

UBC Community Field Experiences June 2019 | Weekly Reflection Assignment for Course EDUC 430

Designed by Blake Smith (FA) *Note this is Version2, intended for International & Elementary.*

Dear amazing teachers,

Being a reflective teacher is incredibly important. It informs how we grow and acknowledge that growth over time in our evolving careers. Actively putting those reflections into practice is key as well as revisiting them over time. We must be willing to challenge even our own assumptions, perspectives, and habits. Reflecting is a way of teaching ourselves to learn. This involves thoughtful observation, writing, and emotional investment beyond the lesson plan: it's the bigger picture.

Submission Expectations

- Please proofread then submit *ONE SINGLE EVOLVING WORD DOCUMENT* in English for these reflections, so that by the end they are all together in one place. Done this way, you will be able to easily reference those reflections for summer courses and/or inquiry projects, and it will read like a CFE journal.
- Length may vary. These can each be between 300-500 words but I find closer to 500-1000 gives more room for something to say. Submit with: your name, CFE location & supervisor(s), date, the age groups & subject areas being taught, **and a thoughtful title**. Include your name & the date in the DOCUMENT TITLE.
- They are only read between you (TC) and I (your assigned FA); however, they sometimes function well as a talking point in weekly debrief discussions or week 3 closure meetings. Partners need our feedback too! 😊
- ***For international teachers**, we have some flexibility here as pre-discussed, depending on your site & access to internet. I highly encourage visual journals as they don't require technology and inspire writing pen to paper and artifact collection. TCs doing visual journals, please contact me for submission details. There are several good visual journaling links on **my teaching blog**, under 'teaching resources → visual journals' *Awakening the Spirit*: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/blakesmi/>
- ****If you are blogging, please send me the link and an email each Sunday once posted. No private or sensitive information, esp. about youth & their names/locations, should be posted online INCLUDING ALL SOCIAL MEDIA.**

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Assignment Note

This is an exercise in digger deeper and is meant to invoke personal experiences closer to the heart. Remember these are weekly course assignments to be submitted on time and done well. As someone who appreciates the freedom of student choice over pre-designed fillable templates, I've tried to leave room for you to choose the writing directions most useful and compelling for you.

On the next page is a list of reflection prompts that I'm hoping you will find clear, inspiring, & fun!

A List of Creative Writing Prompts for Weekly Reflections

Choose only one for each week and be sure to give it a thoughtful title ☺

1. Write about your week in the form of a letter or postcard, with a beginning, middle, and end. Could be to me, to your now/future self, someone you care about, your students, etc. Focus on what you learned and accomplished with your students/partner this week.
2. Share a story about a student, teacher, or the host organization who is teaching you something important that changes how you look at the world &/or your role as a teacher.
3. Choose a theme for the reflection, aligning it to your experiences this week. Some ideas: *Gratitude, Practice, Inspiration, Things Unexpected, Questions, Goals, Meaningful Moments, Challenges, Something Funny, What Now...* (feel free to create your own theme!)
4. Open topic: Write about whatever is on your heart that needs to be shared. Provide context.
5. Write about what you have learned this week, and what is stretching your understandings about things like: school, community, relationships, leadership, etc.. Try to express why and how it is stretching you.
6. Some additional writing prompts that may help inspire the focus of a reflection(s):
 - 6a) how to meet the unique needs of the population/community you are with
 - 6b) how to be a better teacher
 - 6c) what learning looks/feels like in this new context; what's different & why
 - 6d) qualities of effective teaching & leadership here & why they work
 - 6e) the importance of: imagination, compassion, listening, teamwork, resilience, etc.
 - 6f) something you struggle with, that surprised you, that got messy; how to resolve this?
 - 6g) something from this experience you will carry forward...
 - 6h) feedback you received from others including students
 - 6i) a leadership opportunity you got to experience or witness
 - 6j) a new understanding, method, or tool to apply to your own practice
7. Respond to this favorite quote of mine by Rita Pierson: 'Every kid needs a champion.' You can watch/listen to her May 2013 Ted Talk Education [here](#).
8. **FOR WEEK 3:** Your final reflection will be a more summative reflection. Write using any of the above prompts **with a holistic view of not only week 3 but across the entire CFE experience.**
Goal: To zoom out. Address what you've learned in the wider expanse of education, culture, your site & students' needs, and you as a teacher and human being. **How have you changed as a teacher as a result of these 3 weeks, and how will you bring that gift of new understanding forward? How do you hope to have made an impact on the lives of others?**

I look forward to reading these! Enjoy your writing! Blake ☺