

End of term review

Questions and reflections for
school teachers and leaders

Principal Matters



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Self-evaluation should be a useful process that is rigorous and enables you to be critically reflective about yourself as a professional and your practice.

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Evaluation

Teacher Self-reflection

This handbook is provided for teachers who wish to engage in a process of self-reflection as either part of a formative evaluation process or as a voluntary professional activity.

Reflective practice is an inquiry-oriented process during which a teacher engages in a cycle of thought and subsequent action on professional experience.

Research indicates that structured reflection on practice promotes professional learning.

It is hoped that all teachers will feel free to use this booklet, in whole or in part, as a guide to their own self-reflection. The results of this process should be kept private unless the teacher willingly wishes to share them with others or to team up with colleagues in self-reflection. Having completed the process, the teacher should proceed to identify the areas for professional growth.

The teacher self-reflection process can begin with a series of global questions:

- Which current practices can I abandon to make room for new patterns in my work?
- What can I do to help students learn more in the limited amount of time we have together?
- Who are my students? What do they want?
- Who am I? What do I have to offer? What historical and cultural lenses frame my teaching?
- How can I force myself out of my comfort zones and preferred cognitive style?
- How do I seek new opportunities for learning?
- Am I having fun?

To facilitate reflection we have provided you with a series of activities that will serve as a basis for reflection.

In this booklet we have arbitrarily divided professional practices into four

components:

- Planning for Learning
- Instructional Strategies
- Assessing Student Learning
- My Professional Self

The items in the following guide are neither in any order of priority nor are they necessarily of equal importance. They are intended for guidance only, and should be modified as necessary by each individual teacher. This guide can be used in its entirety or each of the components can serve as the basis for an intensive process of reflection.

Reflective Teaching

Everyone is familiar with mission statements.

One of the ways to begin the self-reflection process is to describe your ideas, beliefs and values about teaching in a mission statement.

- Write your own personal mission statement about teaching.
- If you feel comfortable doing so, you may wish to share these answers with a colleague.
- Examine your mission statement to determine if it reflects the reality of your classroom practices.
- Choose a statement contained within your mission statement and develop a series of goals related to the mission statement.
- Establish a timeline for the accomplishment of these goals.
- Make a list of people who can help you accomplish these goals.

Happiness at school

The beginning of a new year is a great time to take stock of your work life. Were you happy or unhappy at work? What would you like to change?

It's important to evaluate because how you feel at work has such a large influence on you at work AND at home. When you're happy at work, you have better job performance and more career success. You also have better health and a happier private life.

Unfortunately, most people look back and think exclusively in terms of what went wrong. The things they should have done. The goals they ought to have achieved. The progress that didn't come.

We gain much of our happiness at work (and in life) by appreciating the good things we have and do. Sure, you should also make sure to improve your circumstances and address any problems but it is just as important to be able to appreciate the things that do work.

This is hard. Negativity bias is one of the most well-established psychological phenomena and it means quite simply that our minds devote more mental focus and cognition to the bad than the good. Our thoughts automatically go to problems, annoyances, threats and fears but remembering and appreciating the good in our lives takes effort and focus.

I think you can achieve much more by turning that around 180 degrees, so here's my suggestion for a little new year's exercise in happiness at work.

Think back at your work life in 2016 and answer the following 10 questions.

It works best, if you take some time to do it and if you write down your answers:

- What went really well for you at work in 2016?
- What did you do that you were proud of?
- Who did you make a difference for at work?
- What new skills have you learned professionally?
- How have you grown and developed personally at work?
- Who has helped you out at work in 2016?
- Who have you admired professionally?
- Which 5 things from your work life in 2016 would you like more of in 2017?
- Which 5 things from your work life in 2016 would you like less of in 2017?
- What will you specifically do to become happier at work in 2017?

Most people think that they must work hard to become successful – and that success will make them happy. They're most likely wrong.

This year, make happiness at work your #1 career goal – because being happy at work will make you more successful in your career.

Personal Qualities

What qualities do I possess that make me an effective teacher?

What one quality would my students use to describe me?

Name one quality of an effective teacher that I do not possess and would like to develop.

What activities/learning opportunities will provide me with the possibility of developing that quality?

A) _____ B) _____

C) _____ D) _____

How can I access some of these opportunities?

Who can I enlist to help?

___ student developmental styles

___ student interests

___ student proficiency

___ community events and circumstances

___ developments in learning theory

___ developments in current research

___ developments in methodology

___ other

Selecting Instructional Goals

I reflect upon my student's level of proficiency, learning styles and interests.

yes no

I have a clear unit plan, which is available to my students, parents, and administrator. yes no

The lessons within my unit build upon each other sequentially for skills, level of difficulty and content. yes no

I am sensitive to my community and my students' socio-economic situation when designing my unit plan. yes no

I include a variety of activities, which reflect multiple intelligences and learning styles within the unit. yes no

I give opportunities for students to give feedback on the lessons and unit.

yes no

What three things can I do to improve my unit/lesson planning?

Talking about myself

A time when I changed the curriculum to meet the students' needs:

A wonderful teachable moment:

A recent successful teaching strategy:

A colleague with whom I shared a curriculum activity

Name of colleague: _____

Activity: _____

A time when I asked students to apply a concept learned in class outside of the classroom:

A problem associated with teaching a particular concept:

Concept: _____

Problem: _____

The reason(s) why I became a teacher:

My definition of a good teacher:

My favorite teacher:

Name: _____

Why: _____

One concept I can remember from primary school:

Concept: _____

Why I remember it:

How I helped a difficult student feel more positive about learning:

If you feel comfortable doing so, you may wish to share these answers with a colleague.

Choose one of the ideas and apply it to your present classroom.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

As a teacher, the extent to which I...

engage students in meaningful activities

Excellent O.K. Needs work

incorporate the prior learning of students into my planning

Excellent O.K. Needs work

provide opportunities for students to apply their learning outside the classroom

Excellent O.K. Needs work

vary methods to suit students' needs

Excellent O.K. Needs work

Incorporate a variety of resources to suit student needs

Excellent O.K. Needs work

incorporate student wishes into my planning lesson

Excellent O.K. Needs work

am able to adapt my lesson in response to internal/external stimuli

Excellent O.K. Needs work

try to provide sufficient time to cover the content I want to present to students

Excellent O.K. Needs work

I want to concentrate on the following area(s):

A) _____

B) _____

C) _____

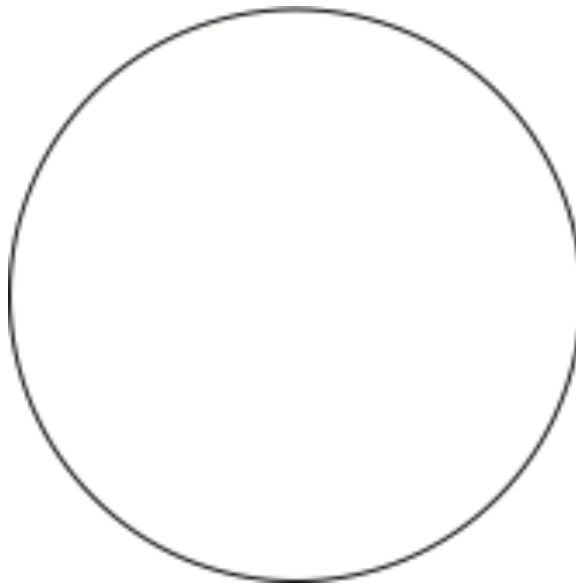
Write a draft goal for one of the areas identified above

Design a plan to accomplish the goal

Indicate an achievable and realistic timeline to accomplish the goal

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Use the circle below to create a pie chart that indicates how much time is spent in individual, pair, small groups and whole group activities.



Based on the chart above, I seem to place more emphasis on

What does this tell me about my instructional strategies?

Do I need to redesign the interaction in my classroom? . yes no

Which area do I need to work on?

Where can I find resources to help me?

Techniques I use to communicate with my students' families.

newsletters

email

SMS

phone calls (happy and sad)

parent teacher conferences

meet and greet

open-door policy

use of volunteers

parent invited performances

notes home

special events

other _____

Identify one new technique to try

After trying out this technique for _____ month(s), I noticed:

Providing Feedback

Record the type of feedback given during one day to the following student responses.

correct response

incorrect response

disciplinary feedback

If you are comfortable doing so, using a video recorder to record the class can assist in the above activity.

Analyzing my responses, most of my feedback is:

Rank the effectiveness of the following feedback techniques.

Reacting to all student errors

Correcting immediately, then testing later

Noting common errors, creating a lesson to address

Noting errors and conferencing with the student

Indicating that this is an error—allowing student to find correct answer

Peer correction process

Correcting by example

Other

If I were a student in my class, what technique would I consider to be the most effective?

Which would be the least effective?

My students said:

The comparison of the two showed:

Knowing Your Students

I get to know my students using the following: (check as many boxes as apply)

Past teachers

Student files

Conferencing/interviews

Journals

Portfolios

Surveys

Brainstorming

Other: _____

I conduct a needs analysis. yes no

*If you answered **yes** to question 2, proceed to questions 3 and 4. If you answered **no**, proceed to question 5.*

Why do I conduct a needs analysis? Student strengths

Student difficulties

Learning styles

Prior learning: skills

Prior learning: content

Student interest

When do I conduct a needs analysis?

At the beginning of a unit of study

When the class composition changes

Periodically during the unit of study

Other: _____

How do I determine the fit between my students' knowledge and skills and my instructional strategies?

- Reflecting on my present class, what comments can I make regarding the composition of my class? _____

Socio-economics _____

Family dynamics: _____

Medical / physical issues: _____

Past successes and accomplishments: _____

- Reflecting upon one subject area:

(A) What are the outcomes of this subject? _____

(B) What did I determine that the students need? _____

(C) What are the areas of discrepancy? _____

How can I revise my instructional strategies to better address the needs of the students?

Classroom Environment

- If I were a guest in my own classroom, how would I objectively describe the following:

chalkboard/whiteboard: _____

teacher's desk: _____

walls: _____

student desk: _____

centres/ workstations: _____

storage: _____

floor: _____

class library: _____

computer center: _____

bulletin boards: _____

file cabinets: _____

resource collection: _____

- Things that I do to make my classroom pleasant, stimulating and inviting: seating that supports cooperation and learning students involved in decorating student work displayed thematic and subject visual displays frequent changes and additions to displays attractive and organized environment

This is a sketch of all the learning spaces in my classroom

I selected this arrangement because:

- I am happy with this arrangement. yes no
- Three things I could do to improve the learning spaces in my classroom are:

(A) _____

(B) _____

(C) _____

The description that best describes my movements around the classroom is:

desk potato

gentle wanderer

rooted to the spot

bouncing ball

on a mission

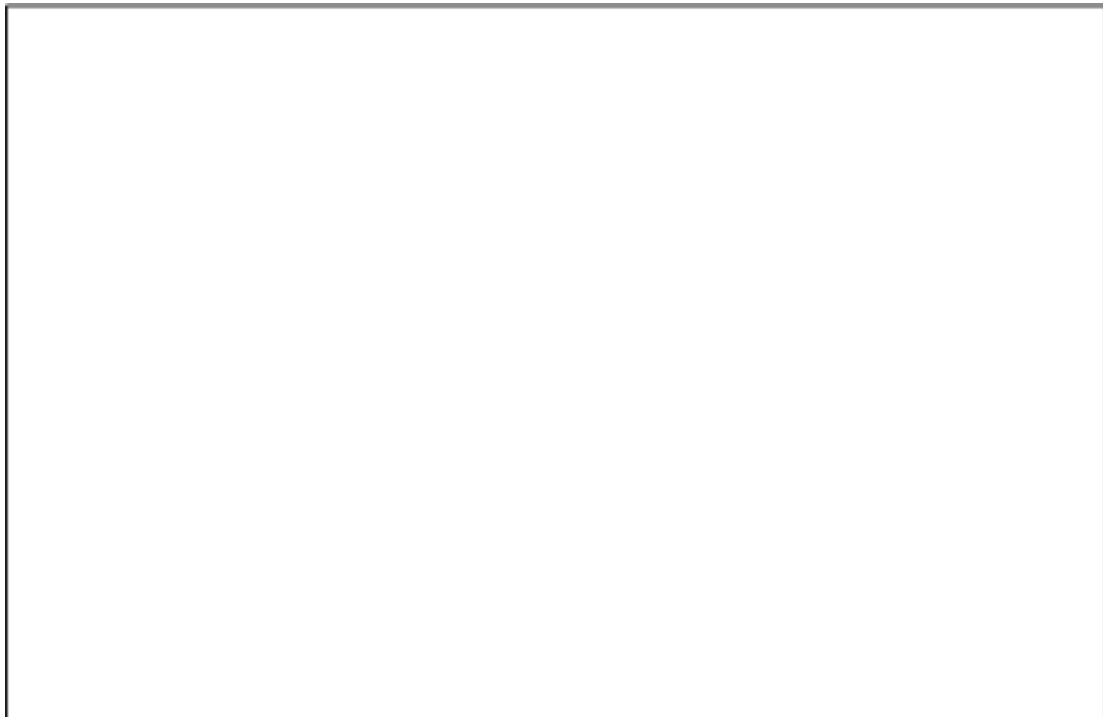
I am visible to all my students.

I can access all my students easily.

I can make eye contact with all my students.

This is my classroom. My students would say that I spend most of my time

at "X".

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a drawing or a written response. It occupies the lower half of the page.

Try repeating this activity by actually asking your students to answer the question instead of assuming their responses.

Classroom Management

- I have a classroom behaviour plan. yes no

The following were involved in its preparation:

students

parents

Code of Conduct (Department of Education)

Behaviour Code (the school's)

- I practice many strategies for preventative class discipline.

I am in my classroom prior to student arrival.

I am organized and prepared for each class.

I consistently apply the rules.

I am clear on my expectations (both for behaviour and academic).

I try to make lessons interesting, varied, and level appropriate.

I use humour. I practice respect.

I have realistic rules and consequences.

I am calm and consistent in my approach. I appreciate all of my students.

- I have established routines for:

class startup

announcements

getting students' attention

allowable talk levels

distribution of materials

computer use

sharing class supplies

cooperative group work

handing in homework

washrooms/ water breaks

fire drills

traveling in the halls
recess and lunch
absentees and notes
early departing students
late students
make-up work
test taking
other routines: _____

- Would I rate my class as harmonious? yes no

Comments _____

I provide many opportunities for my students to solve problems or conflicts using the following.

- circle of friends
- peer mediation
- teacher mediation
- "I" statements
- time out

I clearly communicate to my students my expectations of acceptable behavior in my classroom. yes no

I work with them so they understand the behaviour and how to model it. yes no

I conduct lessons on appropriate self-discipline techniques at the:

beginning of the year
beginning of each term
as needed
systematically throughout the year

Diversity

- I do not use biased language (regarding gender, racial, ethnic and sexuality issues) in my classroom. yes no

- I avoid generalizations that stereotype groups of people. yes no

- If I were a student who is a visible minority in my class, what difficulties or barriers would I encounter?

- As a teacher, how would I respond to these barriers?

- What activities do I employ that encourage students to interact with peers of differing backgrounds?

- Do I reflect on the diversity within my class and community? How is it portrayed in the resources I use?

- How is it portrayed in the instructional strategies I use?

- Do I search out positive role models in my community that are representative of gender, culture, language and ethnicity?

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Cooperative Learning

- Cooperative Learning is _____

- What are the elements of Cooperative Learning?

A) _____

B) _____

C) _____

D) _____

E) _____

- I use cooperative learning techniques in my classroom.

sometimes often never

- I teach social skills necessary for group functioning by:

A successful lesson during which I used Cooperative Learning was:

ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

What do I believe about assessment?

- I am familiar with the assessment techniques outlined in my curriculum guides.

What methods do I use to assess students?

observation

interviews/conferencing

tests

projects

presentations

performance checklists

student self-evaluation

peer evaluation

group evaluation

feedback from parents

student conferencing

assignments

homework

portfolios

other

Are students part of the evaluation process? yes no

In which ways? _____

Are parents part of the assessment process? yes no

In which ways?

How do I record what I find? anecdotal records portfolios of student work tracking sheet for each student videotapes other (specify)

How does my classroom practices match with my beliefs, and the strategies recommended in the guides?

If there is a discrepancy between my beliefs and my practices, what steps can I take to:

expand my inventory of techniques? _____

expand my recording practices? _____

involve students in the assessment practice? _____

other? _____

Communication

- I explain clearly the content procedures for work assignments to my students:

very well

well

average

below average

poorly

- I provide written instruction on expectations for assignment.

- I discuss the expectations with students and ensure that they know what the assignment should look like.

- In my classroom, I have established procedures for:

getting input from students

assigning homework

grouping students

student movement in class

getting students attention

student behaviour

peer assessment

permission for leaving the room

establishing the amount of talk allowed for different types of activities

establishing expectations regarding content and format of assignments

making up missed work

MY PROFESSIONAL SELF

The Portfolio

- What do I already know about a teacher portfolio? _____

- I can document all the Personal Development activities that I have undertaken over the past three years.

yes somewhat no

What is the main purpose for creating my portfolio? _____

Name three things that a portfolio can do.

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

What belief statements do I want to include in my portfolio?

What do I want my portfolio to show about me as a teacher?

What do I want my portfolio to demonstrate about me as a learner?

What kinds of evidence would I include in my portfolio?

How do I integrate the opinions of colleagues, administrators, parents and students into my portfolio?

What plan will I use to best present the data I have gathered?

The following activities may be included in your portfolio:

Teaching Materials Paired with Reflections:

- A syllabus you have used; reflection on what your goals were, how well the syllabus worked, and changes you might make.
- Student evaluations represented graphically or quantitatively; reflection posing hypotheses and/or suggesting how you might use this data to support your improvement.
- Class material you created; reflection as to why you produced it, how well it worked toward your goals, how you might change it or why retain it.
- A journal or your teaching or someone else's teaching in a particular class; reflection on your own journal, each other's journals, or a dialogue between the two of you about what you see in these journals.
- Descriptive information about specific context in which you worked: courses taught, class sizes and attributes, the institution's expectations, your expectations; reflection on how your teaching took these things into account and what you think of the results.
- Information about your wider involvement in teacher development such as other programs in which you have participated, teaching materials you have developed, involvement in curriculum development, etc.; reflection on why you chose to do these particular things, what you got from them, and how you might apply them.

Contributing to School Goals

1. I am aware of my school board's policy.
 - a. I know how to access it.
 - b. I have referred to it.
2. I am publicly supportive and respectful of my peers and my school community.
3. I work within the proper procedures to deal with concerns, issues and problems.
4. I maintain a good working relationship with all school personnel.
5. I understand the relationship of my subject area to the others within the context of the total program.
6. My comfort level for each of the given situations is:

	1	2	3	4	5
	Low				High
sharing a problem with my school administrator					
sharing a problem with my fellow teachers					
speaking up at a staff meeting					
socializing with the staff					
collaborating on curriculum with staff					
discussing student progress					

- Things I do to make my school more comfortable place to work:
 - am on time for work, meetings or with paperwork
 - help out
 - am a positive problem solver
 - follow proper channels
 - am prepared
 - critique with discretion
 - am supportive
 - share
 - am a team member
 - am actively involved

am open to new ideas or methods

smile

practice respect

- Three positive things about my staff are:

- Three challenges for my staff are:

- What can I do to make my school more collaborative and supportive?

- What resources can I access to accomplish these changes?

Evaluation Form

Teacher Self-Reflection Handbook

Usefulness of the document

Low

High

1

2

3

4

5

What I liked most

What I liked least

Suggestions for improvements

Topics I would like addressed

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