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If you feel that your teaching is becoming a bit stale or you've unsure of a lessons effectiveness, reflective teaching is the best way to regain your confidence and interest in ESL education. Lets take a closer look at what reflective teaching entails, why its important, and how you can implement reflective practices in your career. Reflective teaching is covered in detail in the IDELTOnline course. Bridges most advanced professional TEFL certification, which can be used as a pathway to an MA TESOL at more than 1,600 universities. Reflective teaching is a teachers practice of thinking, writing, and/or speaking about their lessons and their teaching methods and approaches. Its easy for teachers to get into a rut while teaching, where it feels like they're delivering lessons on autopilot. Reflective teaching is a way to break out of that rut and become the best teacher you can be. In his essay, Reflective Practice for Language Teachers, Thomas Farrell writes, Reflective practice occurs, then, when teachers consciously take on the role of reflective practitioner and subject their own beliefs about teaching and learning to critical analysis, take full responsibility for their actions in the classroom, and continue to improve their teaching practice. Want to read the entire essay and get a more in-depth look at reflective teaching? Take the graduate-level IDELTOnline course. Teachers participate in a TEFL workshop. Teachers who engage in reflective practice can develop a deeper understanding of their teaching, assess their professional growth, develop informed decision-making skills, and become proactive and confident in their teaching. -Farrell One of the main benefits of reflective teaching is that it helps you to become a better teacher who engages their students more and consistently improves their lesson plans. By analyzing different aspects of lessons like teacher talking time or student collaboration, you can measure your success. For example, if you remember that students weren't engaged during an activity, you can analyze the reasons why. Maybe you didnt set a clear context or you overexplained and slowed down student discovery. Or, maybe it didnt have anything to do with your planning, and the students simply parted the previous night and didnt want to discuss the differences between the present perfect and past simple. Whatever the reason, reflective teaching can help you think of a solution. The more you teach, the more you learn about teaching. But, if you're not taking the time to reflect on your lessons, you can't expect your students to learn. Farrell writes, If teachers engage in reflective practice they can avoid such burnout because they take the time to stop and think about what is happening in the practice to make sense of it so that they can learn from their experiences, rather than mindlessly repeat them year after year. Reflective teaching gives you the time and space to think about how to modify activities and lesson plans so they're fresh and interesting for both you and your students. Teacher Miles uses his passion for hip-hop to inspire students while teaching English. When materials like ELT course book activities start to get boring, its time to try something new. Online, there are tons of resources for up-to-date lesson plans. Personal favorites are Onestopenglish and TeachThis.com, but there are hundreds more, some free and some paid. Another great way to try new things is to collaborate with a fellow teacher. This is easy when working at a language school, but you can also do this online through Facebook groups and LinkedIn. Teachers even share lesson plans through Twitter. Continuing professional development comes in many forms, such as Specialized TEFL/TESOL courses or Micro-credentials that offer targeted training. Reflective teaching is also an effective way to continue developing and expanding your teaching skills throughout your career. While reflecting on your teaching, you can also think back to training from TEFL courses you've already taken and see if you're fully utilizing what you studied in your online TEFL certification lessons. Learn more about professional development for EFL teachers. Posting your teaching reflections in Facebook groups or on LinkedIn helps start conversations around best teaching practices. You'll be surprised to see how many teachers have had the same experiences as you or will have suggestions on how to teach in new ways. This not only allows you to offer and receive great feedback but also builds your network or community of teachers. See the ways that the IDELTOnline sets you up as a teacher. Although reflective teaching can take many forms, there are a few characteristics that appear throughout all types of reflective practices: Reflective teaching often happens in the classroom, and you can improve it if you practice reflective teaching. Its rare that you will reflect on your lessons during an exam, same way that reflective teaching challenges you. You'll need to critique yourself and your go-to lesson plans. Although many teachers write their reflections down, not all reflective teaching needs to be written. Many teachers instead choose to speak about their lessons with a colleague or mentor, or what Farrell calls a Critical Friend. Reflective teaching is collaborative, often involving a teacher or a colleague. Reflecting on and speaking about how your lessons go often leads to helpful insights. Teachers participate in professional training. Some ways of practicing reflective teaching include: Teaching journals: Write down classroom reflections in a journal. Classroom observations: Be observed either by a mentor or by recording the lesson and rewatching it yourself. Critical friends: Speak about your classes with a friend who can offer constructive criticism. Action research: Research something you struggle with, and maybe even take a course to improve specific teaching skills. Online groups: Teachers actively post online about reflective teaching in teacher development groups like the Bridge Teaching English Online Facebook Group. Posting online helps teachers get more recognition in the industry as well as organize their reflections. Blogs: Many teachers choose to share their reflections by creating their own EFL blogs. For example, Rachel Tsateri, an EL teacher and writer, published a reflective post on her teacher talking time (TTT) on her website, The TEFL Zone. Because Rachel read a lot of the literature around TTT, she was also engaging in action research, a rather academic but effective approach to reflective teaching. Teacher beliefs: Continue to develop and verbalize your own beliefs about what makes good teaching. Not sure where to start with your teaching beliefs? Learn about crafting an ESL philosophy of teaching statement. Try different methods to find the right one for you. Journaling is an easy first step, but if you're a more social teacher, you might prefer working with a critical friend or a teacher development group. Teaching, a lot like learning, is a journey. No one becomes a great teacher overnight, so dont be too hard on yourself when you dont. Instead, think critically about how you teach so you can continue to improve your students learning experience and grow your profession. Reflective Teaching invites instructors to examine their pedagogy, articulate reasons and strengths for their strategies, and identify areas for improvement. Some key takeaways on reflective teaching: Reflective teaching refers to the practice of evaluating ones own pedagogy, examining curricular choices, considering student feedback, and making revisions to improve student belonging and learning. Instructors can draw on students eyes, colleagues perceptions, personal experience, and theory and research as they reflect on their teaching and consider areas of improvement (Brookfield, 2017). Reflective practices include self-assessments such as reflection journals, teaching inventories, and video-recorded teaching practices, while external assessments include student evaluations and classroom observations. Instructors engage in reflective teaching when they dedicate time to evaluate their own teaching practice, examine their curricular choices, consider student feedback, and make revisions to improve student belonging and learning. This process requires information gathering, data interpretation, and planning for the future. Reflective teaching involves examining ones underlying beliefs about teaching and learning and ones alignment with actual classroom practice before, during, and after a course is taught. Instructors have reported that reflective practices improve their performance as teachers (Zulfikar and Mujiburrahman, 2018). Reflection can encourage instructors to adjust their teaching according to students needs and conceptual understanding (Olava Mesa, 2018). It also enables students to engage with instructors more effectively and provide feedback on pedagogical practices (Cruickshank et al., 1981). Some of the most exciting teaching moments have emerged from conversations with students, leading us to co-create something new together. Over the years, this has involved hands on Montessori lessons for college students, a rural education student panel, visits to schools, and new readings for the syllabus. Mira Debs, Ph.D., Lecturer in Sociology and Education Studies When reflecting on their teaching, instructors should think critically about their pedagogy and the ways they affect their students. Reflective Teaching Practices: Instructors can record their lessons with a video camera and review them. An video recording allows them to see their teaching from a different perspective. Reflective teaching may include self-assessment, classroom observations, consideration of student evaluations, or exploration of educational research. Because each semesters students and their needs are different, reflective teaching is a continual practice that supports effective and student-centered teaching. Many sources of feedback are available to instructors to inform their teaching, including: self-reflection, students mid-semester feedback, peer review of teaching, and end-of-term evaluations. Instructors should feel empowered to determine what methods fit the needs and context of their situation and to try out different approaches over time. Before collecting feedback, instructors should consider their goals, such as determining whether a particular strategy is working, checking in on the effectiveness of a particular discussion, or understanding if changes in the direction of a course is warranted. After determining the purpose of collecting feedback, instructors should consider what type(s) of feedback to collect and the timing for doing so. Reflection Journals: Instructors might consider capturing a few details of their teaching in a journal to create an ongoing narrative of their teaching across terms and years. Scheduling a dedicated time during the 5 or 30 minutes after class to write their entries will facilitate continual engagement and immediate recall. The instructor writes general thoughts about the days lesson and might reflect on the following questions: What went well today? What could I have done differently? How will I modify my instruction in the future? Teaching Inventories: A Number of inventories, like the Teaching Practices Inventory (Wieman and Gilbert, 2014), have been developed to help instructors assess and think more broadly about their teaching approaches. Inventories are typically designed to assess the extent to which particular pedagogies are employed (e.g. student- versus teacher-centered practices). A Self-Assessment tool on Equity-Minded Teaching: Use this tool to ensure your curriculum, instructional strategies and assessments align with principles to focus on from a teaching practices inventory. Classroom Observations: Any instructor at Yale may request an observation with feedback from a member of the Poovru Center staff. Observations are meant to be non-evaluative and promote reflection. They begin with a discussion in which the instructor describes course goals and format as well as any issues or teaching practices that are of primary concern. This initial discussion provides useful context for the observation and the post-observation conversation. Small Group Feedback Session: In a small group feedback session (SGFS), a trained observer from the Poovru Center visits class and conducts a group discussion alone with students during the last twenty minutes. The observer then discusses the feedback with the instructor and can provide a non-evaluative write-up of the feedback upon request. Basow, S.A., & Martin, J.L. (2012). Bias in student evaluations. In M.E. Kite (Ed.), Effective evaluation of teaching: A guide for faculty and administrators. Society for the Teaching of Psychology. Cruickshank, D. R., Kennedy, J. J., Williams, E. J., Holton, J., & Fay, D. E. (1981). Evaluation of reflective teaching outcomes. The journal of educational research, 75(1), 26-32. Brookfield, S. (2017). Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher, 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. Olava Mesa, M. L. (2018). Reflective teaching: An approach to enrich the English teaching professional practice. Oves, 25(2), 149-170. Reid, L. (2010). The Role of Perceived Race and Gender in the Evaluation of College Teaching on RateMyProfessors.com. Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 3 (3): 137-152. Zulfikar, T., & Mujiburrahman. (2018). Understanding own teaching: becoming reflective teachers through reflective journals. Reflective Practice, 19(1), 1-13. Educational researchers have long promoted the importance of reflecting on practice to support student learning and staff development. There are many different models of reflective practice. However, they all share the same basic aim: to get the best results from the learning, for both the teacher and students. Each model of reflection aims to unlock, make links between the doing and the thinking. Kolb's learning cycleDavid Kolb, educational researcher, developed a four-stage reflective model. Kolbs Learning Cycle (1994) highlights reflective practice as a tool to gain conclusions and ideas from an experience. The aim is to take the learning into new experiences, completing the cycle. Kolb's cycle follows four stages. First, practitioners have a concrete experience. This means experiencing something new for the first time in the classroom. This experience should be an active one, used to test out new ideas and teaching methods. This is followed by Observation of the concrete experience, then reflecting on the experience. Here practitioners should consider the strengths of the experience and areas of development. Practitioners need to form an understanding of what helped students learning and what hindered it. This should lead to the formation of abstract concepts. The practitioner needs to make sense of what has happened. They should do this through making links between what they have done, what they already know and what they need to learn. The practitioner should draw on ideas from research and textbooks to help support development and understanding. They could also draw on support from other colleagues and their previous knowledge. Practitioners should modify their ideas or devise new approaches, based on what they have learnt from their observations and wider research. 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practice more effectively. There are several strategies that can help teachers reflect in a meaningful and productive way:1. Keep a reflective journal or write a journal: This helps to keep a journal of teaching experiences, thoughts, and feelings. This allows the teacher to reflect on what went well, what challenges arose, and what changes they might make in the future. Writing things down also helps clarify thinking and can be a useful tool for tracking progress over time.2. Engage in peer observation: Another effective strategy is to observe other teachers and invite them to observe your practice. Peer observation allows teachers to gain insights into different teaching methods and to receive constructive feedback from colleagues. It's also an opportunity to reflect on how others handle classroom challenges and how those strategies might be adapted for your own teaching style.3. Ask reflective questions: To guide the reflection process, teachers can ask themselves specific questions after each lesson. For instance: What went well today? What didn't go as planned? How did the students respond? How can I improve for next time? These reflective questions help teachers dig deeper into their experiences and identify areas of improvement.4. Set goals for improvement: Reflection should not only involve looking back but also setting concrete goals for the future. After analyzing a lesson, teachers should think about what they want to change or enhance for the next time they teach the topic. These goals provide direction and help ensure that reflection leads to tangible improvements.Challenges to reflective practice While reflection is a powerful tool, there are challenges that teachers may face when trying to incorporate it into their routine:Lack of time: Teachers often have busy schedules, leaving little time for reflection. It can be difficult to find moments to pause and reflect on lessons, especially when there are multiple responsibilities demanding attention. However, setting aside even a few minutes each day can make a significant difference in fostering a reflective practice.Emotional bias: Sometimes, teachers may struggle to reflect objectively due to emotional attachment to a lesson or a student. This bias can make it hard to critically evaluate teaching practices. Teachers must work to approach reflection with an open mind, allowing themselves to see both successes and areas for growth.Fear of judgment: Some teachers may feel that reflection is a form of self-criticism, leading to discomfort or resistance. However, its important to remember that reflection is about improvement, not self-judgment. Creating a culture of openness and growth within the teaching community can help combat these fears.Conclusion: Reflection as a cornerstone of effective teaching Reflection is more than just a tool for self-assessment; it's a vital component of continuous professional development and effective teaching. By engaging in reflective practice, teachers can deepen their understanding of their own teaching methods, enhance their ability to meet students' needs, and create a dynamic, engaging learning environment. Whether done in action, on action, or for action, reflection is an ongoing journey of improvement that ensures teachers evolve and grow along with their students.What do you think? How has reflection helped you as a teacher? Have you noticed improvements in your practice after taking the time to reflect? Lets continue the conversation in the comments! Effective teachers continually reflect on and improve, the way they do things, but reflection is not a natural process for all teachers. Some teachers think that the toolkit is enough.Biggs (2003) eloquently highlights that a toolkit will not necessarily lead to excellence in teaching: Learning new techniques for teaching is like the fish that provides a meal for today; reflective practice is the net that provides the meal for the rest of one's life. Reflective practitioners take an inquiry stance in that they actively search for understanding, and are always open to further investigation.Timperley, Wiseman, and Fungreinforced the fact that teachers need to be constantly updating and improving their practice, andengaging in lifelong learning: It is important, therefore, for teachers to continually update and expand their professional knowledge base and to improve or revise their practices so as to meet the learning needs of their increasingly diverse students The ever-changing knowledge base in our society means that a teaching force that uses yesterday's professional knowledge to prepare today's students for tomorrow's society can no longer be tolerated. Additionally, within each mode of reflection, it's useful to reflect through various lenses. Brookfield suggests using the following 4 lenses for reflection. The autobiographical lens, or self-reflection, is the foundation of critical reflection. It requires teachers to stand back from an experience and view it more objectively. This lens allows teachers to become aware of aspects of their pedagogy that are effective or that may need adjustment or strengthening. This lens allows teachers to view their practice from students' perspectives and is often a consistently surprising element for teachers. Both self-reflection and engaging with student feedback may reveal aspects of teaching practice that need adjustment. While good teachers will engage with the first two lenses, excellent teachers may also look to peers for mentoring, advice and feedback. Engaging with colleagues and hearing their perspectives allows teachers to check, reframe, and broaden theories of practice, and to consider new ideas and approaches. It also makes teachers aware that many of the challenges in teaching are common, which can be profoundly reassuring. The fourth lens found in theoretical literature fosters critically reflective teaching. An engagement with both colleagues and scholarly literature supports teachers and also clarifies the contexts in which they teach. The theoretical literature extends understanding and appreciation of learning and teaching practices, and helps teachers to see the links between their personal development path and the broader educational context. In summary, reflective practice incorporates reflection in, on and for action as well as a reflection within Seeking information from various lenses serves to further strengthen reflective practice. Use the Reflective practice questions to support reflection in action. The questions use the 4 modes of reflection and a variety of lenses. Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership. (2014) Learning from practice - workbook series.Biggs, J. (2003) Teaching for Quality Learning at University: What the Student Does (2nd ed.) Berkshire: SRHE & Open University Press.NSW Education Standards Authority Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.Brookfield, S. 1995 Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.Dewey, J. 1938 Logic: The Theory of Inquiry New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.Killion, J. & Todnem, G (1991) ?A process of personal theory building? Educational Leadership, 48(6).Larrivee, B. (2006) An Educator's Guide to Teacher Reflection. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.Timperley, H. Wiseman, J. Fung, I. (2003) The Sustainability of Professional Development in Literacy, Part 2. Final report to the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education, Wellington New Zealand. In order to continue enjoying our site, we ask that you confirm your identity as a human. Thank you very much for your cooperation. As teachers, there is not a single school day that we leave our classrooms without reflecting on what we did well or not so well. We are always perseverating over why a student acted out or why an amazing lesson did not go over well. Without even realizing it, we are using reflective practice. These daily thoughts are rather informal, but if we act on what we think, these thoughts can be an excellent starting point on using reflective practice to improve ourselves and our teaching strategies.Reflective practice is and should be an ongoing exercise throughout our entire teaching career. This is not an exercise for preservice teachers or those early in their teaching. As educators and administrators, we need to be partaking in reflective practice all the time. Reflective practice is when we look at and analyze our class from an outside perspective. We can do this by looking at our students data. Additionally, teachers can journal after each lesson to help them pinpoint the positives and possibilities for change.What are the Benefits of Reflective Practice?There are many benefits from reflective practice. Teachers who regularly reflect on their teaching can help improve their own professional practices. They can help administrators decide what professional development would be most helpful at that time. Day-to-day responsibilities and actions are always changing in schools. When teachers participate in reflective practice, they are able to respond in a positive way to change.Reflective practice pushes teachers to update their lesson plans to reach the current needs of the students in front of them. Every year, students change. Therefore, they will have different needs than the students in the past year. Evaluating our teaching methods will help us keep all students engaged.How to Get Started with Reflective PracticeJournalingGetting started with reflective practice does not need to be overwhelming. As stated above, journaling at the end of the school day (or even between class periods) is an easy way to start. By writing down and taking the time to think about everything that happened during your teaching, you will be able to decide what areas need to change and what lessons definitely were successful.Peer ObservationAnother great way to begin is to ask a fellow teacher if they would like to do reflective practice with you. Conducting two-way peer observations will give each teacher another viewpoint on their lessons and an opportunity to learn new ideas from other teachers.Research New TheoriesReflecting on our lessons has to also include learning new theories. Even though we think that our lessons are going wonderfully, we want to continually learn the newest techniques. Researching these theories is the first step, but then you must take the time to put theories into your practice. Trying out new strategies and then of course reflecting on them will make you a progressive teacher with whom students love to engage.Curriculum DevelopmentCurriculum development is another way to participate in reflective practice. There are times when teachers complain about new curriculum being introduced into their areas. Therefore, reaching out to administrators ahead of time will help them throughout their teaching careers and the way that they will influence their students. Experiential learning, the process of learning by doing, is an effective way of improving your working methods in all roles, but particularly in the education sector. In teaching, this notion is often referred to as reflective practice. Being able to continually review past lessons and improve them is beneficial not only for your own professional growth but also for your students. In this article, we will outline what reflective practice is exactly, and why its so important in teaching. Furthermore, well provide concrete examples of reflective practice in teaching along with advice on how to incorporate this technique into your role. Reflective practice is where you aim to continually improve your teaching by repeatedly reflecting on your methods, in order to ensure youre providing the best learning experience for your students. Teaching is an extremely busy profession in which the work never really stops, and as such it can be easy to fall into the habit of repeating past lesson plans or resources time and time again to make life easier. Whilst this is completely understandable, its not the most effective way of teaching. Reflective practice ensures youre always evaluating past decisions in the classroom and making tweaks to improve your delivery and content, as well as tailoring your teaching to your current students as every cohort has different needs. Its an essential aspect of ongoing professional development and part of being an effective teacher. Learn more about effective teaching and its importance in our article on What is Effective Teaching? As weve touched upon, reflective practice is a crucial part of being an effective teacher and ensuring youre always developing professionally to benefit both yourself and your learners. This is just touching the surface of the importance of reflective practice, however. Below are a range of other benefits reflective practice could bring to your career and your students educational experience. Increases Your Confidence as a Teacher By reflecting on your teaching practices, you will gain a better understanding of how your students learn and what are the best ways to teach them. The more you hone your practices, the more skilled you will become at delivering lessons that suit your current cohort of learners, finding new solutions to previous problems, and becoming a more flexible teacher. Thus, you will naturally develop confidence and be assured that youre providing your students with the best education they could receive from you.To learn more about increasing your confidence when teaching, take a look at our article: How to Teach with Confidence. Encourages Innovation Reflective practice enables you to experiment with new ideas and find the methods that work best for your class. By varying your approaches to teaching, students will get a richer learning experience and thus will likely become more imaginative and adaptable thinkers themselves. Boosts Classroom Relationships In continuously reflecting on your teaching practices, you create an environment that centres on the learner and can thus provide better support for them. Focusing on your learners as individuals and identifying their various learning styles and needs will help them to feel better understood and cared for within the classroom, tightening the bond between teacher and student and increasing mutual respect. Furthermore, reflective practice helps to create more of a partnership between teachers and their colleagues and students as you work with them to hone your teaching methods. Enhances Problem Solving Teaching always comes with its challenges, so knowing how to overcome these and solve problems effectively is of the utmost importance. Reflective practice can help you to improve your skills in problem solving by learning from previous experiences, or those of a colleague. By drawing on your knowledge from past situations, you will become more resourceful in knowing how to devise the right strategies to overcome any issues effectively. Improves Student Performance Reflecting on your teaching practices is bound to improve the quality of your lessons over time and this will in turn impact the performance of your learners. Better teaching from you will result in them achieving higher academic results, benefiting both parties. Increases Engagement in the Classroom The range and variety of your teaching methods should increase with reflective practice as you experiment with which teaching methods are most effective and inspiring in your classroom. For students, this variation is likely to boost their engagement in your lessons as new ways of learning are often going to be considered more interesting and worthy of attention. Creates a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment Reflective teaching allows you to critically evaluate your classroom management and improve your handling of challenging behaviour. For example, you may assess your current rules and procedures to create a more positive and inclusive classroom environment overall with less disruptions. This will help to create a more productive and respectful learning experience for all students. Fosters a Growth Mindset As you reflect on your teaching practices and seek continual improvement, youre modelling and promoting a growth mindset for your students which will encourage them to seek their own development. Children learn by example, and thus witnessing you demonstrating reflective practice will motivate them to embrace effort, resilience and perseverance too. To break the idea of reflective practice down into more actionable compartments, there are four core forms of reflective practice that you can use in your teaching: This is the most common type of reflective practice, involving thinking about your own practices and what has worked well or what could be improved. What are your strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and what can you do to better support your current students? Ultimately, its your learners opinions of your teaching that matters most as theyre the ones at whom your lessons are aimed and for whom their quality matters most. Thus, an important aspect of reflective practice is to ask your students questions about your teaching to see what they believe does or doesnt work and what they like more or less of. Inviting, engaging with and acting upon the thoughts and opinions of your learners is known as encouraging pupil voice, and this can have a myriad of benefits for an educational establishment. Learn more about pupil voice and its benefits in our article on 5 Ways to Maximise Pupil Voice. One great thing about teaching is that you work as part of a team of educators, so you always have people to bounce ideas off of. You can use this to your advantage as part of reflective practice by asking your colleagues professional opinions of your teaching methods, and to compare methods and come up with the best learning solutions together. Perhaps create a feedback form that your colleagues can fill in to provide their opinions on your teaching and offer suggestions. This could be anonymous to promote complete honesty. You can find a free template to help gather such constructive criticism in our article on A Guide to 360 Degree Feedback. There are always new ideas and schools of thought being developed within the education sector and many of these are based around improving teaching practices. Engaging critically in some of these new theories could provide some inspiration and give you a new outlook on how to approach future lessons. By using a mixture of these four methods over time, youll achieve a broad and insightful view of your current teaching practises to help you reflect on these and move forward with implementing improvements. Being a reflective practitioner should be an ongoing goal rather than a one-time event. Thus, its wise to incorporate reflection into your everyday teaching practice so that it eventually becomes second nature. Here are some tips on how to get the most out of reflective practice and ensure youre continuously reaping its benefits. To effectively reflect on a lesson or classroom event, you need to ensure you can remember all the details of whats occurred without your judgement being clouded by your initial feelings towards it. For example, immediately after youve finished teaching you may have a gut reaction of joy or deflation depending on how you think it went. Its best to let these initial emotions pass before you reflect, so that you can think logically through the positives and negatives of the lesson and make an unbiased judgement. Having said that, you dont want to wait too long as you may begin to forget the details of what has occurred. Having the intention to reflect on your practices is not enough. Rather, you must ensure youre taking action to achieve an assessment of your methods. One way to hold yourself accountable is to incorporate reflective practice into your CPD hours and write down exactly how you intend to complete the activity. A Personal Development Plan (PDP) is a great way to break down your goals (e.g. reflective practice) into actionable steps with a deadline. You can find an example PDP plan for teachers, including an editable template in our article titled Professional Development Plan for Teachers. Sometimes it can be easy to make excuses for our decisions or behaviour in order to justify them to ourselves, however this will prevent you from effectively reflecting on your practice. Being honest with what your weaknesses are and what you should have done differently is a key aspect of reflective practice and this is what will allow you to identify and implement improvements that ultimately make you a better teacher. Its okay to make mistakes as long as you learn from them, which effective reflective practice will help you achieve. Having said this, make sure you acknowledge the positives in your teaching too and reflect on your strengths in addition to your weaknesses. Reflective practice, although its title may sound solitary, is a group activity. As mentioned, two of the four principle methods of reflection involve gathering the opinions of your students and colleagues. To do this, you must be able to communicate often with them and ensure this communication is constructive and productive. Only by achieving this will you learn what you need to know to implement improvements in your teaching methods. Learn more about how to improve your communication as a teacher in our article on Effective Communication in the Classroom: Skills for Teachers. Reflective practice is a vital part of the teaching profession, as it is key to developing your abilities and ensuring youre educating learners to the best of your abilities. There are four main methods of reflecting on your practice, and these should be incorporated into your role habitually to ensure youre able to make continuous progress rather than a one-time improvement. Becoming a reflective practitioner will bring numerous and significant benefits to both you and your students.

Why is reflection important in education. Why is it important to reflect on our teaching practices. Why is it important to reflect on teaching practices. Why should teachers reflect on their teaching. Why do teachers need to reflect. Why is it important to reflect on your teaching. Why should teachers reflect. Why reflect on learning.

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