Mirror, Mirror....
Engaging in Reflective Practice for Information Literacy Librarians

Robin Sakowski
Learning & Curriculum Support Librarian
University of Guelph

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Overview

• What is reflective practice?
• Why reflect on practice?
• Forms of reflective practice
• Engaging in reflective practice
• Who is using reflection in IL practice?
• References and suggested reading

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REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

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What is Reflective Practice?

“Through reflection, [a practitioner] can surface [from practice] and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice ...” (Schön, 61)
What is Reflective Practice?

“... A process that allows insights to surface which serve to challenge our familiar behaviour patterns” (Larrivee, 298).
What is Reflective Practice?

“... a process of understanding and shaping your skills and abilities as you teach, not just assessing your performance at the end of an interaction.” (Booth, 2011)
What is Reflective Practice?

Reflective practice is asking questions about:

1. What you do
2. Why you do it
3. What happens when you do it
WHY REFLECT ON PRACTICE?
Why reflect on practice?

• Enhances learning (Boud, 2001)
• Greater personal understanding of the way we work (catch ourselves “in the act of practice,” Watson & Wilcox, 2000)
• Help us be fluid in practice – we can modify our practice to fit situations on the fly (Larrivee, 2000; Booth, 2011)
• Broaden our thoughts about IL and our roles as educators – put it into the sociopolitical context (Jacobs, 2008)
WHO’S THE FAIREST?

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Forms of Reflective Practice

• Personal writing (journaling, one-minute reflection, etc.)
• Reflection on artefacts of work (handouts, powerpoints, webpages, etc.)
• Reflection on assessment (student/faculty feedback, performance feedback, etc.)
• Philosophies of practice, theory, research, readings, etc.
• Group reflection (practice-group, organization, etc.)

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Engaging in Reflective Practice

Three “essentials” for becoming a reflective practitioner:

1. Making time for reflection
2. Willingness to question - self, status quo, etc.
3. Willingness to act

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Engaging in Reflection

Basic questions:

1. What am I doing?
2. Why am I doing it?
3. What happens when I am doing it?
MAKE IT SYSTEMATIC!

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Engaging in Reflection

Taking action:
1. Check-in with self and/or others (journaling, further reading, conversation with colleagues, observe others, etc.)
2. Apply learning – change action/behaviours
3. Observe/reflect again

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WHO’S USING REFLECTION IN IL PRACTICE?

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QUESTIONS?

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References and Suggested Reading


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