

PDIP 3100 Course Journal

Category Three

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Category 1- “learning from one’s experience involves not just reflection, but critical reflection.”

Objective: What have you learned from reflecting on this particular quote? What has caught your attention?

This quote helped me understand that learning involves a deeper connection with oneself. In order to learn, you must look past the actual experience and start uncovering the causes of your knowledge, assumptions and beliefs. This will allow us to discover new meanings, which can impact who we are.

Adults reflect on their own learning experiences to understand the what, why, and where’s. When students start reflecting critically, they begin to re-evaluate their lives deeper and figure out how to re-make them. This allows students to step back and ask themselves the insightful questions they never thought about asking. It makes them not only dig into the past and present, it importantly asks them to speculate about the future.

Reflective: What did you realize about teaching as a result of this quote?

Teachers must provide students a framework to become critical thinkers, before becoming critical reflectors. Students should know how to compare, contrast and analyze topics, before they begin critically reflecting on their own experiences. If students aren’t prepared to think “outside the box”, learning outcomes will be difficult to reach, and learners won’t see value in the learning experience.

This task may be difficult for instructors who don't critically reflect themselves. If a teacher doesn't understand the fundamentals, they may find it difficult to engage in deeper conversations with students, and help them understand the importance this process. To make critical reflection successful in the classroom, instructors (experienced or not), should design each session so students learn before, during and after each learning experience.

Interpretive: What was your Aha! Moment when you read this quote? In what way(s) did this quote change your mind about being an adult educator? What was one key insight that you now have as a result of this quote?

I felt my "Aha! Moment" once I read- three phases of critical reflection; Brookfield (1990). He described these as identifying the assumptions, assessing and scrutinizing the validity of these assumptions, and transforming these assumptions to become more inclusive and integrative. These phases provided me the steps to follow, and the depth of thinking required to critically reflect.

This quote demonstrates, the importance of being a good educator. It encourages me to help students reflect deeper, so they have a clearer understanding and purpose in the classroom. I believe my actions provide an opportunity, to engage and communicate with students, which makes education more rewarding and fun.

This quote also sums up important roles, for both the student and instructor when critical reflection is used. Students need to find opportunities to advance personal development, and Instructors need to be more involved in this process. When both parties work together, students will effectively learn, from reflecting on their experiences.

Decisional: How has this quote and the insight you have gained from reflecting upon it, influenced your notion of teaching or how you will teach in the future?

Critical reflection can become a difficult task for some instructors. Not all classes are the same, so obstacles will arise. e.g.; my students have low level English skills, learning technical programs. Having them critically reflect on their experiences would be a challenging task. Especially when they have a difficult time reading and writing Basic English words. In this circumstance, I would provide appropriate examples for the students to reflect on. I likely wouldn't ask them to write their reflections down, but to verbally discuss the situations ensuring key English words were understood.

I conclude that, it is important for students to critically reflect. It's a unique way for them to learn, as it enables knowledge from past, current and future experiences. I believe it's important for instructors, to experiment reflecting themselves, prior to adopting this technique in class. Having experience with this approach, will provide them the skills needed to answer questions with ease.

References

<http://opened.uoguelph.ca/pdf/Critical%20Reflection.pdf>