



Reflection Micro-Workshops:

Unleashing the Power of Reflective Journals



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What Are We Doing Today?

Agenda

1. What Is Journaling?
2. Guidelines for Journals
3. Types of Journals
4. Work Time

What Is Journaling?

Journals are often the go-to format of reflecting.

They usually ask students to respond in Canvas to 1-2 questions.

They normally ask students to give updates or explain reactions.

Guidelines for Journals

Responsiveness: Prove that journals aren't just busy work by giving feedback and using them in further assignments

Guidedness: Provide structure to facilitate learning and connections

Guidelines for Journals

Relevance: Relate the journal prompts and goal to the class, course content, and learning experience

Variability: Provide options for those not comfortable with writing

Types of Journals

Freeform Journals vs. Structured Journals

	Freeform	Structured
What Is It?	Let students write about whatever, however	Provide specific instructions for what and how
Goal	See how students' ways of writing and processing change over time	Draw out connections from specific learning content or experiences
Frequency	5+ times per quarter	1+ times, depending on the learning experience
How It Looks	Great together in a portfolio	Great as individual activities

Types of Journals

Generic Guided: Provide some questions for students to answer. Works great in Canvas.

Example: What struck you while doing this reading? How did it make you feel? How could you see this as related to your own life?

Types of Journals

Critical Incident: Ask students to identify a key experience or observation, and expand on its meaning. Great for DIGA and DEAL.

Example: Describe in detail a meaningful situation in which you saw or experienced racism. How did it make you feel? Why was it meaningful to you? How would you put this experience within the context of X learning topic? How might this affect the way you think about and act towards others?

Types of Journals

Perspective: Give students an opportunity to reflect from the perspective of another. Great for applying theory and building empathy.

Example: Imagine that you are a White bus driver in the 1950's South, and you agree with Civil Rights... Imagine that you are a tree... How would X political / economic policies affect you?

Types of Journals

Triple Entry: Encourage deep reflection with a standardized format – Observation, Connection, Meaning. Great for simplicity and in-class journaling.

Example: Have the class fold a piece of paper into three equal parts. In the first part, they describe a learning experience. In the second, they connect it to course content. In the third, they connect it to their own lives.

Types of Journals

Field Notes: Have students note real-world observations, quotes, topics, data sets, resources, etc. over time that they will then use for a later paper or project

Example: At the end of the quarter, you will submit an ePortfolio that brings together course content, personal experiences, research, and real-world observations. For this, you will need to keep – and turn in – detailed field notes...

Types of Journals

Recap:

- Freeform
- Generic Guided
- Critical Incident
- Perspective
- Triple Entry
- Field Notes



Reference: Eyler, J., Giles Jr., D.E., Schmiede, A. (1996). *A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning: Student Voices & Reflections*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University.

Work Time

- 1) Choose a learning experience from which you'd like students to create a journal entry.
- 2) Design two (2) journal assignments for this experience using different structures.
- 3) Consideration: Would you like students to do this in class? At home? Is this private? Is it shared?
- 4) Consideration: What is your goal? Do you want students to explore a specific learning experience, or do you want them to develop their writing and reflexivity over time?