

IA Checklist - Reflective and Analytical elements

Reflective written portfolio – 20 of 60 marks

The portfolio will contain

- (a) Cover sheet with name, candidate number, centre/centre number (150019) and teacher's name
- (b) Introduction to theme and reasons (personal, academic or other) for choosing the theme.
- (c) Two pieces of reflective (creative) writing of 2 of the 3 genres - poetry, short story or other prose form or drama.

These pieces should have literary non-factual content (although your purpose may be to educate through this medium). One of these piece can be taped or videoed but the tape for video must be between 3 to 5 minute long.

- (d) With EACH piece, a rationale for the piece of writing which includes inspiration, purpose in writing, intended audience and situation the audience will receive the writing (e.g. in an anthology, newspaper etc)

- (e) Conclusion. In the conclusion the student should reflect on his/her process in writing and his/her opinions.

- f) Bibliography

Analytical part of the portfolio – 20 out of 60 marks.

Analysis of one your reflective pieces or a published piece of creative writing on the same theme.

The analysis will include: '

- * register (formality, tone, word choice etc),
- * dialectal variation (standard, non-standards),
- * attitudes to language (what does the choice of language convey to the reader about the character, what do other characters think of the choices of language or what do certain language types symbolise in societies),
- * communicative behaviours shown in the story e.g. use of non-verbal communication

Word limits for written portfolio

The word limits are 1200 words for the reflective portfolio and 350 words for the analytical piece. You will be penalised by 2 marks if both the pieces together exceed 1700 words.

While we have no definite guidance on how to proceed with word count, we are assuming that words have to be over 2 letters to be counted.

With regard to taped or videoed submissions, the script must conform to the word limit and should be submitted along with the tape.

Summary of requirements for Expository Presentation

The expository presentation should conform to the following requirements

- An 8 minute presentation on the same theme as your reflective portfolio
- It will have 6 elements
 - An introduction with a thesis statement
 - A rationale in which you explain why you chose your theme

- A discussion of issues (a factual presentation)
 - An evaluation of the reliability and validity of two sources of data used in your presentation
 - A report on the challenges you faced while researching the presentation.
 - A conclusion
- You cannot read from a full script
 - You can use notes in bullet point/ key words form (apart from details of references and statistics)
 - The notes should cover no more than 8 small index cards (or paper the size of index cards)
 - You can use visual aids but they are not a requirement
 - You should wear school uniform which conforms strictly to the dress code for the examination

An introduction (statement of topic)

In the introduction you will give a brief explanation of topic/ theme and a preview (with a thesis statement) of what you are going to cover.

For example.

"My theme is Returning Migrants to St Vincent. Returning migrants or returnees are a group within the population of St Vincent who have spent a significant time away from the island and have then returned to permanently settle again. Returning migrants often are retired from their previous occupation which they pursued in a more developed country such as the United States, Canada or Great Britain or they have been working in another Caribbean state. According to statistics from the Customs Department given to me by Mrs B Chalres in an interview 4361 people claimed the concession for returning residents in 2005. *Returning migrants experience*

5 phases of adjustment when returning which can be termed as "culture shock".

NOTE WELL I CANNOT HAVE THIS ON MY CARDS WHICH I TAKE INTO THE EXAM. It would look like this

Theme ; Returning Migrants to St Vincent.

a group within the population of St Vincent

a significant time away from the island

returned to permanently settle

retired from their previous occupation (the United States, Canada or Great Britain) OR working in another Caribbean state.

Customs Department (Mrs B Charles) "4361 people claimed the concession for returning residents in 2005".

Returning migrants experience 5 phases of adjustment when returning which can be termed as "culture shock".

2. A rationale

In the rationale you need to explain why you picked the theme and it can form part of the introduction. In the rationale you should mention any personal interests, current academic links and future career plans which influenced your decision to choose the theme

For example I chose the theme returning migrants to St Vincent and specifically to focus on culture shock because I am a wife of a returning migrant. I have a BSc honours in Sociology and the concept of culture shock is part of socio-cultural studies carried out by Kavelo Oberg 1958. In the future I will be submitting my Masters thesis on this specific issue.

NOTE WELL I CANNOT HAVE THIS ON MY CARDS IT MUST BE NOTE FORM

3. Discussion of issues

The discussion of issues is the factual presentation about the theme and its narrowed focus based on the thesis statement. Remember this will be about 3 minutes or so – it is not long.

It should have a distinct organisational pattern and you should aim for one of the expository structures such as cause and effect, process analysis, analysis by division, classification etc (See Writing in English)

It should also be referenced and include any research findings. You will also need to give a conclusion to your factual presentation as a sort of sub conclusion don't wait until the end

Here is an example of a possible outline for my example presentation (not all of it). It uses the organisational pattern of process analysis Remember you cannot read from a script!

Culture shock 5 phases

Honeymoon, rejection/ regression, conformist, assimilation, reverse culture shock

Honeymoon

Centre for Overseas Travel “the tourist phase”

Questionnaire (300 returning migrants) 78% not feel “tourist” 82% “elated”

Rejection

Oberg – frustration etc

Questionnaire 50% wanted to return after 3 months,

Reasons, poor service, backward attitude, nothing to do, boring

Interview Dr Sheridan Mental health presentations tend to be in 1st 4 months of return.

4. Challenges of research

You need to discuss what difficulties you faced in preparing your factual presentation. If you did not have any difficulties then just explain why.

For example (in note form)

Questionnaires – time consuming, identifying sample,

Other sources - no central data on returnees, newspaper articles useful

Academic research not on St Vincent

5. Evaluation of two sources

For this aspect of the presentation you need to discuss your research. The two sources need not necessarily be given as a reference in the presentation but they should be relevant. You should try to select two different types of data source e.g. a newspaper article and an interview. You may want to very briefly summarise all your sources before evaluating two for reliability and validity. Please see other parts of the blog for information on reliability and validity.

For example (in note form)

Secondary sources:

academic text books and journals,

local and international newspapers and magazines,

web sites: international public organisations e.g. Peace Corps

general sites e.g. Wikipedia

Primary sources

interviews of experts in St Vincent

questionnaire of returning migrants.

Questionnaire of returning migrants

Reliable: primary data source, research method suited to collecting data for social research

Valid: Problem with sample size as total population of RMs unknown

Problem with generalisation as differences between UK, US and other RMs more research needed.

Overall reliable and reasonably valid

The Experience of Return Migration: A Caribbean Perspective, Joan Phillips and Reliable Denis Conway, Ashgate Press, London 2005

Author expert Phd Social Anthropol. Specialised Caribbean writer – Canada

Publisher: reputable, specialist academic main interest Social research

Valid Recently published Problem no reference to St Vincent

Overall general but very reliable and valid source

6. Conclusion

The conclusion should be slightly different to the internal summary conclusion in your discussion of issues. At this stage you can express a personal view or put forward a possible solution.

Gathering data in research - an evaluation of reliability and validity

Primary and secondary data sources

A research instrument can gather data from either a primary or secondary source

Primary sources

Primary sources are original materials on which other research is based. They are not interpreted or evaluated. Examples of primary sources are data gathered by a questionnaire, statistics of population from the Government census or a first report of a research experiment and its finding

Secondary sources

Secondary sources are less easily defined than primary sources. Secondary sources interpret and analyse primary sources examples might be text books, or journals which review others work. Sometimes it is always easy to distinguish primary from secondary sources. A newspaper article is a primary source if it reports events, but a secondary source if it analyses and comments on those events.

Evaluating Reliability and Validity

In evaluating sources there are two elements *reliability* and *validity*. For a data source to be accurate and credible high levels of reliability and validity is the aim. Both elements are equal in importance in judging the *accuracy* and *credibility* of a source.

Reliability – Can the source provide the data?

For a source to be reliable we must evaluate the ability of the source to provide the information. We are looking at the question “Is it likely that this source can provide this data?”

The issue is therefore *authority*. To evaluate authority we can look at several aspects of the data source.

Author - Is the author an expert in the field? What qualifications do they have? For example an article on a website about HIV+ written by medical doctor might have more authority than one written by some one without qualification.

Professional standards. – Does the author have certain professional standards? The example of a doctor immediately comes to mind. Similarly academic writers who are published in academic journals or books have to conform to standards and have their work checked by other academics. Journalists mostly operate within a professional approach especially large international newspapers such as the New York Times or the Guardian (UK) Authority can mean expertise.

Publisher – Is the publisher reputable? Academic publishers need to maintain their reputation for accurate factual information so they also have editors to ensure a high standard. Other publishers such as newspapers, magazines etc need to avoid legal action for libel (telling lies about someone) so also should be careful to print the truth.

Organisation or Institution – If the data is from an organisation, for example the United Nations, we need to evaluate their reputation and their role or responsibilities. For example statistics on the economy from the East Caribbean Central Bank would

come from a highly reliable source as the bank use the statistics to conduct the very important business of issuing bank notes and controlling the money supply in the region.

Research method – Could the research method chosen generate the data necessary? For example in researching teen pregnancy would carrying out an interview of an expert generate the data needed or would questionnaires of teens be a better choice.

Validity – Is the data true?

A source could have high levels of reliability. For example, academic research published in an academic journal by the leading expert in the field however the data may have a low level of validity in that it might be very out of date. Equally it may be possible that a source might not be considered highly reliable for example an internet site which does not have the name of the author, organisation who maintains the site etc however the data is still true or valid.

In evaluating validity we need to look at *accuracy* and *bias*.

To evaluate *accuracy* we can look at several aspects of the data

Currency – When was the data published or gathered? Could the information be out of date? For example statistics on rates of HIV+ infection will need to be up to date to be accurate.

Relevance – Does the information relate to the circumstances you are applying it to? For example, will research carried out in the United States apply to the Caribbean?

Data collection – Was the data collected by reliable methods? Was it accurately recorded?

Sample size – Was the sample size large enough for generalisation to be accurate? For example if a newspaper article has only interviewed one person in a large crowd can we assume that all the points of view are represented? Similarly with social research the sample size is vital to judging whether the data is representative of the population as a whole.

Replicable – Do other sources have similar information? Would another similar piece of research have the same result? This is particularly relevant to sources such as the internet which lack references.

To evaluate *bias* we can look at:

Representation – Does the sample include all the variables within the population such as age, gender, social class, religion, education level which might affect response? Even with a large sample if the sample is not representative then bias in the data will occur.

Cultural bias – Has the data been collected by someone of the same or a different culture. For example, an Western researcher may misinterpret a non-Western culture and be biased due to racism or other factors. Similarly when researching within ones own culture, being subject to the same values and beliefs as the subjects may cause one not to question certain responses. For example when evaluating religious or other beliefs.

Political bias – Is the data being presented from either a right wing or a left wing perspective. The conservative agenda (e.g. free market economics, personal liberty above all other rights and fundamental religious views) will differ from the liberal agenda (e.g. some control of the market for social gain, social control for the good of society, religious tolerance for different views).

Social bias – Aspects such as gender, race, age and social class may affect the presentation of data. For example a women's perspective on sexual equality may differ from a man's views.

Faulty research methods – Even the best academic researchers can make mistakes and inexperienced researchers such as a student may have issues with poorly designed and executed questionnaires and interviews. Mistakes within the research method inadvertently cause bias. This is why academic research is reviewed by several other academics to evaluate the methodology and avoid bias in the conclusions or faulty conclusions.

Aim of the source in presenting the data – The reason for the data being presented will have an effect on bias. For example a Government might present certain statistics on economic performance if they are favourable and might avoid others. Whilst the data is valid, there might still be bias in that other relevant information is not present. If the source's aim is persuasive again there may be bias. For example commercial sites wishing to sell products.