Critical Reflective Practice in the context of GC/ESD

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Reflective Practice is widely considered an important activity for professional development and featured as a key experience of teachers during the World Class Teaching project.

Some key features of reflection:

• Reflection results in learning-through changing ideas and your understanding of the situation
• Reflection is an active process of learning and is more than thinking or thoughtful action
• Reflection involves problematizing teaching by recognising that practice is not without dilemmas and issues
• Reflection is not a linear process—but a cyclical one where reflection leads to the development of new ideas which are then used to plan the next stages of learning
• Reflection encourages looking at ideas from different perspectives, which helps you to understand the issue and scrutinise your own values, assumptions and perspective
According to Brookfield the goal of the critically reflective teacher is to: “garner an increased awareness of his or her teaching from as many different vantage points as possible”.

He proposes four lenses that can be engaged by teachers in a process of critical reflection which correlate to processes of:

- self-reflection,
- student feedback,
- peer assessment, and
- engagements with scholarly literature.

This process of professional development, was supported by pedagogical tools, in the form of:

**Reflection Tools**
Reflection Tools
were linked to specific topics through Global Learning Big Ideas and the Learning Objectives

‘Global Learning Big Ideas’
Refugees & Migration

• Conflicts within countries are the biggest cause of people becoming refugees
• Resolving conflicts is the key way to reduce the number of refugees
• Understanding terms- refugee, asylum seeker, migrant refugees live in precarious situations often without their basic needs
• Media portrayal of asylum seekers and refugees may be inaccurate or biased
• Misconceptions about them are common
• Refugees have made and make important contributions to host countries
• MOST refugees are in countries of the global south

‘Learning outcomes’
(for an Art and Design project)

Having completed research on Migration, students will have:

• Decided what message they want to express through their art work and
• Produced an installation or piece of graphic art
Case Study: Dealing with Controversial Issues

Topic: Migration

x12 Secondary Teachers different subjects- school 1
x135 Teachers – school 2
Negative Thought Shower:
How not to achieve a successful and harmonious community
Image Theatre

• One of the techniques of exploration of a specific subject created by Augusto Boal. We use it to show transition.

• **Step 1.** In a small group make a sculpture of a situation that is now or of a problem you wish to solve. The rules are as following:
  
  • You use only your bodies
  • Everybody is a part of the sculpture
  • You don’t talk – sculptures don’t talk
  • You don’t move – it’s a still sculpture
  • Don’t think a lot. Make it as quickly as possible!

• **Step 2.** Now in the same group make another sculpture of a situation you desire or of a solution of the problem. The same rules apply.

• **Step 3.** Next the group goes back to the first situation and tries to reach the second situation in three steps. Each step is another stage in the way to finding the solution. Each step means that the members of the group move and try to form another sculpture which signifies the process of transition. When the new sculpture is created give the group a moment to see other people and to feel a bit the new position.

• **Step 4.** In the end ask people how they felt during each stage of the exercise. You can ask how their emotions and thoughts can be translated into solutions/views of the problem in the real life and what they’ve learned from this experience.
Community Cohesion works best if:
- different groups do their own thing - there's less conflict
- all groups give up something to make it work
- national government sets out the rules
- we all agree to disagree
- all the different communities agree on the core values
- local government takes charge of making it happen
- difference is not seen as 'troubling' conflict
- it's a 'bottom-up' rather than 'top-down' approach
- it starts with young people
Activities used with teachers & their students

- Reflection Tools – Refugees and Community Cohesion
- Murder Mystery: Unknown Man found dead near hostel (Positively Global, Leeds DEC)
- What makes a good community? (RISC, How do we know it’s working?)
- Media Detectives (Critical Literacy approach)
- Values and Human Rights (Prioritisation)
Critical Reflective Practice

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<th>A. self-reflection,</th>
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<td>B. student feedback,</td>
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<td>C. peer assessment/peer-to-peer reflection, and</td>
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<td>D. engagements with scholarly literature.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a) I do this usually on my way to and from school</td>
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<td>b) I would like to do more with this- it’s very valuable, but usually specifically focussed on eg. An exam requirement</td>
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<td>c) There is rarely ever any time for this (other than when Ofsted are coming)</td>
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<td>d) No time</td>
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What did we value?
What did we measure?

Some teacher comments:

“We valued the space to reflect on/examine ‘Big Ideas’ with other colleagues”

“Having the Reflection Tools as a way to approach ‘Learning Outcomes’ and our own practice”

“Using the Reflection Tools” as base- and end-line questionnaires with the students”

“Thinking more deeply about ‘what the learning intentions/objectives’ are in topics and looking more closely at learning outcomes”

“Developing critical thinking skills with the students”

“the unanticipated learning outcomes!”

Some teacher comments:

“we measured changes in students’ knowledge and understanding of complex issues” eg. The Trans-Atlantic African Enslavement Trade through History

“we tried to measure/or at least explore, changes in attitudes towards certain topics” eg. Migration through RE/Citizenship/Geography/Art & Design