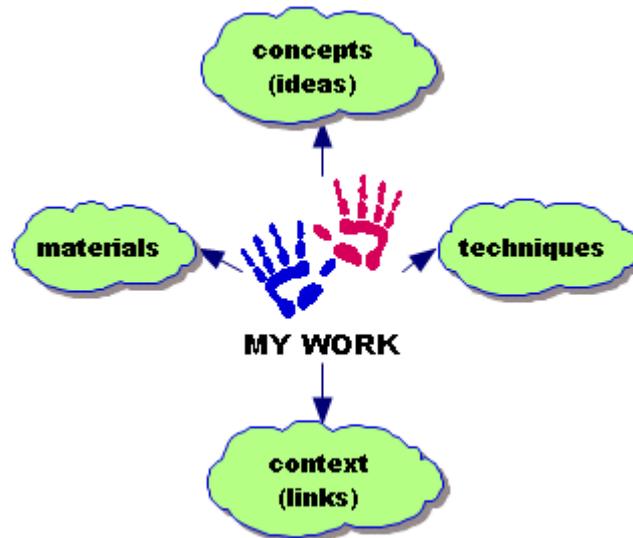


What is a Reflective Journal?

A reflective journal is a way of thinking in a critical and analytical way about your work in progress. It shows how different aspects of your work interconnect.



The journal can record:

- where your inspiration comes from
- how you make use of your ideas to develop your work
- your awareness of the cultural context (setting) in which you work

This context includes: other artists' work and their ideas; the ideas of critics and theorists; social, political, aesthetic and ideological contexts.

The journal could include:

- research notes
- personal comments on your own work
- notes/images from gallery visits
- quotes
- extracts from lectures, tutorials, books, journals
- photos/sketches

Critical and analytical writing



Critical writing involves many of the same processes as when reading. So what is **Critical reading**?

To read critically is to make judgements about **how** a text is written and argued. This is a highly reflective skill requiring you to 'stand back' from the text you are reading. You might have to read a text through once to get a basic grasp of content before you launch into an intensive critical reading.

These are the keys:

- don't read only for **information** (surface approach)
- do read for **clues about views and opinions** (deep approach)

This means:

- comparing the same issue from different points of view
- identifying an argument (analysis of ideas/opinions) in the text
- identifying conclusions and spotting how different people arrive at different conclusions
- deciding what you think, based on the evidence available

Then, in your own writing:

- look at the subject from different viewpoints
- show a clear line of reasoning
- present evidence to support your reasoning
- be clear what your conclusions are

Here are some ways to help you read critically:

- read beginning and end of text to get an overview
- colour code different viewpoints
- underline key words, phrases, or sentences
- write comments in the margins (use stickers if it's not your book)
- bracket important sections of the text
- show links with lines or arrows
- number related points in sequence

Reflective Writing



What is reflective writing?

Reflective writing is evidence of looking back at an event, idea, object, experience, process, etc

It involves:

- analysing and commenting on the object, process, etc from different points of view using contemporary ideas and theories
- exploring and explaining the importance or relevance of the object, process, etc
- considering things that went wrong as well as successes
- saying what the object, process, etc means to you
- saying how your learning will influence the way you work

How to structure reflective writing

- 1 Description (don't make this too long)
What is it? What happened? Why am I talking about it?
- 2 Interpretation
What is important, relevant, interesting, useful?
How is it similar to or different from others?
How can it be explored, explained using contemporary theories?
- 3 Outcome
What have I learned from this?
How will it influence my future work?

Language to use in reflective writing

Interpretation

For me, the	significant important relevant useful	aspect(s) element(s) experience(s) issue(s)	was were
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Previously At the time, At first Initially Subsequently Later	I	thought felt knew noticed questioned realised
--	---	--

This	could be is probably	because of due to explained by related to
------	-------------------------	--

This	reveals demonstrates is different from is similar to
------	---

Outcome

Having	read experienced applied analysed compared	[<i>something</i>] I now	feel think realise wonder know
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I have significantly developed/improved my	skills in knowledge of ability to
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