



CRITICAL REFLECTION FOR THE CO-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCE

VCU REAL Co-Curricular Reflection
Workshop, April 2022

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TODAY'S PLAN

- Partner Introduction: Warm-Up Activity
- What is Reflection? Definitions & Models
- Quick Overviews:
 - Using Reflection for Building Inclusive Spaces
 - Using Reflection for Learning
 - Using Reflection for Assessment
- Photo Elicitation Reflection Activity
- Small-Group Discussion & Brainstorm
- Self-Reflection



PARTNER WARM-UP ACTIVITY: THE STORY OF YOUR NAME

You'll have 3 minutes with a partner to tell each other the **story of your name**.

You can choose to tell about any part of your name and might include:

- How was your name chosen?
- Were you named after someone?
- Does it have any cultural or historical meaning?
- Is there a story or experience related to your name you would like to share?

This activity is adapted from Equity Unbound Educational Resources: <https://onehe.org/eu-activity/introductions-story-of-your-name/>





WHAT IS REFLECTION?

“Reflection is a process of seeking clarity about truth...truth in experience, thought, beliefs, instincts and relationships. Reflection can be accomplished independently or as a collective endeavor. Yet, however done, reflection demands consideration of one’s internal state (beliefs, feelings, assumptions) and external circumstances (actions, relationships, power dynamics, obstacles).”

Tony Chambers

“The purpose of reflective writing is to help you learn from a particular practical experience. It will help you to make connections between what you are taught in theory and what you need to do in practice. You reflect so that you can learn.”

Andy Gillett

“Unless I call attention to what passes before my eyes, I simply will not see it.”

Annie Dillard

WHAT IS REFLECTION?

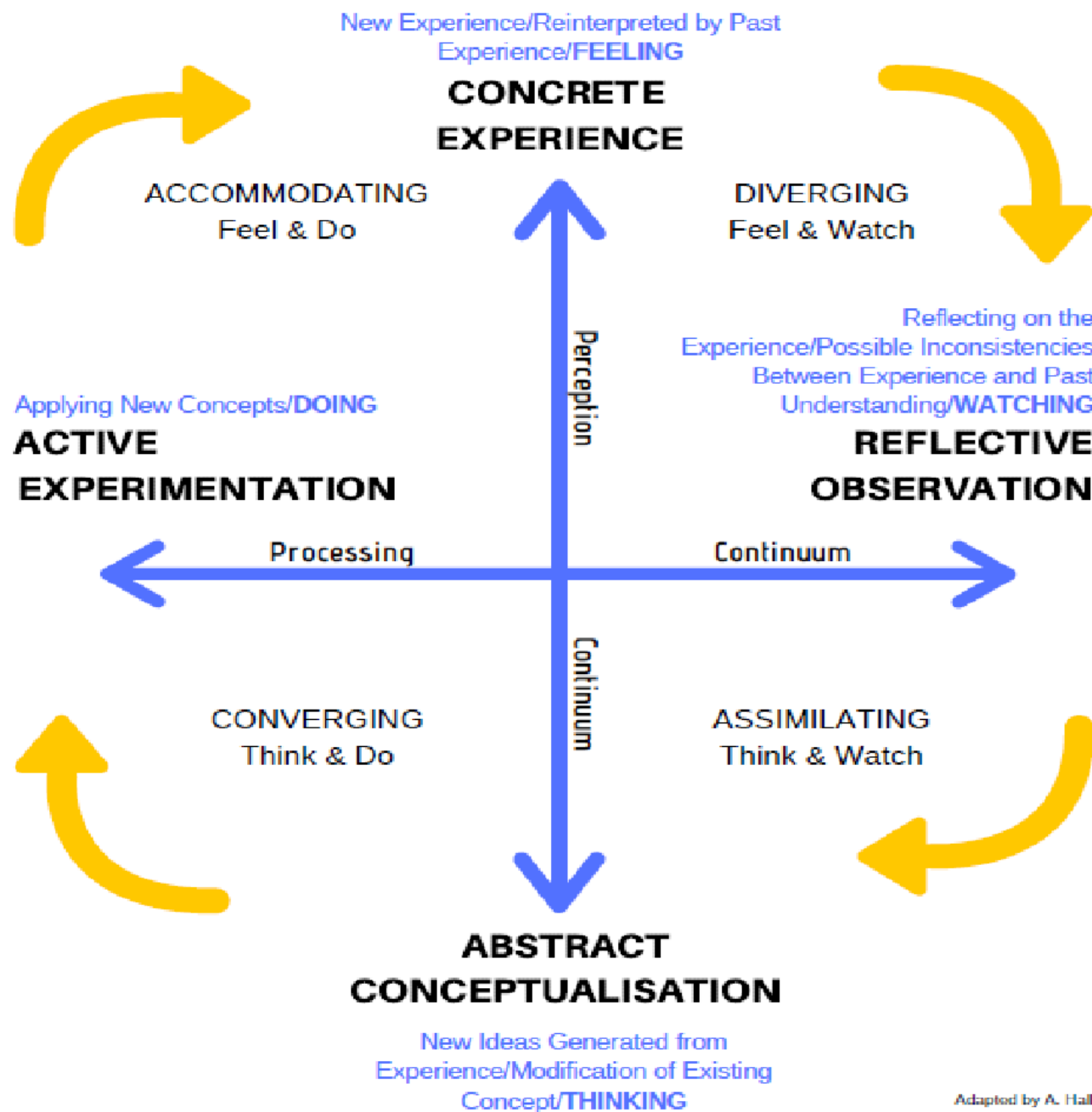
- Reflection is personal
- Reflection is active
- Reflection is intentional
- Reflection is a process



“...through reflection we see through the habitual way that we have interpreted the experience of everyday life, in order to reassess rationally the implicit claim of validity made by a previously unquestioned meaning scheme or perspective.”

—Dr. Jack Mezirow (1991)

Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning





BENEFITS OF CRITICAL REFLECTION

Increased consciousness of what is learned	Ability to hold selves accountable for mistakes
Skill development	Celebration of successes – ability to move from a deficit approach to an asset approach
Increased understanding of self, others, community, and planet	Capacity to see all partners in the process more holistically
Increased capacity for authentic relationships	Curriculum is more relevant
Deeper recognition of assets, interests, and needs of self, others and community	Deeper capacity for action that results in social justice and personal transformation
Increased capacity to listen to self and others in new ways	Power can be redistributed when all partners reflect, teach, and learn together

CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH-QUALITY REFLECTION

	High Quality Reflection ...
Eyler et al. (1996)	is continuous (ongoing)
	is connected (with assignments and activities related to and building on one another and including explicit integration with learning goals and academic material)
	is challenging (including in terms of the expectation that students take responsibility for their own learning)
	is contextualized (to the community setting and broader public issues and to the students' own particular roles)
Bringle & Hatcher (1999)	links experience to learning
	is guided
	occurs regularly
	involves feedback to the learner to enhance the learning
	helps clarify values
Zlotkowski & Clayton (2005)	is oriented toward specific learning objectives
	is integrative
	is assessed in terms of critical thinking
	includes goal setting
	generates change in the learner's life



CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH-QUALITY REFLECTION

Mutually Beneficial	Learning partners/co-educators agree on the content and process of reflection activities and assignments. They create reflection activities that mutually benefit the student, the community partner, and the faculty member.
Culturally Relevant/ Multi-Leveled	Reflection activities draw on multiple ways of knowing, learning, and expression. Learning from the head, heart, gut, hands, and body are honored. Students are asked to examine issues on multiple levels: personal, relationship, group/cultural, institutional/societal.
Supportive	Since learning partners may encounter uncomfortable feelings, it is important that they feel they are in a supportive and mutually respectful atmosphere where they can express their opinions, ideas and thoughts, become more aware of the impact of their perspectives on others, hear others' opinions, and be open to challenging their own perspectives.
Modeled by All Partners	Faculty, community partners, and students model, participate in, and benefit from the reflection process.
Internally Focused	Partners reflect on their own cultural identities in relation to each other and the impact of those identities have on their experiences and their perspectives. Participants reflect on the impact of their experience on their view of themselves as community members and as collaborative leaders in creating social change.
Clear	Clear instructions, expectations, guidelines, and criteria for assessment and evaluation are provided.

WHAT DOES CRITICAL REFLECTION LOOK LIKE?

PART 1: USING REFLECTION TO BUILD TRUST FOR EQUITABLE, INCLUSIVE SPACES





EXAMPLE ACTIVITY: SETTING THE STAGE (ADDRESSING VULNERABILITY UP-FRONT)

NOTE: Activity Details are available in the Reflection Resources Google Folder.

Facilitators would prepare a cards with warm-up questions. They could include things like: “Would you rather live on the moon or under the ocean?” or “What is your most used emoji?” Then have participants:

- Pick a neon question card from the stack on your table.
- Write your name, your pronouns, and your response on the back of the card.
- Swap cards with your neighbor.
- At your table, go around the circle and introduce your neighbor to the group using only the information provided.
- EX: This is Macy and she would rather live on the moon!

EXAMPLE ACTIVITY: HEAD, HEART, HANDS, HOME



- Give each student a piece of cardstock and a marker.
- Students should fold their cardstock to create 4 squares.
- At the top of their page, they should write the name they would like to be called and the pronouns they use.
- In each square, students should draw one symbol or design and/or write a word or phrase that represents each of the categories below: (You may want to already have these categories with questions written on the board or on a ppt prior to start of the meeting).
 - **Head: What do you like to learn about/What is your major?**
 - **Heart: What community/social issue are you most passionate about?**
 - **Hands: What do you like to do as a hobby/your interests outside of school?**
 - **Home: Where is your “hometown” and what is one thing you miss from “home” and/or what is one thing about your home culture that most represents your identity/you will miss while at VCU?**
- Once students have completed the task (after about 5 minutes max), go around the room and have students share their responses – important to listen to how they pronounce their name.

EXAMPLE ACTIVITY: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

ESTABLISHING A SAFE SPACE & SETTING UP DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

- Start by asking students to respond to a written prompt: "I mostly feel _____ when discussing sensitive topics, because _____."
- Make it clear that this is a private writing exercise and they will not be asked to share it with anyone.
- Ask students – what feelings do you think may be in the room when discussing sensitive topics? Record answers on the board. Ask students to refrain from making "I" statements or sharing what they wrote. Focus at first on listing feelings as a group without commenting on them.
- When everyone has had a chance to share, ask students – what do these words have in common? (Are they mostly negative?) What else do you notice? Where do these feelings come from? (Lived experiences, stereotypes) Which feelings are valid? (All) Acknowledge that these feelings can be scary or uncomfortable, but we need to walk through that discomfort together in order to have meaningful conversations about sensitive topics.



EXAMPLE ACTIVITY: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT ESTABLISHING A SAFE SPACE & SETTING UP DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

Create group guidelines by asking students: *What do you need to have a safe yet courageous conversation about topics that may be difficult to discuss?* Record student answers on the board. Important guidelines to include are:

- Speak in "I" statements, avoid speaking on behalf of your group (we feel) or another group's (they think) identity.
- Listen to understand, not to respond.
- If something is said that hurts or offends you, acknowledge that the comment (not the person) hurt your feelings and explain why.
- Stay engaged, it's okay to feel frustrated but don't drop out.
- Practice putting down the mic (allow others room to speak).
- Practice picking up the mic.
- If you're not sure how to say something, write it down and come back to it later.
- Don't expect complete agreement. This is a discussion, not a debate.

Make sure to gain group consensus and buy-in on the guidelines before moving on.

EXAMPLE ACTIVITY: CULTURAL IDENTITY MIND MAP & STEREOTYPING

age	religion	economic status	family/ancestry
gender	ethnicity	sexual orientation	language
race	nationality	geographic region	OTHER

Consider the various cultural elements above and note in the boxes these dimensions of your own identity. You may leave some boxes blank.

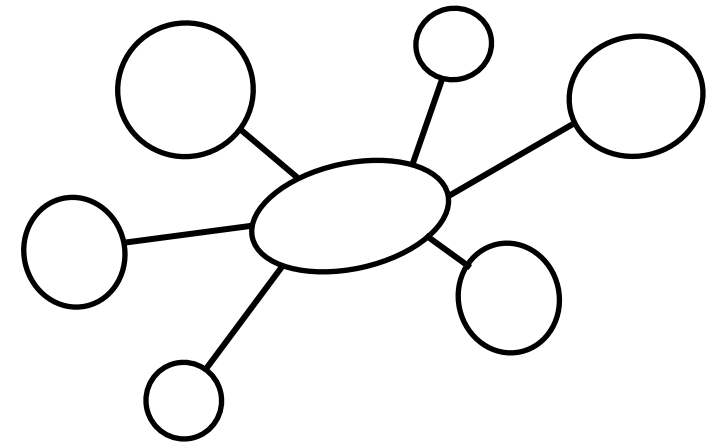
- Write your name in the center oval.
- Using the size of the bubbles to indicate importance, write the specific elements that are most important to your cultural identity in the largest bubbles, somewhat important in the medium bubbles, and less important in the smallest bubbles. If you need more of any size bubble, you may add them to your map.

Stereotyping

1. When do you feel most proud to be associated with one of the cultural identifiers that you previously selected as most important?
2. When do you feel most sad, embarrassed, or ashamed to be associated with one of your cultural identifiers?
3. Share a stereotype that you have heard about one dimension of your identity that fails to describe you accurately by completing the following statement:

I am _____, but I am not/do not _____.

Example: I am Muslim, but I am not a terrorist.



Source: Mind map and stereotyping activities adapted from Cultural Awareness Learning Module One <http://freerangeresearch.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/cultural-awareness-learning-module-one.pdf> (acc. 22 Sept 2014)

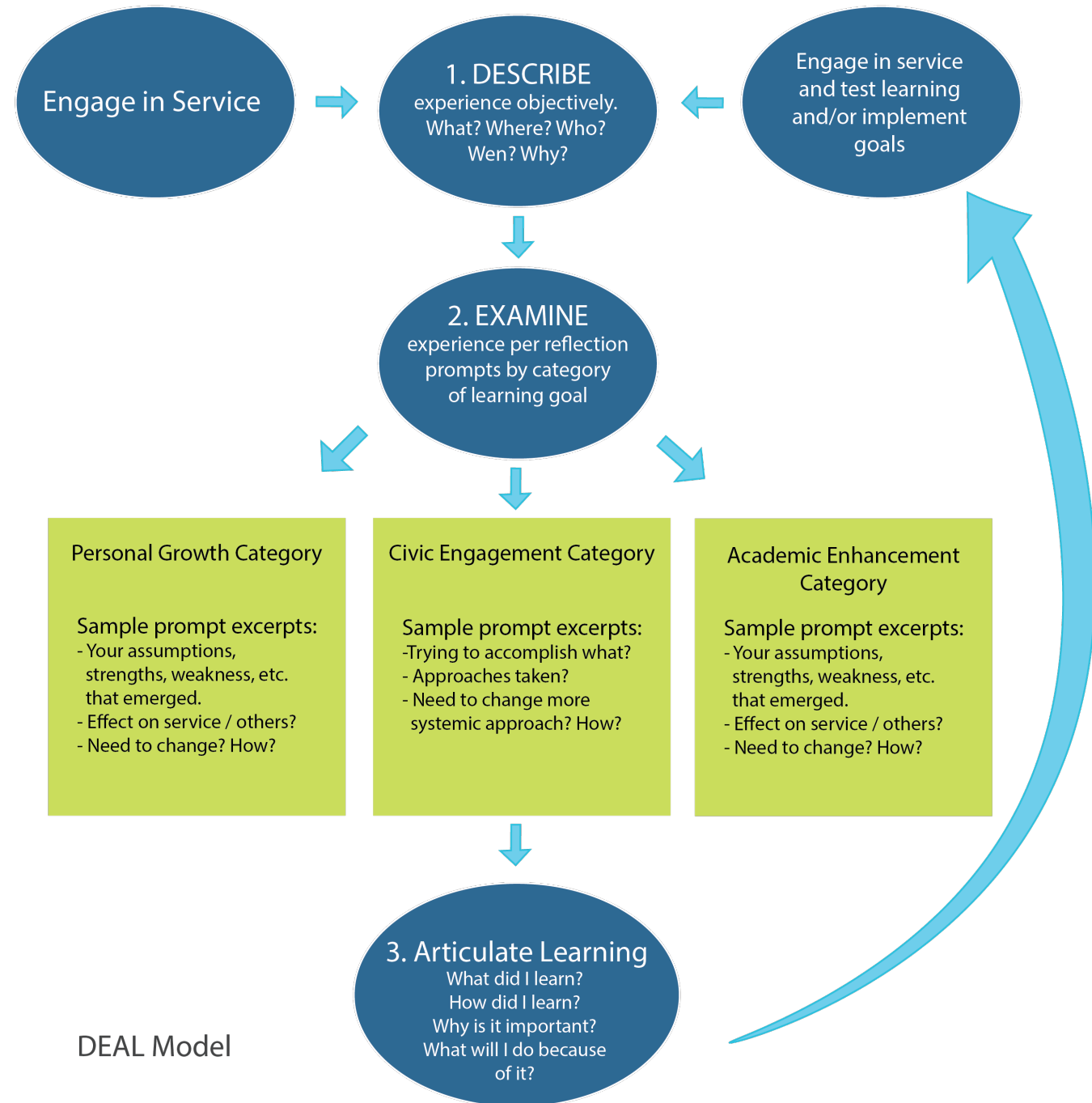
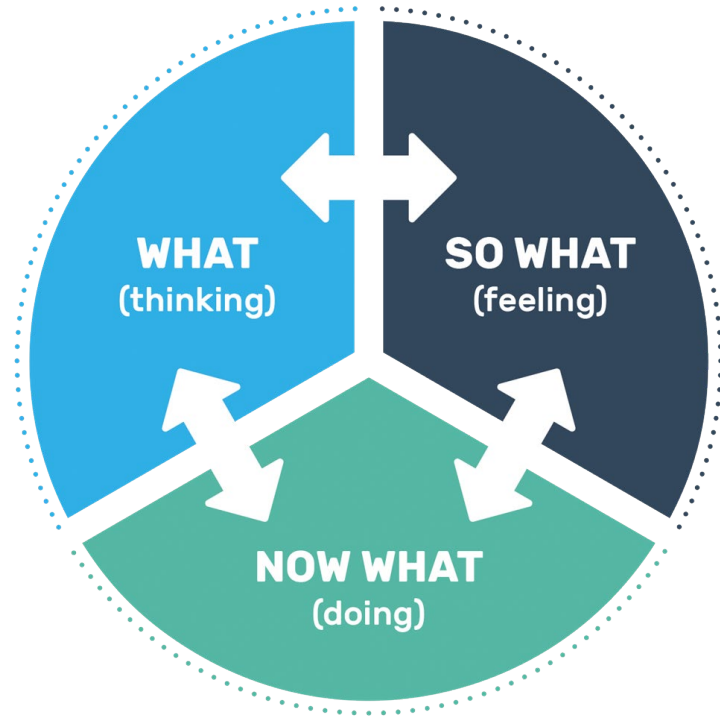


WHAT DOES CRITICAL REFLECTION LOOK LIKE?

PART 2: USING REFLECTION FOR LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE



LEARNING USING REFLECTION: SAMPLE FRAMEWORKS



EXAMPLE ACTIVITY: PHOTO ELICITATION 1-MINUTE PAPER

An emotional hook and reflection activity:

1. Faculty select a photo that is relevant to the theme, topic, content area, etc.
2. Share the photo with students in an online format (discussion thread, blog post, etc).
3. During class discussion, ask students to individually write a 1-minute paper about their interpretation of the photo and how the photo relates to the course content, selected theme, etc.
4. Hold a group discussion or share-out about the different interpretations/perspectives and why there may be differing points of view.

Example: Using the photo on the right, give students 60 seconds, to explain in a “1-minute” paper why they agree and/or disagree with the statement shown. What personal experiences and/or observation have led to their belief?



EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES: ARTS-BASED REFLECTION TOOLS:

([Details are on this resource guide](#))

- Quotes: Capture quotable highlights
- Story Corp Interview
- The Photo Elicitation 1-minute Paper
- Reflection Web
- Theater of the Oppressed:
- Improv as Reflection
- Conversation Café
- Appreciative Interviews
- Daily CREATE



EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES: EQUITY UNBOUND

[ONEHE.ORG/EQUITY-UNBOUND/ONGOING-ENGAGEMENT/](https://onehe.org/equity-unbound/ongoing-engagement/)



DO IT! PHOTO ELICITATION USING *SHOWED*:

All of you are here because you facilitate critical reflection with students.

What's ONE THING you want your students to get from that reflection?

Choose the first word or phrase that comes to mind. Shout it out or drop it in the chat.





PHOTO ELICITATION USING SHOWED:

- And the THEME is.....
- Choose ONE photo from your phone or the internet that represents this theme for you.
- Partner Activity: In breakout rooms, show your partner the photo you chose. Then, use the SHOWED framework to talk about these images together.
- Page 2 of this resource:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aJabmLoK5OrlrX46OgS1priPNdZDWvI1/view?usp=sharing>

Note: This activity can be completed as individually in writing or as a partner interview or discussion.

WHAT DOES CRITICAL REFLECTION LOOK LIKE?

PART 3: USING REFLECTION AS ASSESSMENT

How did it go?
How do you know?



REFLECTION AS ASSESSMENT

•Objective

- What you want students to know
- The “Big Idea”

•Outcome

- Measurable result
- Provides evidence that students have met the objective(s)



Tips & Considerations:

- Are you assessing their participation in reflection activities or their reflection skills? Process v product?
- Identify your desired outcome(s) *first*.
 - Rubrics are key!

Additional resources for assessing reflection are linked in the slide notes.



BRAINSTORM & DEBRIEF:

With a partner, take a few minutes to brainstorm ways you might integrate critical reflection into your own co-curricular programs.



BEING A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

A 'reflective practitioner' is someone who, at regular intervals, looks back at the work they do, and the work process, and considers how they can improve. They 'reflect' on the work they have done.

How do you reflect on your own practice?



STOPLIGHT SELF-ASSESSMENT:

- List 3 hesitations you still have regarding facilitation of critical reflection.
- List 2 motivations that continue to drive you towards using critical reflection as a valid tool to deepen and assess student learning through experience.
- List 1 actionable strategy you will use to further incorporate critical reflection into your co-curricular program.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Check out this Google Folder of Reflection Resources, gathered and prepared by Dr. Amanda Hall.
- https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zh4FX4CmFMcA6I_fHQ3HE8Lim1KVvl9a?usp=sharing





**WANT TO KEEP TALKING ABOUT
THIS? SO DO I.**

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