

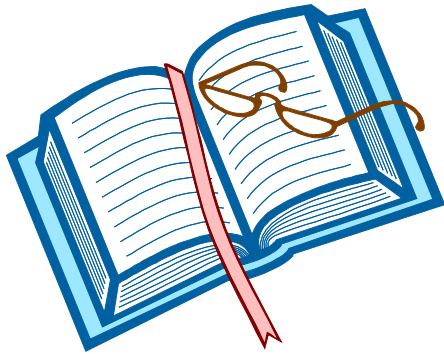
# Reflective Learning Journal



**CC2002 CREATIVE AND CRITICAL THINKING**

**STUDENT**





# Reflective Learning Journal

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## **What is Reflective Learning Journal?**

Reflective journal is designed to help you think deeply about your learning, especially on issues such as: your progress in learning, the difficulties you encountered in the process of learning, the strategies you have taken to get around those difficulties, and your evaluation of your own performance.

## **What can you get from writing reflective learning journal?**

For the study, writing a reflective learning journal helps you:

- bring together theory and practice,
- yield better understanding of the course material

For your development as a successful and independent learner, it helps you:

- See your strength and weakness as a learner
- Find out the methods of learning which suit your own learning style
- Notice how you can improve your learning in the future
- Gain a clearer picture of your learning progress and so in a better position to plan your learning



## General Instructions

### What learning experience to reflect on?

*The object of reflection for this journal is your experience in learning during the week. See 'Detail guidelines' for the specifics.*

### Frequency and length expected

*You are required to make one entry per week, each about 250 words of length. You are advised to make entry regularly rather than leaving it till before a submission date, and the quality of reflection should be the emphasis of your entries rather than worrying about the word count.*

### Pattern of feedback

*A general feedback will be given to the entries in a submission. If there is an entry that has particular significance to you that you want feedback on, you can mark it with an asterisk on the top right corner and special attention will be given to it.*

### Assessment

*Your reflective learning journal will contribute to 30% of your final grade for this subject. The criterion for assessment is the satisfactory completion of the task, i.e. making regular entry as required. The focus of this exercise is on reflection.*

#### Quick reference

Your study

Once a week  
250 words/entry

All /selected entries

Check for completion  
30% of final grade

### Requirement for submission

*Your journal will be collected in three stages, on the dates specified on the adjacent column.*

16-10-2002  
13-11-2002  
18-12-2002

## **Detail Guidelines**

This section offers guidelines to making journal entries that are reflective and significant to you personally.

### **What learning experience to reflect on?**

Reflect on your process of learning. Record any observations, experience, thoughts and insights that are significant to you as a learner, or even as a person.

### **Prompt questions for your reference:**

The function of prompt questions is to stimulate your reflective thinking. You don't need to (in fact, you are not supposed to) answer every one of them in any entry.

- How what I have learned relates to my other experiences?
- What implications does it have regarding my learning?
- What difficulties have I encountered in applying my knowledge in dealing with everyday situations?
- What would be the causes for those difficulties and how could I overcome them?
  
- What has been discussed today in class? What does it mean to me?
- What do I find difficult in understanding? Why?
- What do I find difficult in accepting? Why?
  
- Could it have been otherwise?



## Sample entry

Here is a sample entry to a reflective learning journal with teacher's comments on the right.

The third lecture taught about critical reading. In the part of defining critical reading, I found myself always read books passively and recklessly. When I have to read textbooks, this will happen easily. Some contents of those textbooks are quite long and boring. Just as now I am studying Microeconomics, I should read the whole chapter to get more information and concepts about this subject. But I don't think it is easy to read. The sentences are long and hard to understand. And those examples are cases in America. As I know very little about politics and economics, let alone American politics and economics, when I read this textbook, I often cannot get concise concept and write summary.

Miss recommends us to jot notes when we read: after understanding every paragraphs, write down the words in my own expression. It is more useful for use to re-read. I quite agree with her point. When I was in F.6, I retook the HKCEE in Chemistry. In that year, I jotted down all the important points into other points into another book. Then at the day I had my exam, I just read that book instead of bringing four textbooks. Although I spent much more time to write my own notes, the result proved that this method worked. However, as we now studying further, it is not same as HKCEE. The syllabus is much more detail. If I still use this method in my present study, I am sure I cannot follow the rate of progress of the syllabus. Thus, I do not use this method now. But is there any other method good for me to apply?

I also have a question: We spent almost the whole lecture to talk about argument, how to distinguish it from other statements and identify the sentences to see if they are premise or conclusion. Yet what is the use of identifying a statement as an argument? Is that what we need to know when we can judge or with other uses?

I got many difficulties and questions in writing this second reflective journal. At first, I think I know well to write journal, but later, I don't think so. Do I need to write every reflective journal referring to the previous lecture or tutor? I cannot apply them so quick and see if they work for me.

The content of the third lecture is quite hard for me to apply in my daily life. Apart from the above mentioned problem, I also have a question of what I learnt from the third session. At that tutor session, we focused on evaluating the author's tone and works, the choice of evidence, the validity of the evidence. I think these points can be tried only when I read a commentary or article. If I am reading some storybooks or textbooks, can I still apply them?

Well, in tertiary education, one important skill is to speed up the reading pace, but not necessarily comprehend less. It takes time. Practice makes perfect.

We need to at least have statements in order to have argument. Otherwise, there is nothing to be criticised & reasoned, i.e. it's important to tell whether a sentence is actually a statement

No. Anything relevant to your learning or in the course will do.

I am no rush in seeing application. Struggling with new concepts takes time.

Probably non-statements. If so, do we have to reason so harshly?

Acknowledgement: Special thanks to Wincy Lee of HKCC for providing the above journal entry.



## Quick Help on Reflective Journal Writing

### What to write in the Reflective Learning Journal?

Reflective learning journal writing is very different from academic assignments that you have been writing. It is a piece of flexible, personal, informal piece of writing. If you are unsure about how to start, and how to write, don't just scrawl something in the journal, as writing something truly "reflective" is the most important part of the process, see if our tips can give you a lift!



### "I don't know what to write!"

#### 5 tips on what to write in a journal entry:

- Start off with whatever in your mind about your learning experience in the course
- *Don't* just throw in events in chronological order
- Describe the meaning of what you learnt in the course. Also, your reaction, feeling, opinions, views on both the learning process and the learnt material
- List the goods and bads, strengths and weaknesses you consider you demonstrate in the course of your learning
- Make advice for yourself and make plan for your learning in the near future



### "Now I know what to put in the entry, but how should I write it?"

#### 5 tips on how to write a journal entry:

- Write in first person, as if you are writing a letter to a friend
- There is **no** right or wrong answer for a journal entry. Therefore, feel free to express your ideas, opinion, and thoughts
- Don't hesitate to share your personal experience if that helps to illustrate your point
- Don't limit yourself to words – diagrams and pictures are ok too
- Don't be too intimidated by English rules. It's okay to make minor grammatical mistakes if that does not interfere the transmission of ideas. So don't put too much thoughts about how to write good English, instead spend more effort on what to write