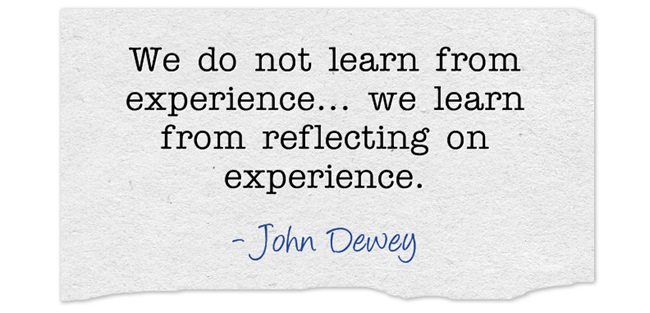
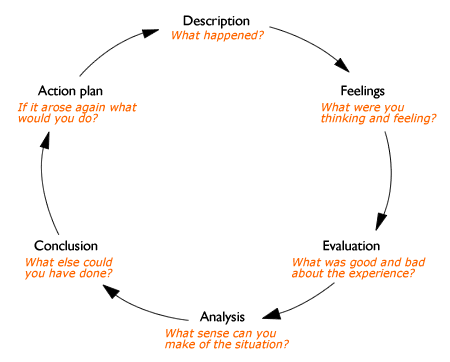
**Writing Reflections**

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| **Aim of this session**  By the end of this session, you will be better able to write a reflection task by:   * Becoming aware of the expectations and the purpose of these types of tasks. * By analysing the type of information and supporting evidence you might use. * By analysing the expected structure of a reflection task. |



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Source of quote and photo: <https://twitter.com/gewoonlogisch/status/607154081111654401/photo/1>

and <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Dewey>

https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/upgrade/study-skills/reflective-writing-gibbs/

**Activity 1: Discussion**

* 1. What does John Dewey’s quote mean?
  2. Have you done any reflective writing in your discipline or other modules? These tasks may be called journal entries, narratives…
  3. Describe the task, the guidelines given and the challenges you faced when writing this/these tasks.
  4. Why do you think lecturers set these tasks? What are they looking for?
  5. Are these tasks beneficial for the student? How?

**Activity 2: Take notes on what reflective writing is and is not**

Watch this video on Reflective Writing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QoI67VeE3ds>.

* As you watch, take notes on what constitutes reflective writing.
* Complete these sentences:
  + *Reflective writing is NOT…*
  + *Reflective writing is…*

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| 1. **Definition, purpose, structure**   **1.1 What is a reflection?**  A reflective task usually requires the writer to write a response to a learning experience such as a reading, a nursing or social work placement or a group-work learning task. A reflection is not only a summary of your experience but usually require you to link your thoughts to the theories and/or concepts that have been seen in the module.  A reflection on a placement, for example, would focus on the outcomes for you (or possibly for the patient/client). You would probably include a description of your actions (and a rationale) as well as the successes and the challenges you faced, how you solved them or how you tried to. You should also show what you have learned from the experience /challenges and what effect this learning will have on you in the future. For all of these items, you should refer to the literature: for example, the rationale for your actions may be found in the readings you have completed for the module. The interpretation of the challenges you faced or the solution you implemented may also be supported by the theories/concepts taught the module.  **1.2 Purpose**  Reflective assignments are used to promote ‘deep and evaluative thinking’. They also aim to make the reflective process (which is essential for learning) more visible so that you can take good habits for future learning situations.  Each reflection task may come with its own set of questions. For a reflection on a placement or an internship you may be asked to think of the following questions as a start:   * Why did the event(s) occur in that particular way? * What factors contributed to the outcome? * Did you achieve your goals? * Did your goals change? * Did other people achieve the set goals? * Were there any problems with resources? * How did your actions influence the situation? * How did other people impact on the situation? * How did the situation affect you? * Could you have reacted differently?   + If you had, what might have happened?   + Why did you react in that way? * How might this experience affect you in the future?   http://owll.massey.ac.nz/assignment-types/reflective-writing.php  You may also be asked to show how your attitude, your beliefs or your values have been changed by the experience: did you learn anything new about yourself? Did you make changes in your approach to a specific task?   * 1. **Structure**   Although there may not be one strict format for a reflection task, you will often be asked to organise your text around a **‘critical incident’**. This refers to a learning experience, where your understanding evolved (for example when you related the concepts studied to a concrete situation). A critical incident is a ‘light bulb moment’ or a moment which made you stop and think, which made you reconsider a conception or perhaps ask yourself new questions. At university, a critical incident may be a difficult aspect of your studies (a challenging assignment or concept or even a particular aspect of teamwork), a successful event, or a moment where you made connections across different modules or learning events. Each critical incidents are very personal; each student will have their own.  A reflection often consists of the analysis of this critical incident and includes a description of the incident, the impact of this incident on your learning, your skills, and your practice (depending on the context).  You might describe the context, the precise incident, why the incident was significant, the way you analysed and explained this incident in relation to your leaning, the impact of this incident (how it changed you and your practice), the different decisions you could have/will make.  Critical Incident  Excavation and reflection  Transformation  Context  Your writing should be academic (no informal language). You should organise your text very clearly, with topic sentences, possibly an introduction too with a scope and you should revise and edit your work carefully. In any case, you should follow the indications given by your module tutor. |

**Thinking of reflective writing as a wave of different types of information**

Think of your paragraphs and organisation of ideas as a wave of information, from general and abstract theories to ‘personal’ examples that exemplify them and from personal experiences to a theory/a concept. There should be a wave of information connecting the two levels: you might use a theoretical concept to justify a personal decision made, or you may describe a learning event as showing support of a concept seen in class.

In a reflective task, the abstract theoretical level and the personal experience should be weaved together.

Watch the short video on Reflective Writing (Monash University) to understand the weaving of theoretical concepts with concrete evidence in your reflective writing. The video is uploaded as an MP4 file in the IVLE folder.

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| Abstract theory/expert opinion  Concrete examples in your own experience | Theoretic concepts from your module  Critical incident details; personal experience; events during a placement |

**Activity 3: Deconstructing sample reflection**

Read the sample reflection below and highlight the ‘concrete, personal examples’ and the theories/concepts referred to.

As you read, answer the questions/complete the following:

* What is the purpose of each paragraph? Annotate the text with the answer.
* How many sources are used? Highlight them.
* Highlight the critical incident.
* Highlight the theoretical information and the personal experience. Plot the information on the wave below, paragraph per paragraph.

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| Conceptual/  Theoretical content |  | | | | | | | |
| Personal experience |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** |  |

* Highlight the shift in language you can observe between the theoretical and the personal realm.
* How are theoretical concepts used in relation to the personal experience?

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| **Prompt:** Drawing on Hall’s article on language, society and culture,reflect on a personal learning incident that occurred this semester. (FASS module) |

**Language, society and cultural difference**

(1) Language, society and cultural difference and the relationships are both interesting topics. Recently, many scholars and educators have focussed on them and conducted further research. Hall (1997:1) explores the definitions of language, identity and culture and discusses the relation between them in the introduction of his article 'Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices'. The close relationships between language, identity and cultural difference are shown in Hall's circuit of culture (p. 1).

(2) According to Hall (2003), 'language operates as a representational system' (p. 1); through language, people may represent their 'concepts, ideas and feelings' to others, meanwhile, 'the representation through language is the process by which meaning is produced' (p. 1). In other words, without language, the 'production and circulation of meaning' (p. 5) cannot take place. People give meaning to things including ideas, values, and emotions through the language. The meaning is what gives us a sense of the group we belong to, of who we are (our identity) (p. 3). Moreover, 'in order to communicate these meanings to other people' (p. 4), people also need to use the linguistic codes (p. 4) of language. Here, Hall claims that language has a much wider sense (p. 4). It is not only spoken and written words, but also involves anything that can represent meaning such as, music, clothing, food, any non-verbal actions. Hall (2003) also argues that 'culture is about shared meanings' (p. 1). 'Culture not only embodies the "best that has been thought and said" in a society' (p. 2), but also it is a process, a set of practices. Members of the same culture must interpret the world around them in similar ways and share a set of ideas, images and values of the group or community, which embodies their cultural characteristics and makes them distinctive from members who belong to other groups, which is their identification. When they interpret the world and indicate their identification.

(3) There are a lot of interesting examples which manifest the links between language, identity and cultural difference. From my experience, I remembered my first English class in Australia, which gave me a big 'cultural shock'. When I called my teacher 'Teacher Sue', she was unhappy with that, and asked me to call her by her first name. In China, this situation had never happened. We address older people including teachers, and the boss with a title in order to express our respect for them. The use of the first name without title would be regarded as a taboo. At that time, I felt great embarrassment. I could not understand why my classmates dared to use the teacher's first name.

(4) Having read Stuart Hall's article, I found the answer and understand why the teacher asked me to use her first name. This is related to the question 'how does the teacher represent herself or himself?' My teacher, Sue represented herself through her first name in her cultural community. However, in my Chinese cultural context, I represent the teacher through the title in order to indicate my respect to the teacher. Thus, my teacher in Australia and I produced our different identity through our representation and language. Hence, as Hall states 'Language is not only the privileged medium in which we "make sense" of things, in which meaning is produced and exchanged' (p. 1), and meaning is what gives us a sense of our own identity (p. 3). On the other hand, language is a symbolic practice (p. 5) and expresses the meaning of the cultural identity and society we belong to.

(5) Also, when my teacher represented herself through the language, she conveyed to me her cultural identity and I had to consume the view 'you are my teacher,' but also 'you are my different teacher.' Therefore, it can be seen that through these language systems, we reflect and maintain the common 'life-world' which we call a culture (p. 5). We hold different cultural values, Confucian as opposed to Western values. Confucian culture emphasises respect for the authority of teachers'. Western culture values the lecturer and students as individuals of equality and believes that teachers and students hold equal positions and rights. The language we use manifests the relationships between teachers and students in different cultural backgrounds. When my teacher and I represented our different cultural identities, the relationships between teachers and students which are reflected in the social practice are regulated.

(6) After I came here as an overseas student, I experienced 'cultural shock'. At that time, I was worried that I had lost my way and my identity. Hall's argument makes me understand that it is a necessary experience, a process of adaptation to a new society. Using a new language means forming new memberships in new cultural contexts. There is a change in language, which leads to a change in identity and social relationships. Likewise, any change in language, identity and culture leads to the change of the other two aspects. And now, I also accept and consume this new culture. I am also used to using the lecturer's first name. However, after I go back to China, I have to remind myself to call the teacher with their title. I change the cultural context where I live and the group which I belong to, so I have to change my language.

Adapted from <http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/llonline/writing/education/reflective-writing/6.xml>

**Activity 4: Preparing for the ES1103 reflection assignment: prompt and rubric**

Prompt: Your tutor will share the prompt and assignment guidelines with you.

Reflective writing tasks vary. Your ES1103 task will not require the same structure or use of sources as the samples above. However, it will be useful for you to think about your learning, the theories (in ES1103 case, the concepts you learned about academic language and writing) used in the semester and how these helped you improve and how these were or can be applied when writing your assignments in your various disciplines.

**Note on expectations:** We want to read your genuine response to the prompt: do no write what you think we would like to read. Avoid self-criticism and unfounded claims as well as copy-paste of the module content. For example:

“I *was a terrible writer in the past, but in ES1103 I learned to structure a text, and I am now much more confident, but there is still so much to learn. I will continue to work hard on my writing skills*!”

**Feedback**: There is no need to evaluate your writing as poor. If you do so, you should provide evidence. The student claims that ES1103 has helped with text structure but does not provide detail of the knowledge referred to, not does he/she provide evidence of the transfer that operated, by citing from a disciplinary assignment for example. The student does not score extra points by promising the ES1103 tutor he/she will work hard in the future ☺

Moreover, your performance on the refection task **does not depend on finding examples of successful transfer**. You may explain and show evidence that little from ES1103 can transfer in your view and still meet/ even exceed the task requirements. For example, you might explain that a specific item of knowledge seen in ES1103 does not apply in your discipline and show evidence of this in the texts you found describing your discipline, and in other sample assignments or model answers.

**Rubric: Understanding the requirements**

Check the rubric and answer the following questions:

A1 evaluates your ability to ‘*Identify a critical learning incident where a concept/ idea/ strategy/ approach on the course has impacted the writer in the wider university context (in the student’s discipline or GM mods)*’

How might you do this, and what sources/evidence may you use?

A2 evaluates your ability to ‘*Provides an evaluation of the extent to which ES1103 applies (or not) to writing in the student’s* discipline. (*To do this, you should provide an analysis of the type of writing required in your discipline referring to relevant sources*.)

How might you do this, and what sources/evidence may you use?

Check A3, B2, B2, C1 and C2: how might you demonstrate what is being evaluated?

**Activity 5**

Decide on one item of knowledge that has/is transferred to your disciplinary writing. Use evidence from your writing to support the claim that this item of knowledge has been useful.

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**To do for Week 13**

* Work on your Reflection Task
* Consult the weblinks on the IVLE platform, in particular the ones that concern your discipline. Compile your disciplinary texts (used in Week 8 and 12) and your assignments for your discipline.
* Search for more sources about writing in your discipline or the discourse of your discipline which might be useful to cite from.
* Refer to the ES1103 notes to remind yourself of what has been covered in the last 13 weeks.

Most of Week 13 Tutorial 2 will be dedicated to writing the reflection task in class. Do not forget to bring your laptop and any of the sources you have found which you want to cite in your task. You will be able to access your online sources, the ES1103 materials, and hard copy sources (if any) during the assessment.

**Additional reading and practice on Reflective Writing:**

<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/upgrade/study-skills/reflective-writing-gibbs/>

<http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/a-brief-history-of-the-idea-of-critical-thinking/408>

<https://www.monash.edu/rlo/assignment-samples/education/education-reflective-writing>

**Sample Reflective Task prompts from a range of disciplines:**

**Business**

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| Use the knowledge you have accrued in this unit to write a reflective essay on the following topic:  What, in your opinion, is the importance of disequilibrium and how would the knowledge you have gained about disequilibrium and other key concepts in this unit help you in your career as an entrepreneur?  Learning outcomes assessed:  Demonstrate understanding of the basic concepts related to economics  Can apply knowledge about economics to workplace/employment situations.  See a sample answer and feedback on https://www.monash.edu/rlo/assignment-samples/business-and-economics/business-and-economics-reflective-essay |

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| Refer to the concepts seen in the module about effective group work and reflect on how your own and your group’s performance and interaction during the group project can be evaluated. |

**Engineering**

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| Question: Discuss at least two things you learnt or discovered – for example about design, or working in groups or the physical world – through participating in the Impromptu Design activities. |

**Health Sciences**

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| Maintain a written reflective journal throughout your eight-week clinical placement. In particular reflect on your day-to day interaction with one type of stake-holders (nurses; doctors and consultants; patients. |

**IT**

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| As part of your Industry Based Learning (IBL) placement you will be, contributing to the creation of a new tool for web engagement analytics. Engaging with the concepts seen in this module, reflect on the rapport you and your team members had, and on your contribution to the finished tool. |

Reference:

The video on Reflective Writing is used with permission by Daniel O’Sullivan from Monash University.