

Writing Reflections

Writing reflections is about making sense of your learning and experiences throughout your nursing school career, helping you to become a more **self-aware** and **critical** thinker. It helps you make learning more **active** and **engaging**, creating **personal connections** and **opportunities for growth**. These are more **personal** documents than other kinds of academic papers.

It is also an essential part of **developing as a professional** because it allows you to:



- **identify** your **strengths** and **areas for improvement**,
- **learn** from **experience**
- **connect theory** with **practice**

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What went well? What didn't go so well?

What might you do differently next time?

Reflecting on theory

This is an opportunity for you to explore the ideas that you found the most interesting. You can also acknowledge any pre-existing beliefs that you hold and reflect on how they are challenged or supported by the topic.

Write about:

1. What are the main ideas? Which of the ideas stood out for you?
2. What did you originally think about the topic?
3. How does the topic fit with or challenge your own beliefs? Were you surprised by anything? Did it confirm things you already knew?
4. How does the topic connect to other readings/topics/ideas for you?
5. How will this change your perspective going forward?

Reflecting on practice

It is common in professional degrees (e.g., education, health, business) to reflect on your own practice and/or the practice of others. This type of reflective writing usually links your practice back to key ideas or theories within your course. It gives you a chance to critically examine situations and your work.

Write about:

1. What were the most important aspects of your experience?
2. Are there any theories that you have learned about in class that seem relevant or applicable to your practice? How did these theories play out in a real life context?
3. Which aspects of your practice went well? Which aspects need development?
4. What can you learn from observing other professionals in your field?
5. How do you plan to improve in the future?

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If you still aren't sure where to start, try some of these "sentence frames."

To interpret

For me, the [most]	meaningful significant important relevant useful	aspect(s) element(s) experience(s) issue(s) idea(s) of learning	was (were) arose from... happened when... resulted from...
Previously, At the time, At first, Initially, Subsequently, Later,	I/we	thought (did not think)... felt (did not feel)... knew (did not know)... noticed (did not notice)... questioned (did not question)... realized (did not realize)...	
[Alternatively,] [Equally,]	This	might be is perhaps could be is probably	because of... due to... explained by... related to...
	This	is similar to... is different from...	because...
[Un]Like...	this	reveals... demonstrates...	

Writing Reflections

To describe outcomes

Having	read... experienced... applied... discussed... analyzed... learned...	I now	feel... think... realize... wonder... question... know...
[Additionally,] [Furthermore,] [Most importantly,]	I have	learned that... begun to understand that...	
I have However,	significantly slightly I have not...	developed improved	my skills in... my understanding of... my knowledge of... my ability to...
Because I	did not... have not yet... am not certain yet about... am not yet confident about... do not yet know... do not yet understand...		I will now need to...
	As a next step, I need to...		

Adapted from: Hampton, M., (n.d.), Reflective writing: A basic introduction. University of Portsmouth, Department for Curriculum and Quality Enhancement. <http://port.ac.uk/ask>