

## ***Description Quest Reflections***

For general information on how to write a reflection paper, I can say these things.

### **Help on Writing Reflection Papers**

**There are three sections to this help page:**

1. What is a reflection paper?
2. How do I write an effective reflection paper?
3. Five steps for writing an effective reflection paper

#### **What is a reflection paper?**

Reflection papers are designed to reinforce what has been learned through lectures, discussions, and activities presented in class and in the readings. Most reflection papers are short. In addition, they are about your thoughts and how those thoughts are connected to the concepts introduced in the class.

#### **How do I write an effective reflection paper?**

Remember that the rules of writing apply to papers about your personal reflections. Although you are writing from your perspective, this does not allow you to use a free form of writing. Here are five steps to follow:

#### **Five Steps for Writing Effective Reflection Papers**

- 1. Focus your thoughts**

Before writing a reflection paper, the writer needs to stop and decide what it is that he or she going to write about. By establishing a theme, the writer will be able to write in a clear and concise manner.

- 2. Be organized**

Being organized will also allow the writer to write in a clear, concise, and cogent manner. Make a point. State what you have established as your theme and the pertinent information that surrounds the theme. Divide your paper into paragraphs. Give each major point its own space so that the reader will be able to understand and conceptualize the different components of your theme. Use topic sentences in paragraphs. These sentences should correspond with your major points and draw the attention of the reader.

A reflection paper is not a random free-flow of ideas. It needs to grab the interest of the reader and present ideas in a clear, concise, and cogent manner.

- 3. Develop observations and thoughts**

Observations and thoughts are an essential component of a reflection paper;

however, in order for these components to be properly conveyed by the writer, they must be developed. Identify specific aspects or components of the situation that has been observed. Once identified, state these specific aspects clearly for your reader.

**4. Review your work at the sentence level**

Use good sentence structure. Remember the Mnemonic Device K.I.S.S (Keep It Simple Silly); i.e., do not pack your sentences full of ideas, keep them focused. Avoid sentence fragments. Write complete sentences that have a subject and verb. Avoid fused sentences, that is, two sentences that have been fused together into one sentence.

Choose language that expresses your meaning. Again, remember K.I.S.S. Simplicity brings clarity. The writer does not need to use language that does not fit within the setting.

**5. Remember these tips**

Relate ideas and link the information together from the writer's personal perspective. Relate relevant information from classroom learning to the experience. Use key phrases, such as "for example," "as a result of," "another idea that supports my view is," "an opposite view is," and "a different perspective is," are all good transitional phrases that signal the introduction of specifics as well as shifts in the argument.

Adapted from:

<http://www.lynchburg.edu/x2344.xml#REFLECTION%20PAPERS>