

## Example Reflective Writing Assignments

### Nursing — Ongoing Reflective Log Moving Beyond Reporting — Understanding and Synthesizing Experiences

Noll, K. (28 November, 2016). Instructions for Reflective Log. *The Journal of Interactive Technology & Pedagogy*. 7. <https://jitp.commons.gc.cuny.edu/wp-content/static/JITP-Bartlett-et-al/docs/nursing-reflective-assignment.pdf>.

In order to understand and connect your Antepartum and Public Health Department clinical experiences, you are required to write a short reflective log. Your writing should focus on the following (Not all questions should be answered; these are just suggestions to get you started):

- What have I learned about antepartum and public health nursing?
- What is the nature of antepartum and public health nursing?
- How do my views, biases, and assumptions shape what I can and cannot see regarding antepartum and public health nursing?
- How do my views, biases, and assumptions shape the assessments, conclusions, and feedback I provide to patients in these settings?
- In what way am I building on my nursing skills? What went well? What went poorly? What will I do differently next time?

### Microbiology — Multi-Stage, Semester-Long Assignment Connecting Course Material to Lived Experience

Oranato, T.M. (2014). Connecting Students and Microbiology Through the Lived Experience. *Community College Journal of Research & Practice*, (38)7, 625-637.

Write about, research, and reflect on a disease caused by a microorganism that has impacted your lives. This assignment is staged in four parts:

- (a) Write a detailed description of the disease-related event;
- (b) Research the biology behind the disease;
- (c) Reflect on the original event with a new understanding of the biology behind it; and
- (d) Identify common themes among your classmates' work and reflect on how microbiology relates to other courses and your future careers.

### Web Design — Post-Assignment Reflection Analyzing the Past; Reconstructing the Future

Write a short response (300 words) in which you answer the following questions about your recent project:

1. What was your design process for creating your web page?
2. What elements of your final web page do you think turned out well?
3. What aspects of the design process would you like to have spent more time on? What would you have done differently?

Providing a bank of questions is common for reflective writing assignments. But if you don't alert students that you expect them to make choices, they will treat each question discretely, which can work against the integration expected in reflection.

Notice the way these prompts move through the different levels of reflection. Try generating similar prompts for a key concept or experience in your discipline.

This assignment uses integrative learning; it requires students to relate the course content to their own lived experiences.

This research requirement fulfills course objectives and gives students practice in their field.

Part C needs further explanation. Asking students to "reflect" may be too open-ended, especially if students are not experienced in reflective writing. Try to create a bank of questions for these students.

Post-assignment and process reflections are common in many disciplines. What processes are your students practicing? How might you adapt this assignment for them?

Instead of following Question 2 with a question about what went poorly, the question has been reframed as reconstructive. This imaginary scenario that looks backward encourages students to consider how they might behave differently in the future, should they encounter similar problems or projects. This also sets into motion a productive habit of thinking — What can I learn from this experience to help me to do better in the future?

