

Developing Reflections

Reflection time and the transition to a written reflection statement arguably are the most powerful components of the entire portfolio process. Powerful not only in the context of student growth but also as an educational tool for all educators across all disciplines.

There are many possible approaches for a process of reflection. Following is one simplified structural model:

Purpose: Describe and identify the purpose for selecting the specific learning activity or experience that you have selected. Things to consider may include:

- Why have I chosen this particular evidence?
- What is the context within which this evidence has been created, developed, etc.
- Can you identify your specific role in the experience?
- How or why is this evidence special to you?

Reflection: Establish the meaning of your learning. This can be done using a variety of approaches and does not necessarily need to be an individual activity. Discussion with others may be very appropriate as part of reflection but a written reflection is likely most effective and engaging. Some things to consider may include:

- What have you learned about yourself from the experience(s) associated with the evidence?
- Are you able to identify specific skills, attributes, attitudes that are reflected via your selected evidence or the activity?
- Did you face any particular challenges in being able to demonstrate this evidence? Establish a context for this if appropriate.
- How do you feel about what this evidence represents and why?
- How have your abilities and interests been enhanced? Describe your level of pride, satisfaction, ownership etc.
- How is/are your accomplishment(s) understood or seen by others (peers, parents, teachers)?

Outcomes: Identify how your levels of understanding, learning and/or growth have been affected as a result of the experiences associated with the evidence you have represented. Some things to consider may include:

- Has this substantiated what you know or felt? Or changed your thinking, values, interests? Are you now better prepared with the learning that you have attained?
- Have you identified any areas for further growth or development as a result of the understandings associated with this evidence?
- How does this evidence and the learning associated with it relate to your other interests or experiences? Is there a potential linkage to career interests?