

Reflective Practices in Introductory Courses at Furman University

Faculty Development Center

Professor: Lorraine DeJong

Course: EDU-120: Human Development

Description of assignment:

Lecture Reflections

Reflection is concerned with consciously looking at and thinking about our experiences, actions, feelings, and responses and then interpreting or analyzing them in order to learn from them. Students will complete *seven* 1-page typed reflection papers related to lecture topics and readings included in the course. Reflections are submitted as word document attachments through Moodle. Please be sure your name and topic for the reflection are on the attachment- see sample provided in this syllabus. Each reflection is worth **10 points** and provides for a lot of choice. Topics for lecture reflections are included with this syllabus. Grading is based on to what degree you answer the question asked and complete it by assigned due dates. I will also be looking for more than just a description of content from lectures, but your willingness to put forth your *feelings and beliefs* about the topic, to *connect* the topic to personal past experiences, and/or to apply concepts to your current observations at your fieldwork classroom. Although not required, free to attach any other additional resources you may find related to a topic you reflect on. Feedback on your reflections will be provided to you through Moodle.

Reflections may be submitted any time after the lecture topic is completed, however *students should plan to complete two reflections by the first exam (Feb 14), two more by the second exam (Mar 21), two more by Apr 16), and the last one by the final exam (Apr 27 or Apr 28).* At least **two** reflections, identified in red and with an * MUST relate to a topic on sustainability/natural environment and human development.

Lecture Reflections

Reflection Topics- 10 points each

Please note: Of the seven reflections due for the class- at least TWO must relate to an issue of sustainability which are designated by an **.

Theory

1. Reflect on the *Constance Kami* or *Alfie Kohn* reading. In what ways do you agree or disagree with these scientists? What connections can you make to the classroom you are in?
2. Reflect on favorite/worst teacher- Describe what you think made them the best/worst for you and relate to the various theories in human growth and development discussed in class and read in the text.

3. Reflect on how you think we can get more students to value sustainability and practice behaviors which support efforts at conservation. Explain which theories of human growth and development you think would be most helpful using the concepts related to the theories. **

Death and Dying

4. Reflect on any personal experiences you may have had with death. What did you learn? How did your teachers and/or schools address the situation? Do you think more or less should have been done? Why? What do they think is the teacher's role in dealing with death related issues? Should death education be part of the curriculum for K-12? In what ways do you agree or disagree? Why?
5. There are several variables that individuals and families consider when deciding about burial options including religion, culture, cost, environmental issues of sustainability, etc. What do you think will be the issues you consider most when making this decision. Could you see yourself ever choosing green options that may be different from your birth family? Why or why not? **

Prenatal Development

6. Reflect on the alternatives for coping with the problem of drug use during pregnancy identified in the reading packet- what options from the list provided in the course pack do you support or not support and why? Whose rights should dominate? Baby? Mother? Or Society?
7. Reflect on how far you think scientists and medical professionals should go in altering the genetic make-up of human beings. Consider eradication/correction of genetic diseases, gender selection, alteration of existing medical conditions, and physical trait selection.
8. What is the best way to make pregnant women aware of the potential environmental toxins of pregnancy that could influence their child's development during this critical stage of development? Does a woman have a right to sue companies who pollute the environment in her community if her newborn child is born with developmental challenges created from these toxins? **

Please complete two reflections sent through Moodle from 2 of the three topics (Choices 1-8)- theory, death and dying and prenatal by 5pm February 14.

Infant Development

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9. Reflect on your assessment of the classroom community for the class you are assisting. Consider what you think the teacher has done or not done to help foster positive *attachment* relations with students in the class using the findings from Mary Ainsworth's research. What does this teacher do well? What could be improved?
10. Reflect on the nine characteristics of your own *temperament* as described in the research by *Thomas and Chess*. What would you hope teachers would understand about you in relation to your own temperamental characteristics and temperamental group (easy, slow to warm up, difficult; mixed)?
11. Should American companies be promoting formula feeding for children in the United States and the developing world as opposed to breastfeeding? Why or why not? Reflect in relation to issues of sustainability here in the US and abroad? **
12. To what extent does John Bowlby's theory of attachment and Mary Ainsworth's research relate to the development of *attachment to the land* as described by Richard Louv in his book, *Last Child in the Woods*? Give examples from your own experiences. To what extent have you witnessed this attachment relationship first hand? **

Preschool Development

13. Reflect on the behavioral management system used by the teacher in the classroom you are in using research scientist's *Diane Baumrind's* discipline classifications. Is the plan effective? Why or why not? Does one parenting style more likely result in "successful" children? Why/why not?
14. According to research, all kinds of play is important for the healthy development of both young children and adults (*Sara Smilansky and Mildred Parten*). In what ways do you believe play (or lack of) has influenced your own development (In as many domains as relevant) in either a positive or negative way based on your experiences?
15. In the class video and in his book, *Last Child in the Woods*, *Richard Louv* directly links the absence of nature in the lives of today's wired generation to some of the most disturbing childhood trends including obesity, attention disorders, and depression. Reflect to what extent you think this is true and the school's responsibility to help turn this trend around.

Complete two reflections sent through Moodle- one from infant-toddler, and one from preschool early childhood (choices 9-15) by 5pm March 21.

School-Age Development

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16. Using *Stanley Coopersmith's* theoretical model and *Susan Harter's research*, reflect on what you see taking place in the classroom that appears to foster, exaggerate and/or hinder the development of student self-esteem. Discuss issues related to grades, retention, friendship, etc. Compare to what made you feel good about yourself when you were in school.
17. Reflect on the physical health and well-being of the students you are with. How does the teacher and school's behaviors toward good nutrition, exercise and healthy living compare with the research of *Julian Reed* and your own school experiences? Be specific of what you see and/or do not see in the school/classroom you are in.
18. Ask your teacher what curriculum content is presented to students at your school related to sustainability. Why is elementary school an important time for teaching this content? Whose responsibility is it during the elementary school years to teach about sustainability? Should all teachers teach aspects of sustainability or just selected teachers? Relate what your teacher says to any school experiences you had on this topic while in elementary school. **
19. According to *Erikson*, the school age years are a time for students to develop mastery and industry in content areas the culture values. After watching the video on Japanese elementary school, and from your observations in the field (if you are assisting in an elementary school) reflect on what you think each culture values. What do you like about what you are seeing in each elementary school in terms of child development? What do you not like? Why is it important to examine practices of schools within the US and internationally?

Adolescence

20. Puberty can be a stressful time for many teens. What aspects of puberty were especially difficult for you? What situations do you recall show that teachers do or do not have adequate knowledge and/or sensitivity for adolescent students when it comes to *puberty*? What should teachers of this age student try to remember given your experiences?
21. Reflect on your own progress towards *identity consolidation* as described by *James Marcia*. What domains are you still in moratorium in, which are you achieved, etc.? What college experiences do you believe have helped you move forward in any of the domains?
22. According to *Lawrence Kohlberg*, an individual may have reached formal operational thinking as per Piaget but may be at lower levels of moral development. Reflect on whether you believe this is true or not based on your own experiences.

23. According to *Piaget*, teens are in the formal operational stage of development. According to *Elkind*, they might also be experiencing the “personal fable”. Use these concepts to explain why some teens may be in support of efforts in high school to promote sustainability and why other teens may not. Were you a teen who cared about this issue or one who did not? How can teachers of adolescents use their knowledge of adolescent development to help make teenagers come to value sustainability more as they develop into adulthood? **

Complete two reflections - one from school age and one from adolescent (choices 16-23) and submit in class by 5pm April 16

Young Adulthood

24. Reflect on the *dating warning signs* discussed in class. Which ones do you think are most or least important and why? Any others you would think are important?
25. Reflect on your *communication style*, as described by *David Johnston* when engaged in conflict. How would you describe yourself according to his model? What do you believe has contributed to your style? Which style is most frustrating for you and which would you prefer others to have? Why?

Middle and Later Adulthood

26. Reflect on the following mid-life issues discussed in class in relation to your own experience- *menopause, dual career families, empty nest, midlife crisis, and sandwich generation*.
27. Middle aged and older adults may believe that sustainability is an important legacy to leave the next generation while other middle-aged adults may not. What factors of life during the middle age years can get in the way of a middle-aged adult living a life that supports sustainability? Why do you think your parents, professors and other adults in command positions of authority may choose not to support sustainability efforts? What can be done to change them? **

Please complete the last adulthood reflection (choices 24-27) by the date and time of your final exam. Please bring final reflection to final exam.