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Reflective School Library Practitioners: Use of Journaling to Strengthen Practice

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The article expands upon a 2019 International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions World Library and Information Congress Conference presentation in Athens, Greece, and reported conference proceedings (<<http://library.ifla.org/2531/1/234-burns-en.pdf>>).

Abstract

Reflection is a skill educators of school librarians hope to foster in their students. Widely used in teacher preparation (Hodgins 2014), reflective journaling is a pedagogical strategy that aligns with the text-based nature of library and information studies coursework, especially as more library schools move online (Kymes and Ray 2012). This study explores use of structured dialogic journaling as a pedagogical approach to inform and shape the reflective practice of pre-service school librarians. Journals were introduced in an early school library methods course and structured using Schon's Reflective Practitioner model (1987). Additional opportunities to engage with dialogic journals continued through the intern experience, with final entries included in the study made after one year of practice. Findings suggest journaling pedagogy impacts participants' perceptions of reflection in action, reflection on action, and reflection on reflection in action when developed as a structured exercise. Participants in this study benefitted from the use of journaling as a teaching tool in their library and information studies program when used to promote more-reflective practice. Implications suggest that journaling enables and encourages participants to critically reflect on practice when provided with a scaffolded experience in coursework.

Introduction

BACKGROUND

A degree in the information field is more-readily attainable than in the past, in part because of the availability of online library science programs and coursework (Kymes and Ray 2012).

Library and information science programs and, specifically, school library programs have revised courses to adapt to online instruction. However, incorporating innovative pedagogy into library programs can be difficult, particularly when teaching in an online format. Creative teaching methods are required to foster student self-efficacy in the reflective practices educators of school librarians hope students develop and then maintain in their daily practice after they graduate. Phillip DiSalvo has contended that, due to the individualized, text-based nature of online instruction, interactive pedagogical structures continue to remain elusive in library science education (2007). Online programs in higher education challenge academics to continuously seek new ways to meet the needs of students.

School librarianship students entering the field can benefit from a reflective approach to learning. Reflective journaling has been used in pre-service teacher preparation courses (Hodgins 2014) as one means to assist new or emerging teachers identify methods and strategies they hope to reinforce in practice and to further modify practices identified as less effective. Omayya al-Haasan, Ali al-Barakat, and Yazid al-Hassan's study found the practice of journal writing improved students' self-awareness and enhanced professional development. Further, beginning teachers who were reflective about their practice were more intentional about their teaching and, therefore, more effective (2012). But, being reflective does not necessarily come naturally or easily (Applebaum 2014). Debra Coulson and Marina Harvey have noted that students rarely know how to reflect, and simply assigning writing in a journal is not sufficient to support learning and growth through a written process (2012, 411). However, reflection can be strengthened when it is taught and fostered through a supported relationship with a knowledgeable faculty member or other mentor.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Scholars (Schon 1987; Kreber et al. 2005) have contended that reflecting on the process of professional practice enhances one's professional ability. The foundational skill of reflection (Feiman-Nemser 2001) prepares pre-service professionals for practice. When modelled and used as a pedagogical tool, reflection gains relevance and depth. Incorporating this practice into school librarianship courses provided a model of supported structure for the reflective approach that can then be used beyond coursework.

This study explores the use of dialogic journaling (described below) as a pedagogical tool in school library education to encourage reflective thinking in practitioners. The study chronicles the journey of five school library students through coursework and early field experiences into their first year of practice. The study was guided by the following questions:

- To what extent do school library students engage in critical reflection during dialogue journals in coursework?
- To what extent does participation in journaling in a school library program impact reflection in practice?

For the purpose of this study, a reflective journal is defined as a journal in which emerging school librarians intentionally and critically engage in reflections on their own learning and practice, dialogue about these reflections, and contemplate the connections between theory and practice. Journaling can be useful in helping to shape the professional identity of pre-service professionals but is most successful when used within the dialogue between student and

knowledgeable mentor. A dialogic journal strengthens this further with student reflection mirrored by an instructor entry.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM AND RELATED LITERATURE

Practical experience is expected in preparation programs for many service professions. During these experiences, students engage in apprentice-type activities (Grossman 2011). In these experiences best practice and ideals studied in coursework are integrated with what is observed in the field. Ever since John Dewey publicly and vigorously advocated for reflective thinking as an essential part of learning (1910), school library educators, particularly those who teach in an online setting, have encouraged students to engage in reflection to infuse theory and belief with their own practice and the practical observations they make (Grossman 2011). As reflection gained a stronghold in higher education, various models and means of documenting reflection became standard practice in coursework and included journals, discussion boards, blogging, and e-portfolios (Dyment and O’Connell 2014).

Studies show that unless instruction occurs on *how* reflection might be useful, student journals are “generally disappointing” (Dyment and O’Connell 2011, 95). Without guidance students describe observations without connecting the observations to their own professional growth or understanding. To be effective in reflection, students must do more than write about their experiences. Critics of journaling have stated that journaling is not properly introduced as a reflective technique (Spaulding and Wilson 2002). John D. Bain et al. have suggested that a mixture of teaching advice and instructor-developed writing prompts is one pedagogical method that assists learners in creating more-effective reflection (2002).

Educational theorist Paulo Friere challenged educators to examine the reciprocal relationship between teacher and student and student and teacher, using a collective reflection to discuss what is learned (2000). The early “Dear Diary” study conducted by Elizabeth Heller et al. employed this type of open dialogic journal among doctoral students as they embarked on their final stages of coursework and began professional positions in a higher education setting (2011). Those authors’ revisited article (Mackenzie 2013) shared further perspectives on the benefits of using journaling as a pedagogical tool and a teaching strategy. The participatory practice of shared open journaling facilitated common dialogue among peers. However, the lack of a knowledgeable mentor did not allow the “Dear Diary” study participants to gain insight into teaching beyond their limited, shared understanding.

Feedback and constructive guidance are benefits of a shared student-teacher journal. Personal interactions have established positive relationships (Lauterbach and Hintz 2005; Spaulding and Wilson 2002). This type of success in higher education was evident when a focused model of reflection was adopted (Etscheidt, Curran, and Sawyer 2012). Donald Schon’s Reflective Practitioner model is one such model (1987). The new AASL *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries* build on Schon’s model and encourage reflection as best practice for school librarians at any stage of their career (2018).

REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER MODEL

Schon's *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (1987) described multiple stages of reflection that help practitioners to build understanding in their field. Progressing through three stages, the practitioner gains deeper understanding and alignment of theory and practice. *Reflecting in Action* happens at one moment in time. At this stage, an observer calls upon prior knowledge, skill, and intuition to react to an observed problem of practice. This progresses to the next state, *Reflecting on Action*. Here the practitioner provides a systemic review of an experience, noting areas of perceived strength and weaknesses. This takes place shortly after a situation occurs. In the final stage, *Reflection on Reflection in Action*, the reflection can occur later. It is in this stage that the practitioner may include other sources of information and may augment practical knowledge and theory to begin to build a greater understanding of and meaning to practice. In this stage the practitioner engages in personal growth.

Using the reflective practitioner model (Schon 1987) in dialogic journaling, the pre-service professional is able to explore beliefs by examining personal observations and practices and engaging in an open exchange of ideas and dialogue with a mentor. This process allows for more development of the attitudes, skills, and values of the emerging information professional. The journal template framed using this model and provided to students who participated in this study is in the appendix.

Methodology and Design

PARTICIPANTS AND DATA COLLECTION

This research study explores the use of dialogic reflective journaling in an online asynchronous school library education program to engage pre-service school library candidates in reflective practice. Students in the program were introduced to the practice of journaling in an early course in school library methods. In that course, they were asked to observe experienced school librarians in the field and reflect on those observations in a shared student-faculty journal. The students were then asked to return to the exercise of journaling when completing a faculty-supervised practical experience. In this experience they worked as school library interns. During the internship, each student reflected on their own practice in a journal the student shared with a faculty member. Coursework-specific dialogic journaling concluded at the end of the semester with the conclusion of support for the internship.

A final point of data collection was participant reflection gathered from a follow-up request to provide reflective feedback. This request was distributed to participants after their first year in practice. The final response mirrored the journal format. Responses were intended to capture participants' reflective practices through six months of independent practice as a school librarian and interrogate the perceived benefits and challenges of reflecting on practice as new practitioners.

Eight pre-service school librarians completed the internship and met the criteria of having participated in the course that introduced journaling as a reflective tool for inclusion in this study, and five responded to the final request for participation. As the source of data for this study, these five participants also provided access to journal entries from their observations of in-service school librarians early in their studies toward accreditation as school librarians and from

their later internships. Collection of three data sources for each participant, collected throughout the progression of learning experiences, established a valid set of data. To maintain confidentiality, all participants have been assigned a pseudonym.

The journals were focused private conversations between the pre-service school librarian and the university faculty member. Topics were semi-structured; several faculty-prepared prompts were provided at the beginning of the Methods course to encourage thoughtful inquiry on practice. The document containing these prompts (shown in the appendix) provided a teaching resource to frame expectations for the journal entries as well as structure for thinking through reflective experiences. Participants were then encouraged to reflect and respond to issues of concern or observation. All journal entries were analyzed to explore a scaffolded model of journaling dialogue infused in school library coursework.

ANALYSIS

Analysis included a combination of coding methods in an effort to develop conceptual themes. This process allowed me, the course instructor and researcher, to understand the participants' past and present experiences and perceptions with reflective journals (Creswell 2012). The data was first analyzed and coded to include *a priori* codes grounded in the reflective practitioner literature (Schon 1987): *Reflection in action*, *Reflection on action*, *Reflection on reflection in action*.

A second round of inductive coding then took place to identify themes within the content of the journal entries. This second round of coding was conducted using a constructivist grounded theory method of analysis (Charmaz and Belgrave 2012, 356). Statements in the participant journals were used as units of analysis. All statements in the journal were coded as I developed themes and remained aware of potential new themes. Themes explored practice as observed, questioned theory/practice learned in coursework, and provided opportunities to consider strengths and weaknesses of practice and seek confirmation from faculty. Once coded, the entries were organized within the framework and categorized to explore thematic interrogation of participant responses as emerging school library professionals (Patton 2002). A second researcher, a fellow pre-service school library educator, reviewed 20 percent of the data for consensus and validity. With an agreed-upon set of codes, the second researcher and I conducted a final focused coding session to collapse codes and establish final themes (see table 1) (Charmaz and Belgrave 2012, 356). These were applied simultaneously to the *a priori* reflective practitioner schema as discussed in the findings.

Findings

INTRODUCTION

Students enrolled in the school library methods course, designed to enhance pedagogy and practice, were introduced to reciprocal dialogic journaling. Students used prompts to mirror Schon's Reflective Practitioner Framework (1987) to structure journal entries. The course instructor wrote mirrored entries in response to address specific student concerns. Findings are discussed using the thematic codes in table 1, aligned to the reflective practitioner structure.

However, participants in this study were novice school librarians and reflection was emerging. Therefore, the themes reflect this emerging status and are cast as *Thinking in Action*, *Thinking on Action*, and *Thinking on Reflection in Action*.

Table 1. Themes evident in the data.

Structural Framework	Themed Codes
Reflective Observation <i>Reflection in Action</i>	best practice questioning practice ineffective practices
Reflective Engagement <i>Reflection on Action</i>	strength of practice challenge to theory or belief questioning/seeking confirmation
Reflective Practice <i>Reflection on Reflection in Action</i>	reflective habits reflective communication barriers to reflection

JOURNALING ON THE PRACTICE OF OTHERS: THINKING IN ACTION

The most-basic reflection conducted by the participants was a journal response to an observation of another practitioner. This experience as part of their school library methods course helped the pre-service practitioners make sense of both what the job was and what it might be like as they engage in the role of school librarian. These observation reflections also allowed their instructor to guide course content based on questions students posed during the journal dialogue.

Best practice was readily identified through observation, and participants were quick to mention the disconnect between what they thought—or had been taught—should happen and what *was* happening in practice.

I did not see full collaboration of the classroom teacher. She was present in the room and the students did ask her questions, but the lesson seemed more librarian-taught than a collaboration between the two. (Rebecca, October 7, 2017)

These early reflections provided opportunities for a participant to reflect on what might be a solution. These reflections also provided good opportunities for the instructor to engage the student in dialogue about the disconnect that Chris Argyris and Donald Schon described as Theories in Use vs. Espoused Theories (1974). Here, too, the educator was able to probe so that the learner would think about whether the lesson embedded content and information instruction or if the lesson was simply a one-shot isolated skills lesson. This faculty-student interaction provided an effective means of helping learners define collaboration for themselves and recognize common misconceptions.

Another student also used this type of evaluative reflection while asking questions for reflection and guidance.

The school librarian read Beverly Cleary since she loved it as a kid. They are well-written, but I am wondering if students would connect with something more contemporary and faster paced. Students were respectful but I wondered how actively engaged they were. Question: How will I choose my read-alouds and how can they connect with what students are learning in class? (Tim, October 10, 2017)

This type of observation and reflection on practice allowed for dialogue with the faculty mentor about best practice. Using journal observations to guide future instruction, the faculty member later embedded a learning module about story time that included a selection of materials.

Another of Rebecca's reflections demonstrated how a participant may observe effective activity, but also began to incorporate what the pre-service school librarians were learning about best practice:

The majority of the students were engaged, although one group participated more in the conversation. If the librarian included some table talk or a turn and talk, it may have encouraged the quieter students to participate more in the discussions. (November 13, 2017)

Likewise, through their observations the participants were able to identify ineffective practices or elements of lessons they did not want to emulate in practice. Nora observed a librarian who lacked student engagement in many of her lessons and did not display a classroom management system that was conducive to a positive atmosphere:

I hope that when I become a librarian I will use each lesson I teach as an opportunity for student learning-involving questioning and inquiry. These lessons could have easily been done in the classroom. I found myself thinking, 'What makes it a good lesson for the library?' I also think that an important classroom management tool is setting the expectation each time, what I expect the class to do when I am reading a story. I hope that I will always try to be positive with my redirections. (Nora, October 24, 2017)

Each of these observed reflections occurred as part of the guided template, providing a structure to assist participants in the types of observations they should be making about teaching and learning, rather than a superficial sweep of the learning environment. Further, as a pedagogical tool used for instruction on teaching strategies, the journal helped the participants exchange ideas with the course instructor as the ideas were authentically viewed. Providing a safe space to question, wonder, and compare ideas of learned theory alongside observed practice provided a third space for discussion unique to each individual's observations.

The reflection itself was important. However, learning to think beyond just observation in a more-critical way was the key goal of the instructor who assigned the journals. This effort to promote reflective practice frequently included further direction or questioning by the instructor in written response to a journal entry. For example, after Rebecca wrote a lengthy description on behaviors in the learning environment, an instructor comment included:

One thing I notice right away in your reflection is the attention to procedure in the library you observed. I wonder what your thoughts are on these procedures. It sounds as if the learners were on task and respectful. Can this be attributed to an emphasis on procedure or do you think there is another reason--such as presence of a school-wide behavior plan?" (October, 2017)

This type of further probing established the journals as an opportunity for formative feedback and a teaching tool. This experience prepared students for a critical review of their own practice.

JOURNALING ON MY OWN WORK: THINKING ON ACTION

The initial phase of reflection on action involves infusing personal beliefs and values into a professional identity, resulting in developing a deliberate code of conduct. Journaling includes examining personal practice and aligning it to educational theory and instructional best practice. The reflective experience helps participants engage in the role of school librarian while providing a means to deconstruct the activities after action.

During their internships the participants reflected on their teaching almost immediately after their lessons, helping them examine how a lesson went and what they may revise or change for next time. The reflection also allowed the participants a time to celebrate a job perceived as well done. Common phrases in journal entries included “the most challenging part,” “what I would change if I taught this lesson again,” “one thing I would do differently,” and “overall it was a great lesson.” Most self-suggested changes were slight revisions to academic tasks. An example of this type of reflection can be seen when Beth stated at the conclusion:

If I was going to teach this lesson again, I would develop some type of word bank. I did not originally have a word bank because the teacher said that she thought her kids could spell words. Overall, it was a great lesson and the students walked away very excited about completing a “Big Kid” task. (January 7, 2018)

As a pedagogy tool used for instruction, the journal helped the participants form ideas about the practice of school librarianship and provided a unique opportunity for the university faculty instructor to “see” the thoughts of the participants and respond to their individual concerns.

When the faculty instructor probed further ways to model good practice Nora noted:

I should have used a projector and computer to navigate through the information even though there is no SMART board in the library. I just didn’t even think about this until you asked it and then it seemed so obvious. (November 15, 2017)

Each participant encountered unique challenges as they began their teaching journey. For example, for Beth pacing and working through the timing of her lessons continued to be a consideration on which she commented in her journal. A short faculty note in the journal suggested breaking some content into several different lessons. Beth acted on the suggestion. Her collaborating teacher at the school where Beth was interning noticed and commented on improved learning outcomes that resulted. This adjustment better prepared Beth for independent practice. The journals provided a communication method for participants to share their insights on links between coursework and practice, and to get feedback from the faculty mentor.

IMPACT ON PRACTICE: THINKING ON REFLECTION IN PRACTICE

Once moving into independent practice at school libraries of their own, reflection on practice provided an opportunity to continue the reflection that was introduced in the library program and infuse reflection into daily activities and habits. Participant responses demonstrated reflective practice at the end of their first year in their position as a school librarian.

The participants *did* infuse a reflective approach into their daily routines. For example, Rebecca described:

As a practitioner I reflect constantly on my instruction and conversations. Sometimes it's immediate and in the midst of instruction, as I see students needing more help than expected and sometimes it's after a lesson, in preparation for the next day as I see a class once a week. (April 2019)

She expressed a favorable view of reflection and the benefit of being a reflective practitioner. She also expressed her intention to continue reflection in the development of her teaching and instruction as she progresses into her second year.

Nora engaged in a more-systematic type of reflection. She described:

As a first-year librarian, all of my lessons were brand new. As I planned, I post-reflect on what part of my lessons were going well, what parts needed strengthening, and I looked for patterns in student engagement. I tried to push myself to explore ways to incorporate other skills that are harder for me to include. I also reflected on whole-school programs that I oversee. Part of that involves problem-solving the scheduling difficulties, teacher participation, and my own advocacy and promotion of events. (April 2019)

REFLECTIVE DIALOGUE

Sharing in the reflective process with a critical friend, mentor, or teaching peer was one lasting component each participant carried from the use of journaling as a pedagogical component in coursework. Shelly noted continued use of a critical peer for reflection in practice.

After teaching I reflect on my practice with my mentor, my literacy team, and sometimes administration. I have seen improvements this year because of these conversations. We discuss what is working and not working and also exchange ideas. I am looking forward to the changes that will take place next year as I put things in place. (April 2019)

Rebecca also embraced the use of critical friends:

In between classes, during lunch or during my planning period. I reflect with my Resource Team for input and feedback to help me improve my instruction and behavior management as they see the same students. (April 2019)

Likewise, Tim established a weekly reflective communication with a mentor school librarian throughout his first year in practice. He described:

A weekly check in with a library mentor has helped me to include reflection in my daily practice. Throughout the week, I keep track of things I have done and problems I have encountered. I usually have had time to work out possible solutions and can share them for feedback from the mentor. Our conversations help me work things out and see things I might have missed. (April 2019)

Beth engages with other school librarians in her large county through an online support group. This extended network provides a place to share what has gone well in her own library but also to “talk out” ideas and get inspiration on things she may not have thought to try. In this way, Beth begins to reflect beyond her own knowledge of practice.

For all participants, continued dialogue with another person has made a critical difference in reflecting on reflecting in practice, despite barriers present in each situation.

PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO REFLECTION ON PRACTICE

All participants noted that a common and frequent barrier to reflection is time. The time in a school day and the time with students are limited. As a result, many new school library practitioners have little opportunity for deep reflection on their practice. Rebecca described a fixed schedule:

After class there is only a five-minute transition, and I have to start preparing for the next class, or I am still waiting for the present class to leave, so that in-between time becomes nonexistent. (April 2019)

Nora stated that her busy schedule has prevented her intentional engagement with reflection on practice, particularly involving others to share in the process with her. She struggles to include others as regularly as she would have hoped. “Reflection is best practice for improving teaching,” she said, and while she does not want to make too many demands on another teacher’s time, she wished for and would value more opportunities to reflect alongside teaching peers to assess her lessons in the context of supporting students’ learning.

Another barrier described by the participants included the difficulty of establishing a process for reflection. The added commitment of developing a structure for reflection in addition to the many tasks and responsibilities that come with assuming a new library position seemed daunting. Both Beth and Rebecca embraced the implementation of structure. Beth hoped to create a more-formal, scheduled time to reflect, dedicating a few minutes at the end of the day to make notes. To this end she has begun to use planbook.com and said:

This [tool] will assist and make my reflections more available as I pull up lessons in the future to refresh on what worked well/didn’t. (April 2019)

Rebecca also stated plans for sustaining her reflective practice:

I plan to design/create a planner to help manage my time and lessons better next year. I want to include this with my reflections so I can jot down what activities went well, what was completed, and have a running document of instructional tools that I can try for the next class. (April 2019)

Conclusions and Implications

The National Association for the Education of Young Children supports reflection as a positive professional skill (2011). Findings of this study help situate journaling as a pedagogical tool used within the context of school library education to promote reflective practice. This study explored the extent school librarians engage in critical reflection in coursework when using a dialogue journal. While some debate the effectiveness of the journaling experience to promote deeper, more-sustained reflective practices (Dyment and O’Connell 2011), findings in this study demonstrated that when introduced in coursework and conducted with reciprocal feedback, deeper reflective practice is developed. The participants identified observed behaviors in library lessons that engaged students. Questions brought back to their mentor further contextualized beliefs and understanding about best practice.

Journaling presents a virtual mentorship structure for online coursework. The dialogue style of the journals can be beneficial in encouraging pre-service professionals to adopt a reflective

practice. Further, dialogic journaling provides a space and place for instructors to interact with the students, providing opportunity to respond to individual concerns. The journals in this study provided a teaching tool and an opportunity to guide course conversations and instruction. In this way, the educator of pre-service school librarians is able to refine content and address individual concerns or, if needed, address common concerns in a more-comprehensive manner if multiple students express similar wonderings or questions. As a teaching strategy, journals show the instructor of a course what issues are most relevant to a given population.

The study further explored the extent participation in journaling in school library coursework impacts reflection in practice. As supported by Lauren Applebaum, introduction and instruction to journaling affects the attitude students may have toward reflection in practice (2014). New library professionals must be prepared for all the roles and responsibilities of the job. Therefore, they need to have the skills and a mechanism for reflection on their own beliefs and practices. The study participants did not naturally journal or reflect on their practical experiences. Early entries had fewer critical components. Reflection grew over time as it was modelled and reinforced. By the time they made their final entries, participants expressed a positive attitude toward reflection. Even those who identify barriers to reflection actively propose solutions to mitigate the identified obstacles and to include additional opportunity for reflection. Reflection is maintained as a behavior in practice.

Early journaling activities can be a bridge between the theory of coursework and practice in the field. As a means of personal and professional identity development during internships, asking student participants to interrogate their own practice can help them explore the questions “Who am I as an information professional?” and “How is my practice emerging and growing?” This *congruence*, as Argyris and Schon refer to the blending of practitioners’ believed theory and that which they put in practice (1974, 23), allows school library professionals to examine their practice as it aligns with their beliefs. Thus, the journaling activities achieved the goal of self-improvement in practice, as perceived by the participants, when used as one strategy to aid in connecting theories about learning to their present experiences.

Participants in this limited study critically engaged in reflective journaling as it was introduced and practiced in their pre-service coursework. Reflective practices were sustained through intentional and continued examination of practice, as well as the inclusion of others in the reflection cycle. This sustained adoption of reflective practices is due in part to the reciprocal nature of the reflective process used in coursework. Similar to Michelle Reale’s practical guide to mitigating challenges to reflection in practice for academic librarians (2017), lessons learned through these lived experiences in the school library assist in establishing a teaching tool for school library educators seeking to guide reflections that include a critical reflection process, identification of strong practice, and dissection of personal practice. To provide purposeful structure to practitioners seeking solutions to mitigate the time constraints on effective reflection in practice, future explorations should include additional attention to strategies that embed not just reflection but journaling into practice of in-service school librarians.

Educators in library studies programs can adopt a supportive, instructional environment for reflection in an effort to produce more-reflective critical thinkers who interrogate and make sense of their practice. The results of this study offer a scaffolded example that can be used by other instructors of pre-service school librarians and other educators who want to integrate reflective practices into coursework.

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Appendix

A process that helps teachers think about what happened, why it happened, and what else could have been done to reach their goal is reflective journaling. Reflection is what allows us to learn from our experiences. It is an assessment of where we have been and where we want to go next. You will reflect on the teaching and learning experience in the school library.

Description: What? (Reporting what happened, objectively). Without judgment or interpretation, briefly describe the presentation or method used with the class.

Guiding questions might include:

- What topic was presented?
- What did you observe?
- What types of teaching and learning strategies were used that we have reviewed in coursework?
- Did anything of significance happen? If so, describe.

Description with some reflection: So what? (Interpretation: What did you learn?) After objectively discussing the lesson, discuss your feelings, ideas, and analyze the observation.

- Was the lesson consistent with your beliefs or prior experiences? Why or why not?
- What did you experience that concerns you or with which you disagree?
- What surprised you during the learning experience?
- What was the engagement of the students?
- Do you think the lesson effectively impacted student learning? How are you measuring this?
- How was the experience different from what you might expect in a learning environment?
- Were all learners included?

Reflection Now What? (How will you think or act in the future as a result of this experience?) This is where you plan for your own teaching and learning growth. What are your primary take-aways from the observation? How does your reaction agree or disagree with ideas we have engaged with in coursework?

- What were my feelings during the learning experience? And why did I feel that way?
- What were my thoughts during the experience? And why did I think that way?
- What do you think was strength of the lesson? What might you have done differently if you were the librarian?

- What learning occurred for you in this experience?
- How can you apply this learning as you think about your teaching?
- What am I learning about myself as a learner and/or prospective teacher as a result of this observation and reflection?
- About what would you like to learn more, related to this observation?

*** You don't need to answer every question. These are just prompts to guide you 😊**

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