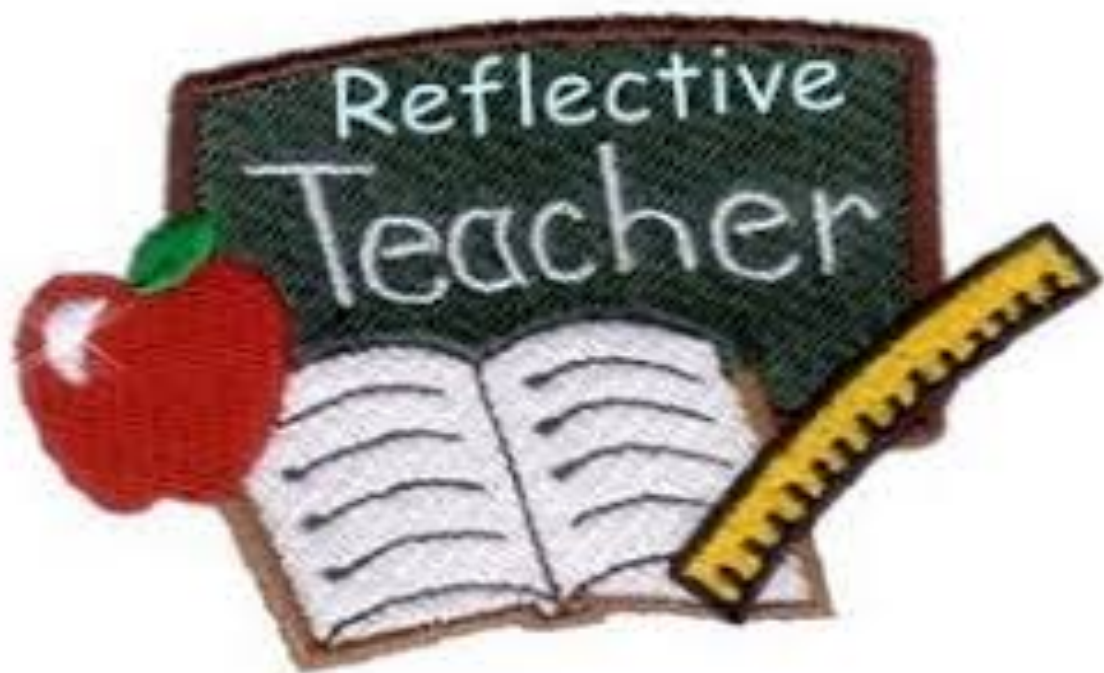


Reflections of early years provision



(Tom Godwin, 2015)

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Reflection model evaluation

Gilett et al. (2009) states reflection is a process that allows an individual to examine themselves. It also allows them to look at their perspectives, experiences and interactions helping to understand how to improve practice and move forward. Royal College of Nursing (2020) also states reflection is a professional process that allows workers to see how they can improve their practice effectively, providing the best care possible. Gilett et al. (2009) also suggests, reflection is important in practice as you understand the way you learn, analysing your work and considering how to improve them to get to your overall long-term goal, making the individual be the best they can be. It is important that practitioners carry-out reflective practice as it provides lifelong learning, meeting and staying up to date with requirements, Royal College of Nursing (2020).

University of Southampton (No Date) states reflective practice was first found by Dewey, he stated that reflection is not only turning short term information into long term, so you can always reflect when needed. It also is an active process. Dewey believed reflection could be useful for looking at events that did not work well and how people could overcome this. Schon built on Dewey's work and added the importance of professional development and practice. Schon identified two types of reflection, reflection in action (looking back on past events) and in action, thinking on your feet, University of Southampton (No Date).

For anyone to develop an understanding of reflective practice, they need tools. These tools are theorists/models, these enable practitioners to learn. The University of Edinburgh (2020) states Gibbs' reflective cycle was made to learn through repetition, this encourages a hands-on approach through learning by doing. However, Kolb's states learning is process you gain through experience, learning from the past, WentworthistTech (2015).

University of Edinburgh (2020) suggests Gibbs' uses a straight-forward 6 step cycle. Each step is clear and easy to understand, allowing practitioners to follow the reflective cycle in the simplest way, making it useable. However, Gibb's cycle can be time consuming. University of Cambridge (2020) states practitioners do not have enough time to effectively reflect on their practise, making it a challenging aspect for them.

Kolb's uses academic language, which over complicates the cycle, making it not straight forward and hard to follow as some would critique it is hard to understand and can be mis-applied, Kolb (1984). Kolb's model would be off putting to practitioners as the language is over complicated. University of Leicester (No Date) states that the material needs to be easy to understand and evaluate, in order to engage in the deep level of critical reflection. Overall, this improves the quality of practise.

University of Edinburgh (2020) states Gibbs' reflective cycle is one of the most well-known models to support effective reflection, as the 6 stages are broken down into simple explicit stages that allow people to understand what went well and how they could improve in the future. Furthermore, Gibb's model provides simple stages, this is an advantage for people new to reflection as it results in a deeper level of learning, Jisc (No Date).

Kolb's, 4 stage, reflective cycle is also classed as one of the most widely used learning theories as it provides a holistic model of the learning process and helps an individual develop to the best of their ability, University of Edinburgh (2020). However, Kolb's model

provides only four stages whereas, Gibb's provides six, this suggests Kolb's may be for those more experienced, University of Edinburgh (2020).

University of Edinburgh (2020) states Gibbs looks more at exploring thoughts and feelings the individual had through-out the experience. It allows the individual to consider how they felt, what was their thoughts and how they felt afterwards, providing effective reflection, University of Cumbria (2016). However, Gibb's has a specific feelings stage, this could possibly put practitioners off as they may not feel comfortable discussing their feelings and this would prevent them for reflecting effectively, University of Cambridge (2020). Kolb (1984) also looks at the importance of feelings and cognitive learning when explaining the learning cycle, so both theorists consider feelings in their model.

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle includes 6 in depth steps to follow whereas, Kolb's uses 4 stages that can be deemed ambiguous. Gibbs' six step reflective cycle could be considered more useful as the model allows practitioners to identify in detail their strengths, in which they can maximise their professional skills. For example, in steps 1-3 Gibbs expresses what arises within the experiences in detail. Whereas, steps 4-6 targets ways of improving these experiences in relation for the future Manchester Metropolitan (No Date). This is beneficial as getting to a level of critical reflection using a model effectively improves practise, resulting in improving quality of provision. Sylva et al. (2004) states in her EPPE that maintaining a high quality of provision is important because it provides better outcomes for children.

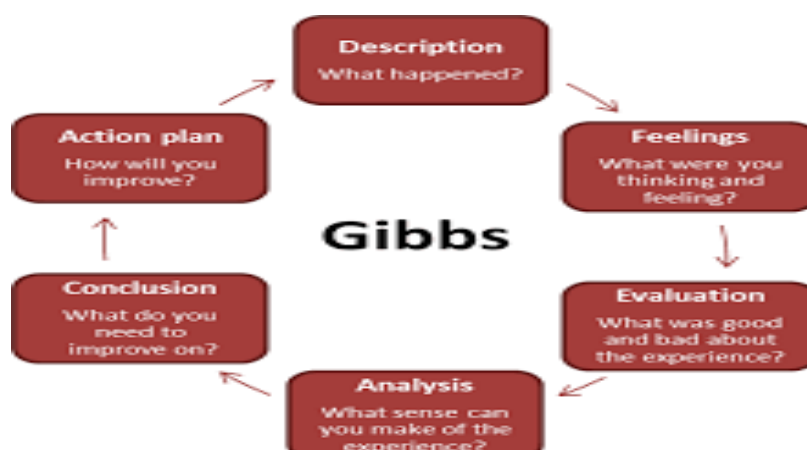
Norwich University (2020) states Kolb's model allows an individual to learn overtime, this is often done through everyday experiences. Gibb's model also allows individuals to learn overtime as the model plans through 6 stages. It allows individuals to analyse and evaluate their experiences, forming an action plan knowing how to deal with a similar situation in the future, would provide an everlasting effect, University of Edinburgh (2020). The benefit of the models are to improve future practise, providing the best care possible, University of Edinburgh (2020).

Gibbs' and Kolb's theory is a learning structure that gives individuals the tools to create an action plan which empathises how to deal with similar learning situations in the future. These would be relevant in making individuals aware in what we can change in the future, University of Edinburgh (2020).

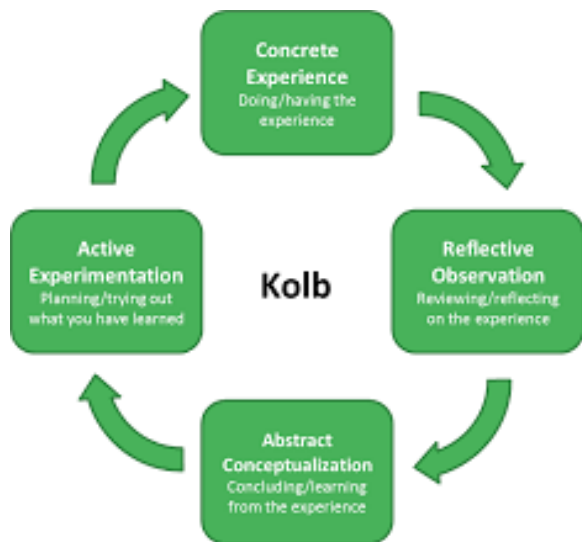
Kolb's and Gibbs theory both enable evaluation of positive and negative practices. They simplify the model in order and break it down to make sense of the situation to evaluate on what you learnt and how you could improve, this supports practitioners to undertake a deeper level of critical reflection, University of Edinburgh (2020).

To conclude, Kolb's and Gibbs model is based upon reflection. From the literature above, there are several similarities that lie between both theorists. For example, both generate reflective practice and are widely accepted. It can be known that Gibb's reflection model is considered a more understandable for academic settings such as practitioners due to the simplicity of the language used within the cycle. For example, the use of terminology can be easily generalised to the wider population in recreating this in their practice. However, Kolb's theory generates a more complex model in order to replicate which could a misunderstanding, leading to poor judgement when using these skills. Although, some practitioners may prefer the use of one reflective cycle over the other.

Mathew et al. (2017) states Reflective practise is a process that practitioners carry out to ease teaching, learning and understanding, this allows their development to grow effectively, being that best professional practitioner possible. Gillett et al. (2009) also states reflective practise is a process that allows practitioners to explore and examine our experiences, understanding how to move forward to provide the best possible care.



Cambridge Assessment International Education (No Date) states reflective practise makes practitioners responsible. Reflecting on an activity in class will allow you to understand what your students liked/disliked, making the practitioner accountable for the student's progress. By carrying this out, it will allow a sense of awareness of what is preventing the learning.



(Cambridge Assessment International Education, No Date)

Schon's theory emphasises that an individual will reflect during and after carrying out an activity. This is beneficial in practise as it provides practitioners with an insight on ways always keep progressing, providing the best possible educational service, Solent University (2019).

Cambridge Assessment International Education (No Date) states reflective practise encourages innovation. Reflecting on practise often allows practitioners to modify their lessons, this promotes success. Using new ideas and approaches in the classroom provides students with better learning experiences as they will think with more imaginatively and creativity, adapting to new learning methods/environments quicker.

Reflection-in-action

- Works on getting to the bottom of what is happening in the experienter's processes, decision-making and feelings at the time of the event or interaction.

Reflection-on-action

- Works of sifting over a previous event to take into account new information or theoretical perspectives available in conjunction with the experienter's processes, feelings and actions.

University of Bradford (2020)

Gibbs and Kolb's both use similar theoretical approaches to promote reflection. Cambridge Assessment International Education (No Date) suggests Kolb developed a four-stage reflective model. The learning cycle shows reflection allows practitioners to conclude and encourage more ideas from previous experiences.

Challenges of Reflective Practice

Duckett (2002) suggests reflective practise can be time consuming. This is often challenging for practitioners as they work in a busy environment, resulting in barely in spare time. This barrier could be prevented by looking at time as an investment into your professional development, leading to other job opportunities, University of Cambridge (2020).

University of Cambridge (2020) states a barrier to reflection is you. Being reflective is often uncomfortable if the practitioner lacks in confidence and has poor self-esteem. However, this barrier can be overcome. Practitioners might need to try a few different methods before they find the right method that works for them.

University of Cambridge (2020) states a barrier to reflection can be the environment. It can often be difficult finding the right environment to reflect. Everyone has different aspects of where they would like to reflect, some prefer quiet whilst some enjoy busy and loud environments. To overcome the environment being a problem, practitioners will need to find somewhere to practise their reflection, this could take a few attempts but do not give up. For more information on ideas of where you could reflect effectively try the **Cambridge Spacefinder** site (<https://spacefinder.lib.cam.ac.uk>).

Another challenge of reflective practise is that practitioners have lack of skill. Some workplaces may not use reflective practise, so practitioners are not educated enough. Also, some models they can use are often complicated or set unrealistic expectations. To overcome this barrier, it is important that practitioners remember there is no wrong option to reflection, you can use whatever method suits best, University of Cambridge (2020).

Reflective log (Section 3)

<i>Brief description of the activity</i>
A cooking activity was carried out. There were 26 children and 2 practitioners as Welsh Government (2014) states this is the average child to adult ratio in the Foundation Phase for 6/7 years. The activity was carried out indoors, in a classroom.
<i>Aim/Objective of the activity</i>
This activity has been carried out as Welsh Government (2015) states children in the foundation Phase should be able to listen and respond to instructions. Children are also required to use a variety of equipment for a longer amount of time. Cooking allows children to feel a sense of independence, working safely in a space. Furthermore, the task will promote teamwork, problem solving and social interaction skills which are required in the early years, Welsh Government (2015).
<i>Your role</i>
The activity was organised and planned by my-self, following the Welsh Government (2014) Foundation Phase curriculum guidelines. The lesson will be led by myself, with support from one other practitioner. There are no children with ALN or SEN in the class however, having extra support in the classroom allows the children to feel more engaged and have an equal opportunity to learn. My role -To observe, -To encourage -To manage a practical food class -Promote knowledge to the children on the importance of nutrition -Teaching food safety -promoting good hygiene -teach good cooking skills Secondly, Organisation skills were demonstrated in the task. Being organised allowed the task to stay on schedule, achieving more in less time. This also reduced stress levels, making the activity fun for both teachers and students. British Nutrition Foundation (2018)
<i>Positive aspects How could these be developed further?</i>
There were several positive aspects on the cooking task. Firstly, when planning the task, I considered that cooking promotes social-emotional development as it is a hands-on activity that would promote learning new skills. I contributed to this by giving the children recipes which helped promote independence, problem-solving and literacy skills. I made sure the method was planned well, allowing the task to be straight forward, helping me provide the best practise. Secondly, physical development skills were used in the task through chopping and mixing foods together, this encouraged good fine motor skills. Thirdly, I used the Foundation Phase curriculum, Welsh Government (2015) to contribute to design decorative dishes, using attractive resources which encouraged creative thinking. Also, I demonstrated Cognitive Development skills through cooking, this encouraged the child's problem-solving skills. I used resources such as measuring jugs and weighing skills to promote this. Lastly, I decided to make healthy meals with the children to allow them to understand the importance of nutrition, encouraging a healthy lifestyle which I think is vital. Overall, the children learnt new skills which has a positive effect on their

development, so I would use and share these positive aspects for future activities, promoting successful reflection.

Challenging aspects – why? Link to your own practice.

Through-out the task there were some challenging aspects. Firstly, some children were not engaging, which caused it to become challenging. The behaviour was caused from frustration due to not having enough attention, this was difficult as there were only two members of staff and 26 children and I feel I couldn't provide the right support needed. Secondly, due to the lack of funding, equipment was low meaning that tasks took longer and not everyone had a turn, this caused arguments amongst the children. My focus was to develop the child's cognitive development skills, however due to lack of resources they were not improved.

Thirdly, some children were not engaging, which caused it to become challenging. This was caused because some of the children were bored. I feel I could have been more enthusiastic in my practise which could have prevented this.

*What knowledge did **you** demonstrate?*

When planning this task, I considered all my knowledge I have learnt from my studies and job. I submitted an assignment on nutrition at level 5, which give me an understanding of why it is important to teach children the importance of a balanced diet. This also gave me ideas on what to cook and how to prepare.

Knowledge on the curriculum was used as I followed the Welsh Government (2014) Foundation Phase curriculum guidelines to plan and interact the activity.

*What skills did **you** demonstrate?*

There were several skills that was carried out through-out the activity. Firstly, communication skills were used to deliver information and to interact with both children and helper teacher. This was key as effective communication allows the task to run smoothly. Secondly, Organisation skills were demonstrated in the task. Being organised allowed the task to stay on schedule, achieving more in less time. This also reduced stress levels, making the activity fun for both teachers and students. Thirdly, leadership skills were demonstrated. This was vital in the task as it was my role to motivate the children. As a leader of the activity, it was also important that I listened to feedback and took responsibility for anything that did not go to plan, so if I had to re-do or share the task with others, these problems would not occur again. Furthermore, I demonstrated adaptability, this was important as I had to consider that some children might have not cooked at home with parents before this lesson, meaning they have never seen some of the equipment before and realised the risks of the oven, microwave and sharp objects such as knives. Being adaptable in the task allowed the students to all feel involved. Lastly, teamwork was demonstrated in the task. By demonstrating teamwork, it allowed the children to gain social and interacting skills, increasing their confidence and independence.

*Which values did **you** demonstrate?*

There were several values demonstrated through-out the activity. Firstly, I demonstrated inclusion. This is important as it allows children to feel involved and promotes equal opportunity. Secondly, I demonstrated the voice of the child. This allowed the children the

opportunity to voice their opinion and for teachers to respect and consider their wishes. Carrying on, it was important to maintain good patience making sure that the children had enough time to understand the task and provide the best work to their ability. Lastly, it was important to consider extra support. This was vital in a cooking activity as hot and dangerous equipment was used, allowing the children to feel safe. It also allowed children who struggled with the task, to overcome any difficulties producing the highest standard of work.

What could be done differently in future?

If this task had to be carried out again, I would change several aspects. Firstly, another teacher assistant would be required. This would promote inclusion, promoting equal opportunity. Behaviour from students effected this task as some students did not have enough attention causing them to feel frustrated. By having extra support, it would allow the children to feel more involved having the right attention and help required. This could be done by splitting the class in to 3 smaller groups or doing two cooking sessions (one morning/one afternoon). Secondly, equipment was low due to budget. If this task was carried out again, I would consider doing two cooking sessions (one morning/one afternoon) so everyone had an equal opportunity to try all equipment, allowing the best cooking education possible. Thirdly, if the task had to be re-done again, I would provide a small lesson beforehand on the eat well plate. The activity would include putting the ingredients in to the five sections of the guide, promoting a healthy balanced diet. Next, understanding and planning from the Welsh Government (2018) curriculum, I would encourage more numeracy skills into the task. This will be done through a small activity at the end, working out a price of how much materials cost looking at the receipt, which will promote problem solving skills and teamwork. Lastly, if I had to do this task again in the future, I would allow the children to do a vote on what they would like to cook. This would encourage voice of the child and allow the children to feel a sense of self-worth, teaching them that their opinion matters.

Personal development plan (Section 4)

Element 4 Personal Development Plan

Area for further development (provide further details)	Why?	How?	Who/Where?	When?
Complete first aid course	I would like to complete a first aid course to provide emergency care to any child or colleague injured. I think this is an important course to carry-out as it will make me feel confident that the children are under the best possible care and will also put parent's at ease when they are not responsible.	My employer mentioned plans about getting me enrolled on to the first aid course.	This will be carried out at my workplace (Townhill Primary School, Swansea)	I aim to complete this before March 2021.
To graduate	From a young age, I've always loved helping others and I've always been passionate about achieving a degree, in helping children.	I am currently studying on the two-years Early Years Education and Care course (University of Wales Trinity Saint David). To achieve my degree, I need to continue to keep working hard, handing in assignments on time and producing the best quality work.	This will be carried out at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Swansea campus.	I am to complete this course by July 2021.
Apply through UCAS to do my masters in, social work	it's clear that Social Work is the right path for me and one in wish to excel in. I've always had an interest, in the care and wellbeing of others around me. Social workers face many challenges, however I'm able to embrace and deal with problems, with this quality I feel it prepares me for a career in Social Work.	First of all, I will need to complete my Early Years Education and Care course to move on to do my masters. Secondly, I will need to attend open days, exploring my options on what university is more suited to me. Thirdly, I will need to apply through UCAS and attend interviews.	I am unsure on what university I will complete my masters at.	I will need to apply for this March 2021.
Food hygiene	I would like to complete a food hygiene course as it would allow me to not only provide good hygiene in the	My employer enrolled me on to the food hygiene course at the end of March. However, I have not been	This will be carried out at my workplace (Townhill Primary School, Swansea)	I am to complete this when I go back to work and

	classroom, but to also make me aware of dietary requirements and the risks of allergens.	able to complete this due to Covid-19.		the courses are up and running again. (hopefully before October 2020)
Child bereavement	I would like to complete this course to be able to understand and respond appropriately to child bereavement. This would be beneficial as it would provide me with confidence in how to provide the right support.	My employer has asked me what course I would like to go on and this was my top request. I have chosen this course as several kids in my workplace experience this. Also, I would like to do social work as my profession when I graduate and several children, I will work closely with would have experienced this.	This will be carried out at my workplace (Townhill Primary School, Swansea)	I am to complete this course by July 2021.

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