
Reflective teaching journal

Twenty prompts to keep a journal useful past the first fortnight

Most teaching journals stop because "write about your lesson" is too broad to face at the end of a long day. Pick one prompt, write for five minutes, and stop. Answer the same prompt again a month later and you will have something worth reading.

THE LEARNERS

1. Who spoke most today, and who did not speak at all?
2. Which learner surprised me, and what did they do?
3. Where in the lesson did they stop listening — and what was I doing at that moment?
4. What did a learner say that I did not have an answer for?
5. If I sat in the back row, what would this lesson have been like?

THE LANGUAGE

1. What did I actually teach today, as opposed to what I planned to teach?
2. Which error did I correct, and which did I let go? Why?
3. How much of the lesson was them producing language rather than me explaining it?
4. What was the hardest thing to explain, and what would I try next time?
5. Did the practice activity practise the thing I had just taught?

THE MATERIALS

1. What did I change about the coursebook page, and did the change help?
2. Which activity took twice as long as I expected?
3. What could I have done with no materials at all?
4. Which task was too easy — and did I notice at the time?
5. What will I keep from today's materials for next year?

MYSELF

1. What did I do today that I would not have done in my first year of teaching?
2. When did I feel most in control, and least?
3. What am I avoiding teaching, and why?
4. Whose lesson would I like to watch this term, and what would I be watching for?
5. What is the one habit I would change if I could only change one?