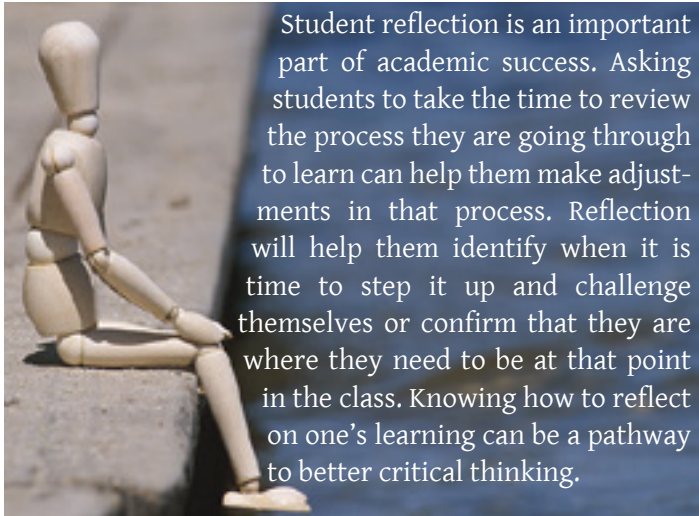


Student Reflection

Leads toward deeper understanding



Student reflection is an important part of academic success. Asking students to take the time to review the process they are going through to learn can help them make adjustments in that process. Reflection will help them identify when it is time to step it up and challenge themselves or confirm that they are where they need to be at that point in the class. Knowing how to reflect on one's learning can be a pathway to better critical thinking.

ONE'S LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Questions to ask of your students: What did you do and how easy or hard did you find it? What was this week's most unclear or "muddiest" moment?

Answers to questions like these give the instructor feedback on concepts that might need more explanation or ideas about what additional support the student might need. This is also great for determining what revisions might need to be made for effective delivery of the material. Identifying what concepts were hard or unclear should tell the student where they need more practice or more research about that concept.

REAL-WORLD RELEVANCE

Math class example: How can you use the concept from this lesson in your life? Your job? For what type of activity can you see it being useful?

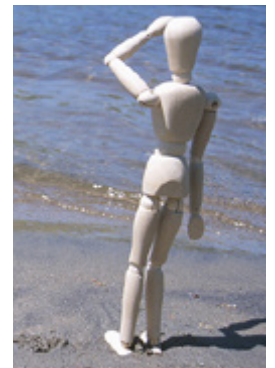
"I don't think a math teacher has ever asked this question before. After thinking about what we just learned, I realized that I do use this process in several ways for example: determining distance and figuring out the shortest route. I know some people who work on the slope and they tell me that they use trig quite a bit when dealing with pipes. But now...I mostly relate a parallel line, to me in bed!"

At this level of reflection, students need to have some understanding of the topic in order to be able to relate it to real-life experiences. They need to be able to synthesize the content to be able to relate it to their prior experience or knowledge to form new ideas and experiences. Being able to identify how to apply the newly gained knowledge can give students a deeper understanding that they can discuss with confidence. Plus, increased understanding of the learning that relates to life's practices can lead to greater motivation.

META-REFLECTION ON CONTENT

This type of reflection, on the learning materials, strategies, and structure employed in the course itself, leads to building critical thinking skills.

When students enter the workforce they will be asked to constantly evaluate what they and the organization are doing. Reflection and critical thinking help to anticipate change and increase or maintain the individual's or organization's position in the market place.



ASK STUDENTS FOR REFLECTION

- in homework assignments
- as postings to their online journal or blog
- as entries in a class discussion so others can give assistance or share resources
- as a presentation or story-telling project using visuals or with an audio / video commentary
- using online tools like blogs, wikis, multimedia, twitter, edmodo
- employing online or offline options