim for. The ability to work with people is also often circumscribed with soft skills and is, under that heading, also a qualification for working life.



Mentoring and teaching share the qualities of being benevolent by design, of providing and embracing intellectual challenges and are both social by design. In contrast a mental vocabulary can also reject intellectual challenges if it makes little use of analysis, anticipation and imagination, an attitude which passive TV consumption may promote



Appendix 5

LEARNING FROM OTHERS

<http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social> and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Second edition/2, 7.3: Learning from others.

From Wikibooks, the open-content textbooks collection

An Article by Michelle Waleski

Introduction

When a fellow teacher talks, we are more apt to listen because they are at our level doing what we do every day and understand what is important. If a peer tells us to try a new web site for information on the latest ways to integrate technology into the classroom, we get excited. When Mrs. Brown, the second grade teacher with 15 years experience, tells us how she gets her students to pay attention, we listen eagerly. Learning through peers is an important way for teachers to acquire new ideas, make fresh lesson plans, get insight on disciplinary issues, and receive constructive criticism. This article will cover the three ways teachers learn through peers: peer review, peer mentoring, and peer coaching.”TO TEACH IS TO LEARN TWICE..” Joseph Joubert

Peer review

In a peer review, a teacher will sit in on part of another teacher’s lessons. They will note what they think the teacher is doing well and what needs improvement. Then they review their observations with that teacher and/or the principal. The peer will make recommendations about which areas teachers need training or counseling. This process first started in 1981 as part of a professional development program. Not all districts require peer review, however they are becoming more and more popular. The main reason for a peer review is to create a higher level of professionalism and set standards for teachers that enter the classroom. “Peer review requires teachers themselves to make decisions about what constitutes good teaching and makes provisions for teachers with expertise in their subject area to evaluate and assist weaker teachers.”(Troen) It also “requires teachers to make decisions about removing [the evaluated] colleagues who cannot perform.”(Troen) The peer review process can help new teachers start off stronger and help veteran teachers learn new techniques. It can also be a valuable tool for school systems to



remove teachers who are not meeting standards. “More probationary and experienced teachers have been dismissed under peer review than under the previous system of administrative review.”(Troen) Although some teachers are scared of peer reviews, most good teachers welcome it. Peer reviews foster an environment for fellow teachers to learn from the strength of others and help open a dialogue among peers to teach each other.

Peer Coaching

Peer Coaching got its start in the early 1980s with the idea that coaching educators would “share aspects of teaching, plan together, and pool their experiences.” (Wong) The concept behind peer coaching is similar to peer review: fellow teachers will sit in on a lesson plan or part of a day and then go over the strong and weak points of that teacher. The difference with peer coaching is that teachers will go over what they saw with only each other. They do not make decisions on counseling, training, or dismissals. With this open dialogue peers are able to discuss methods that are successful and methods that have been ineffective. A bond is created among teachers that promotes strong professional development.

There are three types of peer coaching, which are categorized by their strategies. First is technical coaching which “focuses on incorporating new curriculum and instructional techniques in a teacher’s routine.”(Wong) With technical coaching teachers receive tips from peers on how to improve day-to-day management, lessons, and discipline. For example, Mrs. Griener might get feedback on her lack of integrating the use of computers in her lessons. Next, cognitive and collegial peer coaching is set up to improve an already existing routine. Its main purpose is to “refine techniques, develop collegiality, increase professional dialogue, and assist teachers in reflecting on their teaching styles.”(Wong) For example, the science teachers from County High School get together once a month to go over new ways to make science fun. Third is challenge coaching which is used to zone in on a specific area or problem. For instance, the entire third grade class at Parker Elementary school is falling behind in math skills. With peer coaching the third grade teachers can get together, evaluate another grade that is excelling in math, and pool their thoughts. The success of all three types of peer coaching require trusting relationships, recognition from staff and faculty, clear expectations, and support from administration.



Peer Mentoring

Peer mentoring process occurs when a seasoned teacher takes on a new or probationary teacher to help them to become a successful educator and help the new teacher to achieve a high standard of education. Basically they “show them the ropes”. They will meet a few times a week or month to go over any questions or problems the new teacher has. Sometimes the mentor will give advice on how to implement a good lesson, good classroom management, grade appropriate activities, or anything they feel will be beneficial. For instance, if the new teacher is having a hard time organizing his/her schedule and feels stressed, the mentor teacher should sit with them and go over their schedule to give pointers for some improvements. The mentor is also there to help talk about feelings like stress, frustration, and insecurities. A good mentor will give examples of struggles they faced while starting off. Peer mentoring is there to guide and help a new teacher succeed. Although it is a great concept, the mentor needs to be active; some teachers complain that their mentor teacher has a lack of involvement. A mentor teacher should always provide support to their protégé.

Conclusion

“The primary goal of any peer observation is to rethink the way we do things and adapt to changing times, students, and circumstances.” (Osten) The benefits from peer learning are enormous. The feedback teachers get is specific, learning is acquired from being observed and observing, a sense of teamwork is revealed, through that teamwork a higher standard of teaching is reached, and most importantly new teachers are staying educators longer due to support and mentoring.

Essay Question

Do you feel as a future teacher that you would welcome a peer into your classroom to evaluate you? If so which type of peer learning do you think would work best and why? If not why?

Possible Essay Answer:

I believe that it is a good idea to have another teacher’s opinion about your teaching performance. I personally do not like to be observed by other adults because I feel more inhibited than I do with just kids in the class. When it is just kids, I feel freer to jump around, skip, dance – whatever it takes to make the kids get involved. However, with adults in the room I don’t do this sort of thing. Therefore, I’m not sure that during an observation the other teacher is getting a



good assessment of what I'm really like in the classroom. Therefore, I think that peer mentoring would be what works best for me as a teacher. Peer mentoring would cause me to do a true self evaluation of my performance in the classroom and then discuss any concerns with another teacher. Also, I may see a problem occasionally in the classroom that a fellow teacher may not see if they are only able to come in and observe during one class. I also would not feel the pressure that I might feel because of a peer review. Peer mentoring seems like a less formal way to get good feedback without the stress of some of the other forms of learning from peers.



Appendix 6

OBSERVING CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Second edition/9, 2.3: Observing classroom activities](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/Second_edition/9,2.3:Observing_classroom_activities)

From Wikibooks, the open-content textbooks collection

Improving Evaluations

by: Chris Robinson

2/08/07 Dr. Dwight Allen

Weak or incompetent teachers threaten the reputation of the profession and the quality of education children receive. A good teacher needs to be able to demonstrate the course material effectively so that the students get what they need out of the classroom and are able to use these skills in future classrooms and professional experiences. Evaluating teachers to see how effectively these skills are being taught are important to schools because if students are not getting what they need, then direct action must be taken. So what can be done to improve the evaluations being given in classrooms? How can we implement new ideas to the evaluation process? What should we include in implementing these new ideas? The purpose of this article is to discuss how teachers should be evaluated in order to increase awareness about preserving the most beneficial classroom experience.

Teacher evaluations are often designed to serve two purposes: to measure teacher competence and to foster professional development and growth. Evaluators should consider a variety of teaching skills. If the evaluators use several sources of information about a teacher's performance, they can make a more accurate evaluation.

OBSERVING CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

The goal of class observations is to obtain a representative sample of a teacher's performance in the classroom. Evaluators cannot accomplish this goal with a sample of only a few hours of observation or with an observation of only one class but rather should have a systematic approach that allows them to evaluate the teacher on a more consistent basis. Multiple observers for the classroom would also be very helpful as it would point out inconsistencies between what each eva-



luator says. It is not an issue that one evaluator might be judgemental in a biased way but having multiple people conduct the observation can help to make the data more concrete. Observations can be formal and planned or informal and unannounced. Both forms of evaluation can provide valuable information but the key idea is to be objective by spending quality time in the classroom. Also, what is the purpose of having an announced or unannounced observation? A teacher's performance will not be different just because they did not know that they were about to be evaluated. In performing their duties, the evaluators should be asking these questions:

1. How effectively is the teacher aiding her students in the learning process?
2. What is the teacher's classroom management philosophy and how is it working with the students?
3. Are the students progressing? How well do they do on their tests?
4. What kind of atmosphere is being administered by the teacher? Are the students on task?
5. What is the teacher's lesson plan for the day? How does it link instruction and testing?

Expanding the criteria of evaluations so that they are objective and fair is necessary if the evaluations of personnel are to be improved. Teachers have many issues with evaluations and if the evaluations are to be improved, then the issues on how they are to be evaluated must be discussed.

TEACHER CONCERNS ABOUT EVALUATIONS

Teachers do not have any input into the evaluation criteria. Other professionals such as doctors, lawyers, and engineers control the criteria for their evaluations. Teachers often do not have that privilege. State laws or school boards decide the focus of the evaluation. This leads teachers to distrust the evaluation process and to question the validity of the results that it yields.

Evaluators are not spending enough time on the evaluation. Teachers complain that the principal, or whoever is conducting the evaluation, does not have the time to gather quality information and provide useful feedback. After a teacher's first year evaluation, he or she may not have another evaluation for two or three years, sometimes longer. The evaluations need to be in the classroom much more often in order to fix this problem. If evaluations are to be taken seriously, then all aspects of the evaluations must be constantly undermined until all holes have been filled.



Evaluators are not being well trained. Teachers complain that few evaluators have any special training to help them plan and carry out a successful evaluation. Even worse, many have had little or no recent experience in the classroom. How can someone evaluate what is happening if they cannot appreciate how teaching is implemented in today's classroom? A suggestion worthy of discussing would be the implementation of teachers as evaluators. The teachers could be from other school districts or former teachers but as long as they can be unbiased, then they can properly evaluate the teacher through reflections of their own first-hand experience as a teacher or former teacher.

Other Issues

The students in the classroom being evaluated should have a say in the evaluations. They are the ones being affected by the teaching methods first hand and should be able to comment on their experience. The students could tell the evaluators how they have been affected by the teachings of the instructor and ultimately, the students are the ones that are at the highest level of concern and sole reason why evaluations should be administered. As stated in Teaching, "regard student evaluations as sources of important data", this statement helps to support the fact that students are influential in the process of teacher's evaluations.

Teachers also need a say in their evaluations. A teacher can show the evaluators things that they would possibly miss in their evaluations. When the evaluators have finished, they can show the evaluation to the teacher and the teacher should have a right to defend his or her position when necessary. There cannot be anything manipulated if it cannot be proved and all contradictions of statements should be evident through this objective means of evaluation.

Conclusion

Evaluations need to be more frequent to be more effective. Everyone has a bad day and simply evaluating a teacher briefly is not going to improve the system. Teachers should have a say in their evaluations to include a first-hand perspective on their evaluations. Students should also have a say in the evaluations of their teachers because they are the ones that are being effected by the learning styles of the teachers. If the observations yield conflicting results to the teacher's comments, it might be helpful to see these conflictions to yield a more thorough evaluation. The evaluators themselves need to have some sort of qualifications that assure everyone in relation that they are right for the job. Former teachers would be excellent candidates for evaluators and could provide first-hand relations to what they have experienced on their own through years of teaching.



Appendix 7

Microteaching

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Microteaching is a teaching method whereby the teacher reviews a videotape of the lesson after each session, in order to conduct a “post-mortem”. Teachers find out what has worked, which aspects have fallen short, and what needs to be done to enhance their teaching technique. Invented in the mid-1960’s at Stanford University by Dr. Dwight Allen, micro-teaching has been used with success for several decades now, as a way to help teachers acquire and hone new skills.

In the original process, a teacher was asked to prepare a short lesson (usually 20 minutes) for a small group of learners who may not have been her own students. This was videotaped, using VHS. After the lesson, the teacher, teaching colleagues, a master teacher and the students together viewed the videotape and commented on what they saw happening, referencing the teacher’s learning objectives. Seeing the video and getting comments from colleagues and students provided teachers with an often intense “under the microscope” view of their teaching



Appendix 8

Why is feedback important?

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Chapter 14/2, 3: Why is feedback important](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/Chapter_14/2_3:_Why_is_feedback_important)

From Wikibooks, the open-content textbooks collection

The Importance of Feedback to the Novice Teacher

Written by Barbara Waldron

Introduction

The whole world engages in all degrees and forms of communication. Within this cycle is feedback, and it is necessary for the evaluation, modification, and betterment of a given situation. Focused learning is based on knowing what you know and don't know. To benefit from classes, students (and teachers!) need appropriate feedback on performance. We all need help in assessing existing knowledge and competence when we're getting started and this is where feedback plays a crucial role. Frequent opportunities are needed to perform and accept suggestions in order to improve in a subject. While in school, and later in life, students need the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned, what they still need to know, and how to assess themselves.

"Feedback is central to learning. Faulty feedback is one of the biggest contributors to organization, team, and personal learning disabilities. If I don't know how I am doing, I can't improve." Jim Clemmer, Author, Key-Note Speaker

Feedback in the educational system is absolutely vital, as it serves to better the level of effectiveness of students, teachers, school systems, and eventually the communities themselves (Keil, 2005).

Student Feedback

Teachers might immediately relate feedback to the results of student assessment, which is the traditional connection. How can students gauge knowledge gained in class if they are not assessed? Many educators feel that students focus too much on the actual test score, rather than the content and how well the material was learned, which is where feedback can make a difference. In order for the assessment to be something other than "just another grade," immediate and relevant



feedback from the teacher is vital to the student. Students need the immediate response in order to correct misconceptions, incorrect learning, and encourage long-term memory retention. According to the U.S. Department of Education (www.ed.gov), there are two distinct forms of feedback, evaluative and descriptive. The evaluative form is used strictly for assessment, without providing detailed information. Descriptive, however, provides “opportunities for the learner to make adjustments and improvements toward mastery of a specified standard” (www.ed.gov). This form of feedback is specific, relates directly to the learning, provides comparison to models and samples, and relates to performance. Frequent feedback to students during learning, as opposed to after learning, should be “specific, timely and frequent” (Wormeli, 2006).

More Student Feedback - This Time for the Teacher!

After assessing students is another perfect opening to seek feedback as the teacher can ask detailed questions, which should lead to revision and modification of lessons. Such questions might include:

1. Is the material presented in an understandable manner?
2. Are the objectives and goals clear?
3. What strategies help the student understand and retain certain materials?
4. Is there a particular aid that supplements the main material, such as worksheets, note-taking, web quests, PowerPoint, or graphic map?
5. Do the various activities enhance the main concept or do they detract?

After receiving this information from students the teacher should then reflect on the feedback and determine if there are modifications that can be made. If so, the modifications should be planned and implemented as quickly as possible. Again, as mentioned previously, specific, timely, and frequent.

Teacher Feedback

In the same vein, teachers’ performance is enhanced when they are provided with feedback on student assessment. For example, in the Fuchs et al. (1994) study, it was found that students’ performance was increased when teachers were provided with assessment feedback and specific instructional recommendations to facilitate change. Another aspect of this view is the interaction and feedback of peers, which is one of the most effective tools. When teachers regularly provide feedback and assistance to one another, the opportunity to refine and improve methods or strategies is enhanced (Mallette, Maheady, & Harper, 1999). Teachers can receive strong feedback about their own instructional practices and common



student misconceptions by engaging in the design and use of assessments, states Charlotte Danielson, an independent, Princeton based, consultant. “When this is done by teachers working together,” she says, “the entire intellectual capital of the school is enhanced.” (Olsen, 2005) Teachers are instrumental in identifying outmoded methods or even new methods that do not work. After all, they are “on the front line” and can evaluate how well students respond to new approaches. This also extends beyond instructional modifications and assessments, whether the issue is a school policy or scheduling problem. Providing the school administration with thorough, reflective, and useful feedback is important to the overall effectiveness of all schools.

Peer-to-Peer Feedback

There are two forms of peer feedback, sometimes also referred to as peer observation. The first is “formative,” which is especially important to the new teacher. (www.ed.gov) This involves faculty members observing and assisting in the classroom to enhance the teaching skills of a novice teacher. All teachers should have the opportunity to participate, as well as mentor coaches or in-house mentors. An ideal situation would be to have all of these resources provided to new teachers. There is a need for better “formative assessments” that are given regularly in the classroom and provide quick information that lets teachers and students adjust what’s happening to promote learning.

The second medium is the “summative” observation and is used for promotion and other merit decisions. (www.ed.gov) This is more likely to be the formal administrator-teacher observation and feedback, which makes most teachers nervous. What is the efficacy of a formal observation if appropriate feedback is not provided? Change to desirable teacher behaviors is more likely through feedback by “...increasing use of praise, direct instruction teaching behaviors, effective use of time, and responding to incidents.” (Scheeler, Ruhl, & McAfee, 2004) Feedback from supervisors is instrumental in revising, changing, and adapting new methods and strategies and should not be dismissed or regarded as critical. Perceptions need to change in this format as well, as it can provide valuable information to teachers and a different perspective. For more information on these and other forms of feedback, please view the University of Texas website through this link: [1].

Don't Forget the Parents and Other Valuable Components!

Parents of students are another area of focus for feedback. Success in the classroom can be greatly affected by the relationship with parents and this is an area of concern for all in education. Parents and schools should communicate regarding



school activities, discipline codes, learning objectives, and the child's progress. (Barrera, Warner, 2006) Reaching out to parents by keeping them up-to-date on topics and activities in the classroom can establish a viable venue for feedback. A parent who relays that their child shared an activity or lesson that was of particular interest can be invaluable. By the same token, if the parent relays that their child seemed uncertain or frustrated during a lesson, the teacher is provided with an opening for re-evaluation and change. Another area of feedback not to be dismissed is that of the principal. Through the use of feedback, the principal can determine whether the communication avenue has missed or met an objective. The willingness to listen and change, if necessary, is only possible if multiple ways to assess communication are established. (Keil, 2005) Many families consider feedback from teachers and the principal to be imperative. Feedback between the community and school administrators is very important in the level of overall health and effectiveness of student education.

Conclusion

The communication cycle of feedback is of vital importance in all aspects of education and affects everyone involved. Teachers are not the only ones accountable in the feedback cycle, however they are at the core, with students. The entire education community must be willing to constantly assess, review, revise, modify, and be positive in this constant cycle of feedback.

Note:

For examples, guidelines, and templates of various forms of feedback, please visit the Center for Teaching Effectiveness, University of Texas at Austin, click here: [2] This site has invaluable tools and information for teachers!



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Appendix 9

Teaching

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teaching>

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia (Redirected from Teaching)

For other uses, see Teacher (disambiguation).

For university teachers, see professor. For ‘extra-help teachers’, see tutor. For Parapros, see Paraprofessional educator. This article needs additional citations for verification.

Please help improve this article by adding reliable references. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. (July 2007)

The neutrality of this article is disputed.

Please see the discussion on the talk page.(January 2008)

Please do not remove this message until the dispute is resolved.

This article may require cleanup to meet Wikipedia’s quality standards.

Please improve this article if you can. (June 2008)

A teacher writing on a blackboard.

In education, a teacher is one who helps students or pupils, often in a school, as well as in a family, religious or community setting. A teacher is an acknowledged guide or helper in processes of learning. A teacher’s role may vary between cultures. Academic subjects are emphasized in many societies, but a teacher’s duties may include instruction in craftsmanship or vocational training, spirituality, civics, community roles, or life skills. In modern schools and most contemporary occidental societies, where scientific pedagogy is practiced, the teacher is defined as a specialized profession on the same level as many other professions. Contents [hide]

1 Pedagogy and teaching

1.1 Secondary School Teachers

2 Professional educators

3 Teaching around the world

3.1 England and Wales

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3.3 Republic of Ireland

3.4 Scotland

3.5 United States

4 Misconduct

5 World Teachers' Day

6 Spiritual teacher

7 See also

8 References

Pedagogy and teaching

A primary school teacher in northern Laos

In education, teachers facilitate student learning, often in a school or academy or perhaps in another environment such as outdoors. A teacher who teaches on an individual basis may be described as a tutor.

The objective is typically accomplished through either an informal or formal approach to learning, including a course of study and lesson plan that teaches skills, knowledge and/or thinking skills. Different ways to teach are often referred to as pedagogy. When deciding what teaching method to use teachers consider students' background knowledge, environment, and their learning goals as well as standardized curricula as determined by the relevant authority. The teacher should also be able to deal with students with different abilities and should also be able to deal with learning disabilities. Many times, teachers assist in learning outside of the classroom by accompanying students on field trips. The increasing use of technology, specifically the rise of the internet over the past decade has begun to shape the way teachers approach their role in the classroom.

The objective is typically a course of study, lesson plan, or a practical skill, including learning and thinking skills. The different ways to teach are often referred to as the teacher's pedagogy. When deciding what teaching method to use, a teacher will need to consider students' background knowledge, environment, and their learning objectives. A teacher may follow standardized curricula as determined by the relevant authority. The teacher may interact with students of different ages, from infants to adults, students with different abilities and students with learning disabilities.



Secondary School Teachers

Perhaps the most significant difference between primary and secondary teaching in the UK is the relationship between teachers and children. In primary schools each class has a teacher who stays with them for most of the week and will teach them the whole curriculum. In secondary schools they will be taught by different subject specialists each session during the week and may have 10 or more different teachers. The relationship between children and their teachers tends to be closer in the primary school where they act as form tutor, specialist teacher and surrogate parent during the course of the day.

This is true throughout most of the United States as well. However, alternative approaches for primary education do exist. One of these, sometimes referred to as a “platoon” system, involves placing a group of students together in one class that moves from one specialist to another for every subject. The advantage here is that students learn from teachers who specialize in one subject and who tend to be more knowledgeable in that one area than a teacher who teaches many subjects. Students still derive a strong sense of security by staying with the same group of peers for all classes.

Professional educators

This article or section is missing citations or needs footnotes.

Using inline citations helps guard against copyright violations and factual inaccuracies. (January 2008)

Teaching may be carried out informally, within the family (see Homeschooling) or the wider community. Formal teaching may be carried out by paid professionals. Such professionals enjoy a status in some societies on a par with physicians, lawyers, engineers, and accountants (Chartered or CPA).

A teacher’s professional duties may extend beyond formal teaching. Outside of the classroom teachers may accompany students on field trips, supervise study halls, help with the organization of school functions, and serve as supervisors for extracurricular activities. In some education systems, teachers may have responsibility for student discipline.

Around the world teachers are often required to obtain specialized education and professional licensure. The teaching profession is regarded for having a body of specialised professional knowledge, codes of ethics and internal monitoring.

There are a variety of bodies designed to instill, preserve and update the knowledge and professional standing of teachers. Around the world many governments operate teacher’s colleges, which are generally established to serve and protect



the public interest through certifying, governing and enforcing the standards of practice for the teaching profession.

The functions of the teacher's colleges may include setting out clear standards of practice, providing for the ongoing education of teachers, investigating complaints involving members, conducting hearings into allegations of professional misconduct and taking appropriate disciplinary action and accrediting teacher education programs. In many situations teachers in publicly funded schools must be members in good standing with the college, and private schools may also require their teachers to be college members. In other areas these roles may belong to the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Education Agency or other governmental bodies. In still other areas Teaching Unions may be responsible for some or all of these duties.

Teaching around the world

There are many similarities and differences among teachers around the world. In almost all countries teachers are educated in a university or college. Governments may require certification by a recognized body before they can teach in a school.

England and Wales

Main article: Education in the United Kingdom

Nursery, Primary and Secondary School teachers ranged from £20,133 to £41,004 in September 2007, although some salaries can go much higher depending on experience.[1] Preschool teachers may earn £20,980 annually.[citation needed] State school teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree, complete an approved teacher education program, and be licensed.

Many counties offer alternative licensing programs to attract people into teaching, especially for hard-to-fill positions. Excellent job opportunities are expected as retirements, especially among secondary school teachers, outweigh slowing enrollment growth; opportunities will vary by geographic area and subject taught.[citation needed]



France

Main article: Education in France

In France, teachers, or professors, are mainly civil servants, recruited by competitive examination.

Republic of Ireland

Main article: Education in Ireland

Salaries for primary teachers in the Republic of Ireland depend mainly on seniority (i.e. holding the position of principal, deputy principal or assistant principal), experience and qualifications. Extra pay is also given for teaching through the Irish language, in a Gaeltacht area or on an island. The basic pay for a starting teacher is €31,028 p.a., rising incrementally to €57,403 for a teacher with 25 years' service. A principal of a large school with many years' experience and several qualifications (M.A., H.Dip., etc.) could earn over €90,000.[2]

Scotland

Main article: Education in Scotland

In Scotland, anyone wishing to teach must be registered with the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). Teaching in Scotland is an all graduate profession and the normal route for graduates wishing to teach is to complete a programme of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) at one of the seven Scottish Universities who offer these courses. Once successfully completed, 'Provisional Registration' is given by the GTCS which is raised to 'Full Registration' status after a year if there is sufficient evidence to show that the 'Standard for Full Registration' has been met.[3]

For salary year beginning April 2008, unpromoted teachers in Scotland earned from £20,427 for a Probationer, up to £32,583 after 6 years teaching, but could then go on to earn up to £39,942 as they complete the modules to earn Chartered Teacher Status (requiring at least 6 years at up to two modules per year.) Promotion to Principal Teacher positions attracts a salary of between £34,566 and £44,616; Depute Head, and Head teachers earn from £40,290 to £78,642.[4]



United States

Main article: Education in the United States

Further information: Paraprofessional educator

In the United States, each state determines the requirements for getting a license to teach in public schools. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that there are 1.4 million elementary school teachers,[5] 600,000 middle school teachers,[6] and 1 million secondary school teachers employed in the U.S.[7]

US teachers are generally paid on graduated scales, with income depending on experience. Salaries vary greatly depending on state, relative cost of living, and grade taught. The median salary for all primary and secondary teachers was \$46,000 in 2004, with the average entry salary for a teacher with a bachelor's degree being an estimated \$32,000. Median salaries for preschool teachers, however, were less than half the national median for secondary teachers, clock in at an estimated \$21,000 in 2004.[8] For high school teachers, median salaries in 2007 ranged from \$35,000 in South Dakota to \$71,000 in New York, with a national median of \$52,000.[9] Some contracts may include long-term disability insurance, life insurance, emergency/personal leave and investment options.[10] The American Federation of Teachers' teacher salary survey for the 2004-05 school year found that the average teacher salary was \$47,602.[11]

Misconduct The factual accuracy of this section is disputed.
Please see the relevant discussion on the talk page.(February 2008)

Misconduct by teachers, especially sexual misconduct, has been getting increased scrutiny from the media and the courts.[12] A study by the AAUW reported that 9.6% of students in the United States claim to have received unwanted sexual attention from an adult associated with education - be they a volunteer, bus driver, teacher, administrator or other adult - sometime during their educational career.[13] A study in England showed a 0.3% prevalence of sexual abuse by any professional, a group that included priests, religious leaders, and case workers as well as teachers.[14] It is important to note, however, that the British study referenced above is the only one of its kind and consisted of "a random ... probability sample of 2,869 young people between the ages of 18 and 24 in a computer-assisted study" and that the questions referred to "sexual abuse with a professional," not necessarily a teacher. It is therefore logical to conclude that information on the percentage of abuses by teachers in the United Kingdom is not explicitly available and therefore not necessarily reliable. The AAUW study, however, posed questions about fourteen types of sexual harassment and various degrees of frequency and included only abuses by teachers. "The sample was



drawn from a list of 80,000 schools to create a stratified two-stage sample design of 2,065 8th to 11th grade students” (17). Its reliability was gauged at 95% with a 4% margin of error.

In the United States especially, several high-profile cases such as Debra LaFave, Pamela Rogers, and Mary Kay Latourneau have caused increased scrutiny on teacher misconduct.

World Teachers’ Day This article or section is missing citations or needs footnotes.

Using inline citations helps guard against copyright violations and factual inaccuracies. (January 2008)

UNESCO inaugurated World Teachers’ Day on 5 October 1994 to celebrate and commemorate the signing of the Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers on 5 October 1966. World Teachers’ Day also highlighted the Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel adopted in 1997.

Some countries or regions such as Taiwan also celebrate Teacher’s Day as a national holiday, while others ignore it completely. In Brazil and Chile, it is celebrated on October 15, while in India it is celebrated on 5 September, in honour of a thinker and President Dr. Radhakrishnan.. In Brunei, it is celebrated on September 23. In Turkey it has been celebrated on 24 November since 1928. Northern Cyprus also celebrates this day. In Malaysia and in Colombia, it is celebrated on 16 May. In South Korea, Teachers’ Day is celebrated on 15 May. Teachers’ Day is a school holiday for students in primary and secondary schools and junior colleges/centralised institutes in Singapore celebrated on 1 September. In China, it is celebrated on September 10. Although it is not a national holiday in China, it is a custom for students to visit teachers that have taught them before on this day.

Spiritual teacher This article or section is missing citations or needs footnotes. Using inline citations helps guard against copyright violations and factual inaccuracies. (January 2008)

Main article: Spiritual teacher

In Hinduism the spiritual teacher is known as a guru. Traditionally, a spiritual seeker would revere his or her guru highly, and demonstrate utmost submission



and humility through menial service in order to prove worthy to be a recipient of the knowledge the guru has attained by initiation practices. There are many sayings on the teacher like “Guru devo bhava” (Guru is God), which reflects of the esteem associated with a guru’s role.

In the Latter Day Saint movement the teacher is an office in the Aaronic priesthood, while in Tibetan Buddhism the teachers of Dharma in Tibet are most commonly called a Lama. A Lama who has through phowa and siddhi consciously determined to be reborn, often many times, in order to continue their Bodhisattva vow is called a Tulku.

There are many concepts of teachers in Islam, ranging from mullahs (the teachers at madrassas) to ulemas.

A Rabbi is generally regarded as the Jewish spiritual teacher.

See also



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Appendix 10

Resources for Professional Development

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational psychology/Chapter 13:
Types of resources for professional development](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_psychology/Chapter_13:Types_of_resources_for_professional_development)

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Types of Resources for Professional Development and Learning

At some level reflection on practice is something you must do for yourself, since only you have had your particular teaching experiences, and only you can choose how to interpret and make use of them. But this rather individual activity also benefits from the stimulus and challenge offered by fellow professionals. Others' ideas may differ from your own, and they can therefore help in working out your own thoughts and in alerting you to ideas that you may otherwise take for granted. These benefits to reflection can happen in any number of ways, but most fall into one of four general categories:

- talking and collaborating with colleagues,
- participating in professional associations,
- attending professional development workshops and conferences, and
- reading professional literature.

In the next sections we explore what each of these activities has to offer.

Colleagues as a Resource

Perhaps the simplest way to stimulate reflections about your own teaching is to engage fellow teachers or other colleagues in dialogue (or thoughtful conversation) about teaching and learning: What do you think of this kind of experience? Have you ever had one like it yourself, and what did you make of it? Note that to be helpful in stimulating reflection, these conversations need to be largely about educational matters, not about personal ones ("What movie did you see last night?"). Dialogues with individual colleagues have certain advantages to more complex or formal professional experiences. Talking with an individual generally allows more participation for both of you, since only two people may need to express their views. It also can provide a measure of safety or confidentiality if



your conversation partner is a trusted colleague; sometimes, therefore, you can share ideas of which you are not sure, or that may be controversial.

A somewhat more complex way of stimulating reflection is group study. Several teachers at a school gather regularly to bring themselves up to date on a new curriculum, for example, or to plan activities or policies related to a schoolwide theme (e.g. “the environment”). Group meetings often result in considerable dialogue among the members about the best ways to teach and to manage classrooms, as well as stories about students’ behavior and learning experiences. For a beginning teacher, group study can be a particularly good way to learn from experienced, veteran teachers.

Sharing of ideas becomes even more intense if teachers collaborate with each other about their work on an extended basis. Collaboration can take many forms; in one form it might be “team teaching” by two or more teachers working with one group of students, and in another form it might be two or more teachers consulting regularly to coordinate the content of their courses. Collaborations work best when each member of the team brings responsibilities and expertise that are unique, but also related to the other members’ responsibilities. Imagine, for example, a collaboration between Sharon, who is a middle-years classroom teacher, and Pat, who is a resource teacher—one whose job is to assist classroom teachers in working with students with educational disabilities or special needs. If Pat spends time in Sharon’s classroom, then not only will the students benefit, but they both may learn from each other’s presence. Potentially, Pat can learn the details of the middle-years curriculum and learn more about the full range of students’skills—not just those of students having difficulties. Sharon can get ideas about how to help individuals who, in a classroom context, seem especially difficult to help. Achieving these benefits, of course, comes at a cost: the two teachers may need to take time not only for the students, but also for talking with each other. Sometimes the time-cost can be reduced somewhat if their school administrators can arrange for a bit of extra planning and sharing time. But even if this does not happen, the benefits of collaboration will be very real, and often make the investment of time worthwhile.

Professional Associations and Professional Development Activities

Another way to stimulate reflection about teaching is by joining and participating in professional associations—organizations focused on supporting the work of teachers and on upholding high standards of teaching practice. Table 13-1 lists several major professional associations related to education and their Internet addresses. Most of them are composed of local branches or chapters serving the needs of a particular city, state, or region.



To achieve their purposes, a professional association provides a mixture of publications, meetings, and conferences intended for the professional development of educators, including classroom teachers. Typically the publications include either a relatively frequent newsletter or a less frequent journal focused on issues of practice or research. Very large associations often publish more than one newsletter or journal, each of which is focused on a particular topic or type of news (for example, the [National Education Association] in the United States publishes eight separate periodicals). Some also publish online journals (there are several listed as part of Table 13-2) or online versions of print journals. Whatever format they take, professionally sponsored publications stimulate thinking by discussing issues and dilemmas faced by professional educators, and sometimes also by presenting recent educational research and the recommendations for teaching that flow from that research. We discuss ways of using these publications further in the next section of this chapter.

The meetings and conferences sponsored by a professional association also take a variety of forms. Depending on the size of the association and on the importance of the topic, a meeting could be as short as a one half-day workshop or as long as a full week with many sessions occurring simultaneously. Sometimes, too, an association might sponsor a more extended course—a series of meetings focused on one topic or problem of concern to teachers, such as classroom management or curriculum planning. In some cases, the course might carry university credit, though not always.

As you might expect, the size of a professional association makes a difference in kinds of professional development experiences it can provide. In general, the smaller the association, the more exclusively it focuses on local news and educational needs, both in its publications and in its meetings or other activities. At a professional development workshop sponsored by a local teachers' association, for example, you are relatively likely to see colleagues and acquaintances not only from your own school, but from other neighboring schools. Locally sponsored events are also more likely to focus on local issues, such as implementing a new system for assessing students' learning within the local schools. In general, too, local events tend to cost less to attend, in both time and money.

By the same token, the larger the association, the more its professional development opportunities are likely to focus on large-scale trends in education, such as the impact of the No Child Left Behind legislation we discussed in Chapter 1 or the latest trends in using computer technology for teaching. Conferences or other professional development events are more likely to span several days and to be located outside the immediate town or region whether you live and work. You may therefore see fewer of your everyday colleagues and acquaintances, but you may also have a greater incentive to make new acquaintances whose interests



or concerns are similar to your own. The event is also more likely to feature educators who are well-known nationally or internationally, and to call attention to educational trends or issues that are new or unfamiliar.

Whether large or small, the activities of professional associations can stimulate thinking and reflecting about teaching. By meeting and talking with others at a meeting of an association, teachers learn new ideas for teaching, become aware of emerging trends and issues about education, and confront assumptions that they may have made about their own practices with students. Professional meetings, conferences, and workshops can provide these benefits because they draw on the expertise and experience of a wide range of professionals—usually wider than is possible within a single school building. But compared simply to talking with your immediate colleagues, they have a distinct disadvantage: they take effort and a bit of money to attend, and sometimes they are available at convenient times. Well-balanced professional development should therefore also include activities that are available frequently, but that also draw on a wide range of expertise. Fortunately, an activity with these features is often easily at hand: the reading of professional publications about educational research and practice.



Appendix 11

Performance Assessments

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary Educational Psychology/Chapter 10: Performance assessment.](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Contemporary_Educational_Psychology/Chapter_10:Performance_assessment)

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Performance Assessments

In performance assessments, students complete a specific task while teachers observe the process or procedure (e.g., data collection in an experiment) as well as the product (e.g., completed report) (Popham, 2005; Stiggins, 2005)[1][2]. The tasks that students complete in performance assessments are not simple (in contrast to selected response items) and might include the following:

- Playing a musical instrument
- Athletic skills
- Artistic creation
- Conversing in a foreign language
- Engaging in a debate about political issues
- Conducting an experiment in science
- Repairing a machine
- Writing a term paper
- Using interaction skills to play together

These examples all involve complex skills, but show that the term performance assessment is used in a variety of ways. For example, the teacher may not observe all of the process (e.g., she sees a draft paper but the final product is written during out-of-school hours); essay tests are therefore often considered examples of performance assessments (Airasian, 2000)[3]. In addition, in some performance assessments there may be no clear product (e.g., the performance may be group interaction skills).



Two related terms, alternative assessment and authentic assessment, are sometimes used instead of performance assessment, but they have different meanings[4]. Alternative assessment refers to tasks that are not pencil-and-paper and while many performance assessments are not pencil-and paper tasks some are (e.g., writing a term paper, essay tests). Authentic assessment is used to describe tasks that students do that are similar to those in the “real world.” Classroom tasks vary in level of authenticity. For example, for a Japanese language class taught in a high school in Chicago conversing in Japanese in Tokyo is highly authentic – but only possible in a study abroad program or trip to Japan. Conversing in Japanese with native Japanese speakers in Chicago is also highly authentic, and conversing with the teacher in Japanese during class is moderately authentic. Much less authentic is a matching test on English and Japanese words. In a language arts class, writing a letter (to an editor) or a memo to the principal is highly authentic as letters and memos are common work products. However, writing a five-paragraph paper is not as authentic as such papers are not used in the world of work. However, a five paragraph paper is a complex task and would typically be classified as a performance assessment.

Advantages and Disadvantages

There are several advantages of performance assessments.

The focus is on complex learning outcomes that often cannot be measured by other methods.

Performance assessments typically assess process or procedure as well as the product. For example, the teacher can observe if the students are repairing the machine using the appropriate tools and procedures as well as whether the machine functions properly after the repairs.

Well-designed performance assessments communicate the instructional goals and meaningful learning clearly to students. For example, if the topic in a 5th grade art class is one-point perspective the performance assessment could be drawing a city scene that illustrates one point perspective[5]. This assessment is meaningful and clearly communicates the learning goal. This performance assessment is a good instructional activity and has good content validity - common with well designed performance assessments.

One major disadvantage with performance assessments is that are typically very time consuming for students and teachers. This means that fewer assessments can be gathered so if they are not carefully devised fewer learning goals will be assessed – which can reduce content validity. State curriculum guidelines can be helpful in determining what should be included in a performance assessment.



For example, Eric, a dance teacher in a high school in Tennessee learns that the state standards indicate that dance students at the highest level should be able to do demonstrate consistency and clarity in performing technical skills by[6]:

performing complex movement combinations to music in a variety of meters and styles.

performing combinations and variations in a broad dynamic range.

demonstrating improvement in performing movement combinations through self-evaluation

critiquing a live or taped dance production based on given criteria.

Eric devises the following performance task for his 11th grade modern dance class. In groups of 4-6, students will perform a dance at least 5 minutes in length. The dance selected should be multifaceted so that all the dancers can demonstrate technical skills, complex movements, and a dynamic range (Items 1-2). Students will videotape their rehearsals and document how they improved through self evaluation (Item3). Each group will view and critique the final performance of one other group in class (Item 4). Eric would need to scaffold most steps in this performance assessment. The groups probably would need guidance in selecting a dance that allowed all the dancers to demonstrate the appropriate skills; critiquing their own performances constructively; working effectively as a team, and applying criteria to evaluate a dance.

Another disadvantage of performance assessments is they are hard to assess reliably, which can lead to inaccuracy and unfair evaluation. As with any constructed response assessment, scoring rubrics are very important. An example of holistic and analytic scoring rubrics designed to assess a completed product are in Tables 10-5 and Table 10-6. A rubric designed to assess the process of group interactions is in Table 10-7. This rubric was devised for middle grade science but could be used in other subject areas when assessing group process. In some performance assessments several scoring rubrics should be used. In the dance performance example above Eric should have scoring rubrics for the performance skills, the improvement based on self evaluation, the team work, and the critique of the other group. Since devising a good performance assessment is obviously complex, it may help if you:

Create performance assessments that require students to use complex cognitive skills. Sometimes teachers devise assessments that are interesting and that the students enjoy but do not require students to use higher level cognitive skills that lead to significant learning. Focusing on high level skills and learning outcomes is particularly important because performance assessments are typically so time consuming.



Ensure that the task is clear to the students. Performance assessments typically require multiple steps so students need to have the necessary prerequisite skills and knowledge as well as clear directions. Careful scaffolding is important for successful performance assessments.

Specify expectations of the performance clearly by providing students scoring rubrics during the instruction. This not only helps students understand what is expected but it also guarantees that teachers are clear about what they expect. Thinking this through while planning the performance assessment can be difficult for teachers but is crucial as it typically leads to revisions of the actual assessment and directions provided to students.

Reduce the importance of unessential skills in completing the task. What skills are essential depends on the purpose of the task. For example, for a science report, is the use of publishing software essential? If the purpose of the assessment is for students to demonstrate the process of the scientific method including writing a report, then the format of the report may not be significant. However, if the purpose includes integrating two subject areas, science and technology, then the use of publishing software is important. Because performance assessments take time it is tempting to include multiple skills without carefully considering if all the skills are essential to the learning goals.

Portfolios

“A portfolio is a meaningful collection of student work that tells the story of student achievement or growth” (Arter, Spandel, & Culham, 1995, p. 2)[7]. Portfolios are a purposeful collection of student work not just folders of all the work a student does. Portfolios are used for a variety of purposes and developing a portfolio system can be confusing and stressful unless the teachers are clear on their purpose.

When the primary purpose is assessment for learning, the emphasis is on student self-reflection and responsibility for learning. Students not only select samples of their work they wish to include, but also reflect and interpret their own work. Portfolios containing this information can be used to aid communication as students can present and explain their work to their teachers and parents. Portfolios focusing on assessment of learning contain students’ work samples that certify accomplishments for a classroom grade, graduation, state requirements etc. Typically, students have less choice in the work contained in such portfolios as some consistency is needed for this type of assessment. For example, the writing portfolios that 4th and 7th graders are required to submit in Kentucky must contain a self reflective statement and an example of three pieces of writing (reflective,



personal experience or literary, and transactive). Students do choose which of their pieces of writing in each type to include into the portfolio[8].

Portfolios can be designed to focus on student progress or current accomplishments. For example, audiotapes of English language learners speaking could be collected over one year to demonstrate growth in learning. Student progress portfolios may also contain multiple versions of a single piece of work. For example, a writing project may contain notes on the original idea, outline, first draft, comments on the first draft by peers or teacher, second draft, and the final finished product. If the focus is on current accomplishments, only recent completed work samples are included.

Portfolios can focus on documenting student activities or highlighting important accomplishments. Documentation portfolios are inclusive, containing all the work samples rather than focusing on one special strength, best work, or progress. In contrast, showcase portfolios focus on best work. The best work is typically identified by students as one aim of such portfolios is that students learn how to identify products that demonstrate what they know and can do. Students are not expected to identify their best work in isolation but also use the feedback from their teachers and peers.

A final distinction can be made between a finished portfolio -such as used to for a job application - versus a working portfolio that typically includes day-to-day work samples. Working portfolios evolve over time and are not intended to be used for assessment of learning. The focus in a working portfolio is on developing ideas and skills so students should be allowed to make mistakes, freely comment on their own work, and respond to teacher feedback. Finished portfolios are designed for use with a particular audience and the products selected may be drawn from a working portfolio. For example, in a teacher education program, the working portfolio may contain work samples from all the courses taken. A student may develop one finished portfolio to demonstrate she has mastered the required competencies in the teacher education program, and a second finished portfolio for her job application.

Advantages and Disadvantages

Portfolios used well in classrooms have several advantages. They provide a way of documenting and evaluating growth in a much more nuanced way than selected response tests can. Also, portfolios can be integrated easily into instruction, i.e. used for assessment for learning. Portfolios also encourage student self-evaluation and reflection, as well as ownership for learning. Using classroom assessment to promote student motivation is an important component of assessment for learning which is considered in the next section.



But there are some major disadvantages of portfolio use. Good portfolio assessment takes an enormous amount of teacher time and organization. The time is needed to help students understand the purpose and structure of the portfolio, decide which work samples to collect, and to self reflect. Some of this time needs to be conducted in one-to-one conferences. Reviewing and evaluating the portfolios out of class time is also enormously time consuming. Teachers have to weigh if the time spend is worth the benefits of the portfolio use.

Evaluating portfolios reliability and eliminating bias can be even more difficult than in a constructed response assessment because the products are more varied. The experience of the state-wide use of portfolios for assessment in writing and mathematics for 4th and 8th graders in Vermont is sobering. Teachers used the same analytic scoring rubric when evaluating the portfolio. In the first two years of implementation samples from schools were collected and scored by an external panel of teachers. In the first year the agreement among raters (i.e., inter-rater reliability) was poor for mathematics and reading; in the second year the agreement among raters improved for mathematics but not for reading. However, even with the improvement in mathematics the reliability was too low to use the portfolios for individual student accountability (Koretz, Stecher, Klein & McCaffrey, 1994). When reliability is low, validity is also compromised because unstable results cannot be interpreted meaningfully.

If teachers do use portfolios in their classroom, the series of steps needed for implementation are outlined in Table 10- 8. If the school or district has an existing portfolio system these steps may have to be modified.

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Appendix 12

How should personnel be evaluated?

[http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social and Cultural Foundations of American Education/edition 3/9.2](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Social_and_Cultural_Foundations_of_American_Education/edition_3/9.2)How should personnel be evaluated?

From Wikibooks, the open-content textbooks collection

How Should Personnel Be Evaluated-By Joanie Griffith

The evaluation of teachers is an important process that should incorporate all parties involved, so that it can provide a chance for teachers to reflect on their daily practices and provide suggestions for improvement. It is difficult to understand the complexities of classroom life and there is no universal agreement on “what makes a good teacher.” Thus, there is a wide range of factors that exemplifies the attributes of a successful instructor. Assessing the strategies and supplying feedback to the faculty is a necessary component.

To teach effectively, teachers must conduct the proper planning and assessment of their students. The educator should design coherent instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals. The instruction should also achieve desired objectives that reflect the curriculum guidelines. Successful instruction also involves designing appropriate learning activities that are clearly connected to instructional objectives. In addition, lesson plans should be clear, logical, and sequential, and teachers need to monitor student understanding on an ongoing basis and adjust teaching when necessary. Instructors are obligated to demonstrate competence in the use of acceptable grading, ranking, and scoring practices in recording and reporting student achievement. Additionally, records of student progress should be used and maintained for instructional decisions.

Furthermore, the teacher diagnoses individual or group program needs and selects appropriate materials as well as resources to match the abilities and needs of all students. Assisting students in planning, organizing, preparing for assignments, long-range projects, and tests is also preferred. It is vital to demonstrate knowledge of resources and methods appropriate to serving students with special needs. A variety of assessments should be implemented to approach making both short-term and long-range instructional decisions to improve student learning. In addition, faculty must have a complete understanding of instruction methods. For example, they must understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and how to approach



and apply discipline. Teachers should create learning experiences that make the subject matter meaningful to students, and understand that students differ in their approaches to learning and be able to meet the diverse needs. This includes selecting materials and media that match learning styles of individual students. Instructional needs of all students should be implemented including remedial and enrichment or extension activities as necessary.

A crucial part of instruction is technology. Teachers need to supply comprehensive materials and resources that promote the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills. Moreover, teachers must actively implement discipline that fosters a safe and positive environment for students and staff. Procedures should also be taken to manage academic learning time and maintain rapport with students. Creating a supportive learning environment for all students that encourages social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation should also be demonstrated in the classroom.

Faculty members are required to establish effective communication and community relations. Factors such as verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to further interaction in the classroom are part of proper communication. It is necessary for educators to forge partnerships with families to promote student learning at home and in the school. Lastly, to maintain communication, teachers need to work collaboratively with staff, families, and community resources to support the success of students.

The professionalism of educators should also be taken into consideration. For instance, teachers model professional, moral, and ethical standards as well as personal integrity in all interactions. Additionally, teachers are obliged to take the responsibility for and participate in a meaning and continuous process of professional development that results in the enhancement of student learning. Teachers should also be dressed in a respectable and appropriate manner in order to provide service to the profession, division, and community.

Not only is the evaluation of teachers important, but the support staff should also be evaluated regularly. One factor in evaluating the support staff consists of having knowledge of the job being performed. Personnel should demonstrate knowledge of all aspects of their position and contain the ability to perform job responsibilities. Position knowledge also needs to be effectively applied so performance can be enhanced. Caring for and using equipment properly is also an important element.

Furthermore, personnel need to recognize job competence. For example, personnel are required to complete assigned tasks accurately and meet deadlines for tasks. Another factor is having the ability to independently seek and assume responsibility for additional tasks. Seeking new and improved methods of accomplishing tasks



should also be completed. For instance, personnel could plan ahead to prevent potential crises. Personnel also should organize their work to manage time wisely, keep a safe work environment, and be productive. Department instructions and guidelines should be followed effectively and personnel are expected to maintain confidentiality.

In addition, the support staff needs to have efficient working relationships. This consists of displaying a positive role model behavior to students, peers, and other staff members. Other attributes that should be exhibited include maintaining a positive attitude and behavior, flexible and adaptable to change, and respectful and considerate of others. It is important for the staff to be punctual and easily accept change as well as accepting constructive feedback in a positive manner. To provide the best service personnel should work productively as team members and treat others with courtesy. Last of all, staff must take in consideration professional growth and development. This includes identifying ways to continuously improve performance and participate in learning opportunities. If relevant, personnel also need to actively participate in cross training. Successful staff members also recognize when assistance is needed and are not hesitant to request it.

In conclusion, the standards explained above, although idealistic, at the same time endeavor to be practical. The evaluation of teachers and staff ensures that educational opportunities are available to all and that skills and information are being taught properly. All personnel should realize the significance of their actions and understand their actions are viewed and appraised by the community, professional associates, and students. Lastly, teachers and staff members need to make the well being of students the fundamental value of all decision-making and actions, and understand that each student is capable of learning.



Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Which of the following is another source of instruction and is important to integrate into the curriculum?
 - A. Technology
 - B. Lesson Plans
 - C. Safety
 - D. Snack time
2. If a teacher or staff member noticed that a student has spilled their beverage and the custodian is not present what should they do?
 - A. Ask the student to clean up the mess
 - B. Clean the spilled beverage because assuming additional tasks makes successful educators
 - C. Leave the spilled beverage and wait for the janitor to arrive
 - D. Put the student in time out for carelessness
3. What is the importance of teacher and staff evaluation?
 - A. To criticize teachers and staff members
 - B. Make the perfect teacher
 - C. To constantly tell others what to do
 - D. To provide feedback for improvement and ensure student learning
4. What factor should be implemented to foster a safe and positive environment for students and staff?
 - A. Flat top desk
 - B. Discipline
 - C. Locks on all doors and windows
 - D. Students names written on their desk
5. Teachers are illustrating _____ when they model professional, moral, and ethical standards as well as dressing appropriately?
 - A. The ability to work with the individual needs of the students
 - B. Loyalty to the school and the community
 - C. Professionalism
 - D. Their knowledge of subject matter



Essay Question: Explain the appropriate methods for evaluating personnel.

Answers to Multiple Choice Questions:

1. A
2. B
3. D
4. B
5. C

Source: Created by Joanie Griffith



Appendix 13

What role does action research play?

Social and Cultural Foundations of American Education/Chapter 14/What role does action research play? 1

From Wikibooks, the open-content textbooks collection

Classroom Action Research
by Tara Falkowski

Teachers constantly test and adapt their teaching methods to ensure the best learning environment for their students because teachers know that not all accepted methods work for all students. After all, most educational research is conducted not in an actual classroom but in a controlled environment, yielding results that only theoretically work in a classroom. Teachers who want to prove what methods work with their current group of students can conduct research in their own classroom, referred to as classroom action research.

Classroom action research is most often conducted collaboratively, but can also be used by individual teachers to answer a pressing question about learning in their classroom. Classroom action research can focus on an individual student, a group of students, or two or more classes. Educators pose a question and look for the answer within their classroom or their team, gathering data as they teach; in other words, action research is research that actively takes place in the classroom. When performing action research, "...the researcher wants to try out a theory with practitioners in real life situations, gain feedback from this experience, modify the theory as a result of this feedback, and try it again" (Avison et al, 1999, p.95). Analysis of data will usually combine both qualitative (e.g. classroom discussions or student surveys) and quantitative (e.g. test scores or student averages) measures. Classroom action research can be instituted for as little as one semester or can take place over the course of an entire school year. Because the researcher is also the teacher and not an outsider collecting data for publication, findings from data analysis can be used immediately to share with other professionals and to decide what course of action to take in the classroom regarding the issue studied. In this way, classroom action research provides teachers an outlet to share common concerns and solutions to real classroom problems and helps to eliminate isolation that is common among teachers. Furthermore, classroom action research offers the teacher-researcher insight into what teachers know about how and what their students are learning in their classrooms.



Many writers supporting classroom action research (e.g. Mettetal, 2002-2003; Johnson, 1993; Rinaldo, 2005) encourage teachers to participate in action research by equating the processes involved with action research to the behaviors of naturally gifted teachers because "...on a daily basis teachers design and implement a plan of action, observe and analyze outcomes, and modify plans to better meet the needs of students" (Anderson). Formally writing down these things essentially transforms good teachers' methods into research. Most research writers agree that successful research follows a set of clearly articulated steps that are easily manageable with other daily duties, even for the beginning teacher: ask a question, research accepted answers to the question, develop a research plan, collect data, analyze data, plan a results-based course of action, and finally, share the results. (Mettetal, 2002-2003) Overall, supporters for classroom action research want teachers to realize that teachers have the power to develop and implement best practices in their classrooms simply by turning their lessons or procedures into research and place importance on classroom action research as vital to educational reform. Supporters further argue that a teacher's observations are more valuable than an outside researcher's, given teachers' real-life experience in the classroom, and subsequently hope in the future to see more teachers and schools involved in action research. (Mettetal, 2002-2003; Johnson, 1993; Rinaldo, 2005)

While supporters of classroom action research make some convincing arguments, those dubious ones also raise some interesting questions regarding the validity and ethics of classroom action research. Skeptics view the role of teacher-researcher as poorly defined in the absence of clearly stated guidelines for carrying out action research and argue for the creation of ethical and procedural standards specifically related to classroom action research. (Avison et al, 1999, pp.96-97; Bournot-Trites and Belanger, 2005, pp.197-215)

Most research standards and ethical policies are designed for medical experimentation and, therefore, do not readily apply to educational research. Bournot-Trites and Belanger argue that some modern day ethical principles designed for medical research are important to classroom action research. (2005, p.199) For instance, the Nuremberg Code, developed as a response to the inhumane practices of Nazi medical researchers and the basis for modern research ethics, dictates that a research subject must give voluntary consent upon being informed of the experimental procedures. However, classroom action research holds no standard for free and informed consent. Without free and informed consent from both students and parents, Bournot-Trites and Belanger worry that students' rights, including ownership of intellectual property (i.e. written work) and entitlement to best possible instruction, could be overlooked. (2005, pp. 204-210)



Additionally, some researchers (Avison et al, 1999, pp.96-97; Bournot-Trites and Belanger, 2005, pp.197-215) believe that procedural guidelines must be established for classroom action research to be considered credible. The purpose of guidelines or standards for any documented undertaking is to quantify the quality of information being communicated. In other words, guidelines or standards allow us to judge the validity of one person's research compared to another. In order "...for novice researchers and practitioners to understand and engage in action research studies in terms of design, process, presentation, and criteria for evaluation," (Avison et al, 1999, p.96) guidelines must be developed. Moreover, these writers believe that with these necessary improvements action research could be a valuable tool that could improve education. (Avison et al, 1999, p.96)

In spite of their differences both supporters of action research and those doubtful of the current state of action research share the belief that classroom action research, when done properly, can make a difference in education. Teachers must weigh the benefits and consequences of conducting research in their classroom, not only the ethics and credibility of action research but also their ability as a professional to balance those two roles of researcher and educator. Although the practices of action research and a skilled teacher's daily routine of observing, reflecting, and adapting material are similar, the ease with which a teacher can perform the additional task of consistently recording the data from these routine practices relies on solid time-management and multi-tasking skills. Poorly planned and executed classroom action research can jeopardize a student's education, and teachers must remain cognizant of their duty to provide the best possible instruction for their students.

For information about an online introductory course to action research, follow the link: http://www.teachereducation.com/course_outlines/graduate_online/action_research_gradon_outline.htm See also Contemporary Educational Psychology/Chapter 13: The Reflective Practitioner. --

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