

Elfen 2 Log adfyfyril – Element 2 Reflective log

Brief description of the activity (no more than 50 words)
The activity I carried out with children aged 6-7 in mixed groups of 15 was cooking shaped cookies. The activity involved children reading basic instructions, measuring and mixing the ingredients together, then cutting the cookies into symmetrical shapes with cookie cutters and finally baking the cookies in the oven.
Aim/Objective of the activity
The activity began by children reading a simple instruction sheet explaining step by step how to measure and mix the ingredients and then how to bake the cookies. The aim of this step is that children are able to read set instructions independently and then follow what is written. The Welsh Government(2015b) states that children in Year 2 should be beginning to use phonic strategies such as blending on unfamiliar text and should be able to confidently follow instructions. The next step of the activity was for children to measure out the ingredients correctly using the correct measurements and resources. The Welsh Government (2015b) states that Year 2 children are able to use standard units to measure weight and capacity. The children measured the dry ingredients using grams and a digital weighing scale and measured the wet ingredients using millilitres and a measuring jug. Next the children poured required ingredients into a mixing bowl to begin combining them to the desired mixture. The aim of this step was for children to first communicate and discuss what they thought would happen to the mixture once the dry ingredients were mixed with the wet. The children were then given the opportunity to mix the ingredients with their hands and feel the change in state and enhance their sensory experience. The Welsh Government (2015b) states that children should be given opportunity to have sensory experiences to aid their development. Once the mixture was made and rolled out children had to choose which shapes they would like their cookies. They were given a variety of cookie cutters that included symmetrical and non-symmetrical shapes. The children had to choose the symmetrical shapes to cut their cookies. Finally, the cookies were put into the oven to bake for the required time. For health and safety reasons I placed the cookies into the oven and removed them once they were done. When I placed cookies into the oven to bake, the children set the timer on a digital clock. The Welsh Government (2015b) states that children in Year 2 should be able to read hours and minutes on a digital clock.

Your role
Due to having a large group of children taking part in the activity I had to ensure that every child was involved in the making of the cookies, this was done by reminding the children to take turns and to share out their jobs. While the children were carrying out the activity I had a very active role by first ensuring that children are able to read the set instructions, I was there for support if it was needed. I then ensured that the children used the correct measurements and resources to measure out the ingredients. I then encouraged children to mix the ingredients with their hands to enhance their sensory experience. If the children did not want to mix with their hands, they were welcome to mix with a spoon. Finally, I supported the children when choosing their symmetrical shapes, reminding them what makes a shape symmetrical and what does not.
Positive aspects – why?
A positive aspect of the activity is the use of mathematics. The Welsh Government (2015b) states that children should apply mathematics in practical situations. The Welsh Government (2015b) also states that children should have positive sensory stimuli experiences, another positive aspect of the activity is the amount of sensory stimuli that children experienced. They had the opportunity to have the sensory experience of feeling the ingredients with their hands and feel the mixture change state and texture. They also had the sensory experience of smelling the different ingredients before they cooked, during cooking and after they cooked. Children also got the opportunity to work together and communicate while making the cookies. They discussed the changes in state, the smells and the textures. The children enjoyed the hands on practical experience and got very involved in all aspects of the activity.
Challenging aspects – why?
A challenging aspect of the activity is that there was one child with Autism. Due to his disability he really struggled with the sensory stimuli of the activity and the amount of activity going on around him.
What knowledge was demonstrated?
Throughout the activity knowledge that was demonstrated included mathematical knowledge of measuring correctly using the correct units of measurement, scientific knowledge of how the mixture changes state depending on what ingredients are added.

What skills were demonstrated?

Throughout the activity the children demonstrated various skills including fine motor skills when mixing the ingredients together, mathematical skills when measuring out the different kind of ingredients and using two different methods of measuring (grams and millilitres). Children also demonstrated the skills of turn taking, due to there being a large amount of children they could not all work at once, so the children took it in turns to measure and mix.

Which values were demonstrated?

Throughout the activity the children demonstrated patience when waiting their turn to participate in the activity. The children also demonstrated good listening skills, they listened well to each other when discussing the activity and listened well to me when I gave instruction or advice.

What could have been done differently? Why?

If I were to do this activity again I would have groups smaller than 15. I would do this so that each child is more involved in the activity and gets the opportunity to do more. Having a smaller group would also benefit any children with special educational needs such as the boy with Autism who took part. A smaller group would mean I can concentrate more on the child with SEN and provide more support.

Reflective Practice

What is 'Reflective Practice'?

Within the Early Years profession, it is important that practitioners reflect as Lindon (2012) states it is an expectation of practitioners to continually reflect upon their experiences with children, young people and parents. Reflection is 'being mindful of self, either within or after experience' (Johns, 2013, p.2). Johns (2013) states that reflection is learning through everyday experiences, reflecting on the things we learn in order to deliver our desirable practice. The Welsh Government (2015a) agree stating that reflective practice is about improving what we do and then responding in a way that improves the practice delivered. Hargreaves and Page (2013) state that reflection often causes one to stop and think about what they are doing and why they are doing it. McGregor and Cartwright (2011) agree that questioning is an important part of reflection and asking questions such as "why did it happen that way?" or "What could I have done differently?" can help the process. To reflect on one's practice practitioners can use observation as a useful tool. "Pedagogical documentation can act as an instrument that can be used to develop methods of reflective practice that examine deeper meanings in relevant practice. (Vennineen, 2012). Reflective practice can be carried out alone or with another. Lindon (2012) agrees stating that it is both a personal and shared experience but practitioners cannot be solely dependent on another throughout the reflective process. Instead practitioners may find another's participation useful for encouragement and extension of reflection.

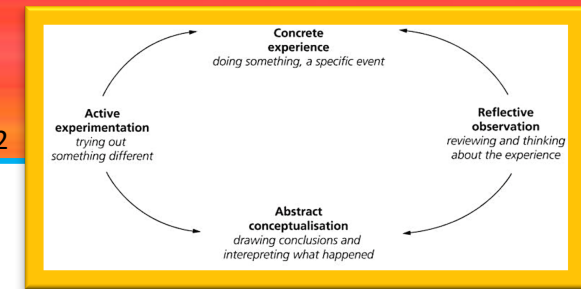
Why should we reflect?

It is important to reflect so that we learn from our own experiences as Harper (2018) states, it is a critical component in learning. Johns (2013) agrees stating that reflection is learning through our everyday experiences and adapting if necessary in order to deliver our desirable practice. Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2013) state that it is necessary for practitioners to reflect to develop and improve their teaching practice and if reflection does not take place then practitioners are at risk of repeating the same practice without any improvement. Larrivee (2000) agrees stating that "unless teachers develop the practice of critical reflection, they stay trapped in unexamined judgments, interpretations, assumptions, and expectations." (Larrivee, 2000, p.293). Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2013) note that reflection is an opportunity for practitioners to develop their problem solving skills. Reflecting allows practitioners to recognise a problem and then determine how it can be solved. Reflection also allows practitioners to look at themselves and the practice they deliver closely. Roffey-Barentsen and Malthouse (2013) note that reflecting on oneself critically can cause practitioners to think negatively of themselves and practice delivered rather than the intended purpose of improving. Schön (1993) suggests that this form of reflection can result in uncertainty and self-defence but instead should be a journey of self-discovery and improvement. The Welsh Government (2015a) agree stating that reflection is not personal criticism but instead about improving what you do.

Reflection is "a mirror in which the practitioner can view and focus self within the context of a particular experience in order to confront, understand and move towards resolving contradiction between one's vision and actual practice" (Johns, 2013, p.2)

Models of Reflection

Lindon 2012



Many models of reflection have been created to help those who wish to reflect progress through the process.

Schön's Reflective Cycle

Johns (2013) note that Donald Schön created a reflective model in 1983. Schön's reflective model is made up of two components, reflecting in action and reflecting on action. Meierdirk (2017) describes 'Reflection in Action' as a decision practitioners make quickly, in the moment. Schön (1983) uses terms such as 'thinking on your feet' and 'keeping your wits about you' to describe 'Reflecting in Action' and suggests that we cannot only think about something but we can think about something while doing it. Van Manen (1995) queries this statement, wondering whether we really can think while doing and how effective would this type of reflection be?

Meierdirk (2017) describes 'Reflection on Action' as reflecting on what has already taken place. Van Manen (1995) states that this can be done alone or with colleagues using memory or evidence collected throughout practice. Schön's theory of reflection on action is supported by theorist John Dewey, who according to Richardson (1994) believed that individuals learn best kinaesthetically or 'learning by doing'.

Kolb's Reflective Cycle

David Kolb created a Reflective Cycle which Lindon (2012) describes as an active process of learning where you learn through experience with the help of a more knowledgeable other. Chen, Jones and Moreland (2014) note that the cycle has four stages and begins when the learner comes upon a new experience – this stage is known as "concrete experience". The cycle then goes on to a further three stages, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. Reynolds (2013) notes that Kolb's Reflective Cycle was created to be used by different people in different professions in order to improve practice.

Estyn

Estyn inspect all schools in Wales and according to the Government (2015) website the schools are judged on five areas including wellbeing, care and support, leadership and teaching. The schools are judged using a four point scale ranging from unsatisfactory and needs urgent improvement to excellent.

Estyn (2014) note that practitioners feel that feedback is a good tool in the reflective process to bettering themselves and their practice delivered.

An Estyn report created by Welsh Government (2018) states that staff must reflect on their practice and take responsibility for improving their own teaching and learning.

CIW Care Inspectorate Wales

The Care Inspectorate Wales' role is to "register, inspect and take action to improve the quality and safety of services for the well-being of the people of Wales" (CIW, 2018).

The CIW will inspect under four headings: Wellbeing, care and development, environment and leadership and management.

The setting is then rated:

Poor- Areas for improvement outweigh the strengths.

Adequate- Strengths outweigh the areas for improvement.

Good- Strengths with no important areas requiring improvement.

Excellent- Many strengths with commitment to improving further.

(CIW, 2016).

Element 4 Personal Development Plan

Area for further development (provide further details)	Why?	How?	Who/Where?	When?
1. Knowledge Maths GCSE Re-sit	Discover Teaching (2017) state that all candidates applying for teachers training must hold a Mathematics GCSE grade B or equivalent. After completing my Mathematics GCSE I achieved a grade C. I will have to re-sit the exam in order to achieve the entry requirements to progress through teaching.	In order to achieve a GCSE B grade in Mathematics I will need to re-sit the examination. According to Neath Port Talbot College (2017) the course is part time for the duration of 1 year. The total cost will be £238 to study. The link to the course: https://www.nptcgroup.ac.uk/courses/gcse-maths/	I will study by attending Neath Port Talbot College, Afan Campus to study.	Neath Port Talbot College (2017) states that the course takes place every Monday from 6pm until 8:30pm.
2. Knowledge Graduate Teacher Programme	While working full time as a Teaching Assistant in a primary school I am not able to study and complete my PGCE qualification full time at a university. To enable me to gain this qualification I will apply to do the Graduate Teacher Programme.	Discover Teaching (2017) state that the Graduate Teacher Programme is an employment based avenue into teaching. I will need to meet all the entry requirements to be eligible for the programme. The Graduate Teacher Programme requires a school to pay the candidate £14,500 annually. Providing I get a place on the Graduate Teacher Programme and my school are willing to	Discover Teaching (2017) states that I will need to be in a school setting in order to complete the Graduate Teacher Programme and obtain a PGCE	September 2020.

		pay me the annual wage, I will gain my PGCE qualification. The link for Discover Teaching is: https://www.discoverteaching.wales/routes-into-teaching/#y1py2	qualification. Providing my setting allows, I will be completing the Graduate Teacher Programme at Awel- Y-Mor Primary School.	
3.Skills The Ability to Model	While being a Teaching Assistant I have not gained the opportunity to teach a class as the main class teacher and therefore have not had the chance to confidently model to children whilst teaching a lesson. I would like to gain confidence in doing this to gain experience ready for when I become a class teacher.	I am currently Level 4 qualified in Childcare and Education which enables me to cover Preparation, Planning and Assessment (PPA) sessions for the class teacher. I will gain confidence of acting as the class teacher and modelling lessons to children by covering these PPA sessions.	I will carry out PPA cover at my current setting, Awel-Y-Mor Primary School.	September 2019.
4.Skills Organisation	With the career path I have chosen (primary school teacher) I will need to be organised, especially in the journey to get there. I currently work full time as a	I will be organised by completing University assignments on time and following an assignment work plan created by myself. I will keep a diary of all assignment deadlines and work related responsibilities so I have time to prepare anything that I need to.	At home, at work and University.	July 2019.

	Teaching Assistant while studying at University and once I have graduated with my degree I will be completing my PGCE. I will need to be organised in order not to put too much stress on myself so that I can complete assignments and work to the best of my ability.			
5.Values Perseverance	In order to be the best teacher I can be, I need to be able to persevere. I need to persevere with any challenge that I may come across within my journey toward my desired profession and once I become a teacher. The ability to persevere will enable me to achieve my goal of becoming a teacher and therefore I am able to enhance the experiences of young children and their families.	I will persevere by using my developing organisational skills to keep stress to a minimum. I will continue to complete University assignments on time alongside the challenge of working full time.	At home, work and University.	July 2019.
6.Values Empathy	Within my chosen career Understood (2014) state that it is important to be empathetic	I will develop my empathy skills by experiencing children from all backgrounds and viewing all different behaviours. I will do this by volunteering	Women's Aid Swansea.	July 2019.

	toward children and their families and this may lead to an understanding of why children display certain behaviours.	for a Swansea Women's Aid Children and Young Peoples Service where I will have the opportunity to work with children throughout school holidays in S.T.A.R groups. I will learn of their backgrounds and learn strategies on how to help them. The link to Swansea Womens aid: http://swanseawomensaid.com/services/children-and-young-peoples-service/		
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