

Using this Guide

Before you put pen to paper, you should first select a method for structuring your reflective writing.

You could use one of the five methods – or a combination of these methods – to start writing your reflection. Create an Outline, Free Writing, DEAL Model, Three-Stage Model, or ORID Model. Prompts for each of the 5 methods follow.

Use the guidelines and question prompts, and start composing your draft.

Reflective Essay Guided Writing

Introduction

Writing Prompts: Creating an Outline

Introduction:

State the main claim or purpose for this reflective piece of writing.
What are the main lessons you learned from the experience?

What theme(s) will you explore in your reflection?

Have your views changed because of the experience?

Review past, present, and future views, thoughts, or approaches.

Key Theme #1:

Identify the theme.

Write about the personal experience that shows support for the theme.

Connect the theme and your personal experience and/or course material.

Key Theme #2:

Identify the theme.

Write about the personal experience that shows support for the theme.

Connect the theme and your personal experience and/or course material.

Final Thoughts:

What would you like to highlight for the reader about your experiences, what you have learned, and how you will move forward?

Continue to Free Writing →

Conclusion

Writing Prompts: Three Stage Model

Stage 2: So What?

Answer some or all of the following questions as you write about your observations and analysis of the experience. This is the “during” stage.

What did this experience mean to me?

What did I do that was effective? Why was it effective?

What am I learning about others and myself?

What did I do that seems to be ineffective? How could I have done it differently?

What values, opinions, and/or decisions have been made through this experience?

Continue to Three-Stage Model: Stage 3 →

Conclusion

Writing Prompts: Three Stage Model

Stage 3: Now What?

How it is time to apply the lessons you have learned during your experience to other situations. Answer some or all of the questions as you explore new understandings about yourself and community issues. This is the “after” stage.

Is it important for me to stay involved in the community?

What will the final results of my efforts be?

How will my efforts working with these community and service agencies contribute to social change?

How can I use what I learned in my future placements or career?

What changes would I make in this experience if it were repeated?

Will I continue to be of service? Why or why not?

How does this experience exemplify or contradict module materials?

Continue to ORID Model →

Conclusion

Writing Prompts:
ORID Model

Interpretive:

Now, answer questions that guide your exploration of your cognitive experience.

What did the experience make you think?

How did it change your thinking about...?

What did you learn?

What worked?

Decisional:

Finally, think about how you will prepare yourself to incorporate your experience into a new situation.

What will you do differently next time?

What decisions or opinions have you formed?

How will the experience affect your career path, your personal life choices, or your use of information, skills, or technology?