

Field Observation Journal

Critical Reflection

D2L Grade Book Category 1.13



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Overview of Education II
EESE 1011



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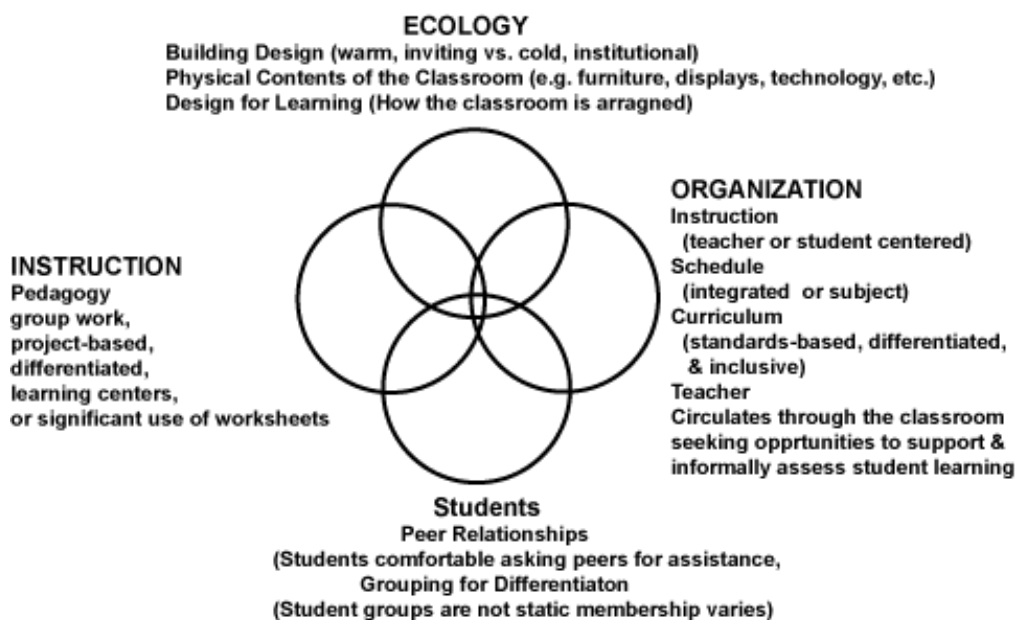
Reflective Journaling

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS REFLECTION?¹

KEY IDEA 1

Reflective practices help you understand the links between what we do (what we can call our practice) and how you might improve our effectiveness (by developing your practice) upon entering the classroom. For example, reflective practices can help you understand the relationship between and among various aspects the physical and intellectual environment of a school (see Figure 1). Reflection is therefore linked to practice (Figure 1). Through reflection, you can develop new insights and understandings that will help you as you proceed through your course of study leading to becoming a professional educator. Simply, reflective practices are aimed at what you **ARE** really doing and how they relate to what you **WILL** be doing.

FIGURE 1
INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REFLECTION AND PRACTICE



Adapted from Owens (1998)

¹ The material in this section is adapted from:

Ghaye, T. (2011). *Teaching and learning through reflective practice: A practical guide for positive action, 2nd ed.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Johns, C. (2013). *Becoming a reflective practitioner, 4th ed.* Chichester, West Sussex, UK.

KEY IDEA 2

Reflective practices will help you understand the links between feeling, thinking and doing. How we feel affects how we think. This affects what we actually do in the classroom and may affect four kinds of learning:

- AFFECTIVE LEARNING — helping you learn through feeling and emotion;
- COGNITIVE LEARNING— helping you think about things differently, perhaps more creatively;
- POSITIVE ACTION LEARNING— helping you turn what you think and feel into action that is ethical, moral and strengthening;
- SOCIAL LEARNING— helping you learn from and with others.

KEY IDEA 3

Reflection is often described as *structured* or *organized thinking*. So what might you think about? Maybe about your feelings, because your work is influenced by emotions (e.g., how you feel and how those you are working with are feeling). Your work is also guided by what you think and the context in which you practice, such as in a school.

KEY IDEA 4

You can understand your practice by looking backwards — *but work needs to be lived forward* like the Roman god Janus. Looking back on your experiences and learning from them is important — but reflecting on the past can be limited by what we can remember and by what has happened. It is also important to reflect on the here and now — to reflect not only on what has happened or what we would like to happen, but on what's happening in the present.

**KEY IDEA 5**

It is very important to use the power and potency of reflection to help you identify, develop and amplify what you can do, not just what you can't. It is important to reflect on your strengths. It is not always necessary to first analyze the problematic aspects of the situation/experience. What might it benefit you to begin by looking at the successful aspects of the experience and to devote your energy to amplifying what went well during your observations? Reflecting on the positive aspects of your guided observation experience might help you minimize the negative feelings you may associate with this assignment as you think about the positive events during your guided classroom observation.

KEY IDEA 6

Reflection can be triggered by many things. One thing is a question. It is important to know the difference between a deficit-based question (e.g., what went wrong) and a strengths-based question (e.g., what went well?). The latter can be called a 'positive question'. Strengths-based reflective practices draw upon the power of the positive question. Here are five examples of reflective questions:

1. What am I doing? (awareness)
2. How successful am I? (appreciation)
3. What is a better way to do this? (imagine)
4. What do I need to do to achieve this? (design)
5. Is this what I should be doing? (judgement).

You should know that reflection is not an *add-on* piece to your pre-service teaching experiences. Reflection is integral to the complex process of becoming a teacher. Successful reflection enables self-awareness, personal and professional growth and improved teaching skills. Reflection compliments lifelong learning and professional development by helping you realize why successes succeed and the failures fail, providing a catalyst for educational change and professional development (Pensavalle, et. al., 2006).

Ultimately, self-reflection and dialogue with your colleagues, teachers, instructors, members of the community, and your students will result in insights as to:

- how and why you think the way you do about teaching;
- the significance of what you observed in the classroom(s);
- the significance of the actions and choices made by the teacher;
- what you learned about the interactions between the school, classroom, students and teacher;
- what you observed and if you were to start teaching tomorrow implement in your classroom;
- what you would change if you were to start teaching tomorrow implement in your classroom; and
- what you would not implement if you were to start teaching tomorrow.

(Klein, U.W.- Stout, Chandler, UW-Whitewater2006)

PURPOSE OF THIS ASSIGNMENT TO YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT


FRAMING YOUR INSIGHT

Personally I like the work of Christopher Johns (2013). Mr. Johns comes to reflective practice from the nursing profession and I have come realize we have a lot in common with our colleagues in nursing. The organization of a hospital is not that much different from the organization of a school. Johns (2013) identifies eight traits of a *reflective practitioner* (Figure 2). These traits, in turn, enable to organize your classroom observation—the purpose of this assignment.

Figure 2

FRAMING PERSPECTIVES

Adapted from Christopher Johns
Becoming a Reflective Practitioner, p.66

<p>PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMING:</p> <p><i>How has this experience enabled me to confront and clarify my beliefs and values that constitute desirable practice(s) about being a teacher?</i></p>	<p>PROBLEM FRAMING:</p> <p><i>How has this experience enabled me to focus on problems, issues, or concerns faced by teachers and how to deal with them <i>in the moment?</i></i></p>	<p>REALITY PERSPECTIVE FRAMING:</p> <p><i>How has this experience enabled me to see beyond my preconceived notions of being a teacher and see teaching for what it is?</i></p>
<p>PARALLEL PROCESSING FRAME:</p> <p><i>How has this experience enabled me to make connections between the learning process and my classroom field observations to identify patterns and anticipate how I might respond in similar situations?</i></p>	 <p>Insights</p>	<p>THEORETICAL FRAMING/MAPPING:</p> <p><i>How has this experience enabled me to draw on research-based practice to being to make sense of what I have observed and begin to assimilate what I saw, what the research says, and what I want to be?</i></p>
<p>TEMPORAL FRAMING:</p> <p><i>How has this experience enabled me to identify and draw upon the <i>13,000 hours of observational apprenticeship</i> (Lortie, 1975) and other resources (formal and informal) to identify patterns and anticipate how I might respond in similar situations?</i></p>	<p>DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMING:</p> <p><i>How has this experience enabled me to understand the responsibilities associated with being a reflective practitioner and applying what I observe, read, and learn as I develop a professional persona?</i></p>	<p>ROLE FRAMING:</p> <p><i>How has this experience enabled me to more clearly understand my role as a member of a professional learning community and the value of collaboration in my professional development?</i></p>

“The point of reflection is to learn and gain insight. Insights, by their very nature, change people. In changing people, insights inevitably impact on the wider community as the practitioner responds differently, more

congruently with her values...Insights are at the level of understanding, empowerment and transformation. They can be explosive moments of revelation, perhaps something so obvious that we simply have not seen it before. They may be subtle, their subtlety only revealed through subsequent reflection. Insights are more than thinking about things differently. Indeed, our thinking may block gaining insight simply because it is the way we have always thought, whereas insights reflect different thinking. In gaining insight we learn to think about our thinking. It is this dimension of reflection that becomes mindful and deeper.” (Johns, 2013, p. 62).

Carson (2008, p. 139) writes, “when you change the way an individual thinks of himself, you change the way he lives in his community and thereby you change the community in some way to a greater or lesser extent.” Framing your insights into something coherent empowers you. Wheatley (1999), writes, “when we concentrate on individual moments or fragments of experience, we see only chaos. The complexity of our practice may seem like chaos — just how do I sort the wood from the trees to see clearly? But if we stand back and look at what is taking shape, we see order. Order always displays itself as patterns that develop over time” (p. 118). It is that *order* for which I want you to look. I want you to reflect on the *chaos* you saw when you first entered the classroom and how over time order emerged.

Johns (2013) uses a construct (a way of organizing) he calls the *framing perspective* (Figure 2). The purpose of the framing perspective is a way to organizing to allow what may appear as unrelated parts of your classroom observation to emerge as whole. For example, you probably have seen this drawing and probably at first saw either a beautiful woman or an old woman. It wasn't until someone, who saw the other figure, pointed out if you changed your focus you would see the other figure—an old woman. I hope, using Johns' *framing perspective*, occurs when you go back through your Field Observation Journal and reflect on what you observed, what you learned, what you now think being a teacher is.



Johns (2013) organized the framing perspective around its purpose: to gain insight and our case **insight into what is required to be an effective teacher**. I want you to consider as you go back through the notes in your Field Observation Journal, the comments made on your Field Observation Cards, and your conversation's with your colleagues what you have learned. I want you consider using Johns' framing perspective to allow you notes, observations, and conversations the *data to talk to you*. I encourage you to reflectively think about how what you observed have come to frame you perspective of what it means to be a teacher.

QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN PREPARING YOUR CLASSROOM FIELD OBSERVATION REFLECTION

- How did you think about teaching **BEFORE** the field observation and how do you think **NOW**?
- What did you observe that affected changes in the way you think about teaching?
- Identify at least one example of **GOOD TEACHING** and describe the effect it had on the classroom, student, or teacher for each of the categories (We remember best what we hear as a story).
- Given what you have learned about teaching from your observations, what do you believe are the roles and responsibilities as a teacher to your students, school, parents, community and society?
- How would you describe your development as a pre-service teacher as a result of your observations?

Short, Harste & Burke, 1996, pp. 58-59

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