

Element One:

Reflective practice is “an active, dynamic action-based and ethical set of skills, placed in real time and dealing with real, complex and difficult situation.” (Moon, 1999). Reflective practice is important as (WJEC, 2019) states that reflective practice can help an individual to achieve a better awareness of themselves. It can help someone to better their own knowledge and understanding, skills and competencies, and workplace practices in general (WJEC, 2019). Reflective practice can improve and develop a worker’s practice as the worker can learn from previous experiences. (Caldwell and Grobbel, 2013, p.112) states that “Reflective practice should be a continuous cycle in which experience and reflection on experiences are inter-related.”

(Olteanu, 2017) describes Dewey’s thought on reflection as an “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends”. (Rodgers, 2002, pp.842-866) states that Dewey reminds practitioners that reflection is seen as a rigorous, complex, intellectual and emotional enterprise which can take time to do well. Dewey states that reflection is seen as a systematic approach and believes that reflection needs to happen in the community in interaction with others (Rodgers, 2002, pp. 842-866). Dewey believes that reflection is a meaning-making process which can move a learner from one experience to another with deeper understanding of its relationships and connections to other experiences. It can help an individual progress with their own skills and society (Rodgers, 2002, pp. 842-866). (Iris, 2017) suggests that Dewey’s theory on reflection shows that professional development is seen as a spiral cycle, where learning from one cycle can stimulate the beginning of another cycle which can provide an individual with a process that allows themselves to reconstruct their own skills and knowledge considering new experiences.

One model that could support the importance of reflection in early years practice is Graham Gibbs’ reflective cycle. Gibbs’ reflective cycle was developed in 1988 to give practitioners the structure to learn from previous experiences (ED, 2020). Gibbs’ cycle offers a framework to examine experiences and it enables individuals to learn and plan from things that went well or didn’t go well. Gibbs’ reflection cycle is made up of 6 stages which include: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion and an Action Plan (ED, 2020). A practitioner using Gibbs’ 6 step cycle will be able to think in more depth and detail as the cycle can help the individual assess all levels of the situation and it can provide a useful starting point for practitioners who are unsure where to begin whilst reflecting. However, (Libguides, 2020) argues that Gibbs’ reflective practice model must be followed in a defined way and many practitioners may not like this structure. (Libguides, 2020) also states that models may not apply for every individual to suit their own life. Gibbs’ reflection model could support ‘Reflection-on-action’ as this involves reflecting on a previous experience or situation (Iris, 2017). Gibbs’ model can support the reflection-on-action aspect as the practitioners would explore what happened in a particular situation, why they acted as they did and whether they could have acted differently. Gibbs’ model may be

more beneficial for individual practitioners to carry out as the model requires the individual to think in depth and this approach may be too detailed for a group of practitioners to complete together. However, Reflection-in-action would not be an appropriate aspect to support Gibb's model as reflecting in action is described as 'thinking on your feet'. It consists of the practitioner to think carefully on the activity which they are working on while it is unfolding and this would not support Gibb's model as the model was developed for individuals to learn from previous experiences (Iris, 2017).

Another model which could support practitioner's reflection in early years practice is David Kolb's. Kolb's cycle is referred to as the 'Experimental Cycle'. This model is used by practitioners to review their experience in 4 stages. (McLeod, 2017) states that practitioners are able to enter the cycle at any stage and they can follow it through its analytical sequence. However, Kolb's cycle is only effective once the learner completes all four stages of the model. Therefore, one stage is not effective as a learning procedure on its own (McLeod, 2017). Kolb's reflection model could be appropriate for an individual to use or a group of people. Gibb's model includes reflecting on your feelings, this is different to Kolb's model as Kolb's model does not discuss an individual's feelings. This shows that Gibb's model could be deemed more appropriate for an individual to use rather than a group of people as some people do not wish to discuss their feelings in front of anyone. Gibb's model and Kolb's models are seen as different as Gibb's model focuses on reflecting on previous experiences. However, Kolb's model could support the aspect of 'Reflection-in-action' as practitioners using Kolb's model focus on the activity whilst it is happening. Rolfe et al's reflection model is seen as a less structured and easy model to follow and this may be easier for a practitioner to use if they have never used a reflection model before. Rolfe et al's model is a three step cycle and it consists of the practitioner thinking of 'What, So What and Now What?' (Futurelearn, no date). Rolfe et al's model is less detailed compared to Gibb's 6 step cycle, as Gibb's cycle asks the practitioner to think more in depth and provide detailed explanations as to why things have happened in past experiences. However, Gibb's and Rolfe et al's model can also be seen as similar, as both models include the use of reflecting on feelings whereas Kolb's model does not.

Reflection

What is reflection in practice?

(SocialworkEngland, 2020) describes reflection as “reviewing a professional experience or approach to help make positive changes for an individual’s future practice.” It can help turn practitioners experiences into learning and it can help improve and develop practice in a way that is suitable for the practitioner.

Reflection is a way of thinking to achieve better understanding which can lead to new learning (QMU, 2014).

Donald Schon defines reflective practice as the practice by which professionals become aware of their implicit knowledge base and learn from their previous experiences (Gulari, 2018).

Reflective practice happens when a practitioner explores an experience they have had to identify what happened, what their role was in the experience- including reflecting on behaviour and emotions. Reflecting can help a practitioner to identify changes to their approach to similar events in the future (Latrobe, 2020).

Main Barriers to Reflection:

- Time
- Motivation
- Distractions
- Environment
- Lack of experience reflecting

(LibGuides, 2020)

Tips

Things you *could* do to overcome barriers whilst reflecting:

- Set aside time to reflect, e.g. Half hour at the end of the day.
- Use tools such as a diary or a video recorder to record yourself.
- Minimise distractions whilst reflecting. For example- turn off notifications on your phone and try and reflect away from your current work place.
- Focus on the reason why you began reflecting in the first place to help keep you motivated. (LibGuides, 2020)

(Koshy et al. 2017) states that reflecting, can develop your own skills and values.

Importance of critical reflection:

What is critical reflection?

(The University of Waterloo, No date) states that critical reflection means regularly identifying and questioning and assessing deeply held assumptions about your knowledge and the way you perceive events and issues, feelings, beliefs and actions.

According to (Stein, 2000), critical self-reflection is important as it involves individuals having an understanding of the assumptions that govern their actions and questioning their meaning.

Why being a reflective practitioner is important:

Reflection empowers practitioners to:

- Demonstrate insight by identifying actions to help learning
- Development or improvement of practice
- Develop greater insight and self-awareness
- By reflecting effectively the practice is better.
- Reflecting improves the way a practitioner works.

(aomrc, 2018)

Quality Service Example:

Quality service is seen as safe, effective, patient-centred, timely, efficient and equitable (HealthGov, 2020)

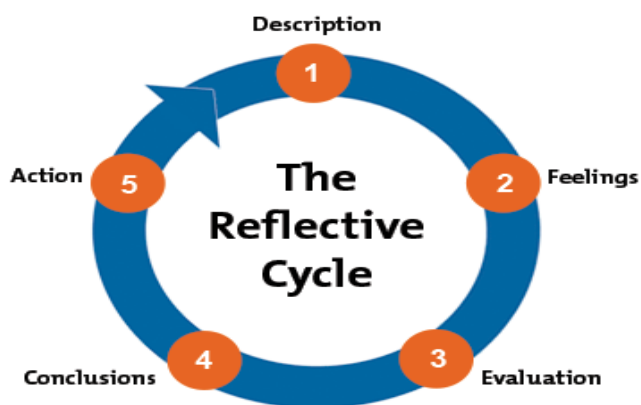
EPPE (Effective Provision of Pre-School):

EPPE describes the effect of quality and specific practices in Pre-school:

- Settings that have staff with higher qualifications and higher quality scores make more progress.
- Quality indicators include warm interactive relationships with children, having a trained teacher as manager and a good proportion of trained teachers on the staff.

(EPPE, 2004)

Gibbs 6 Step Reflection Cycle Diagram:



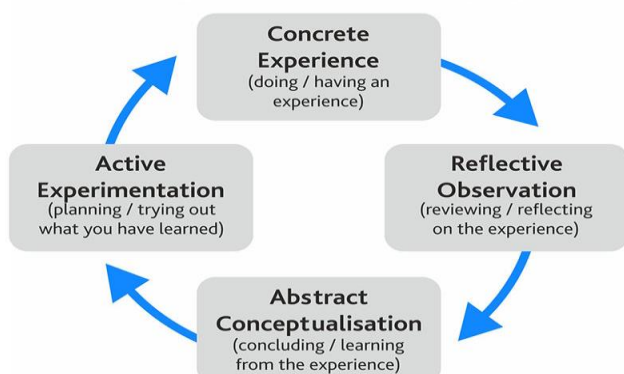
From "Learning by Doing" by Graham Gibbs. Published by Oxford Polytechnic, 1988.

Helpful video link to find out more about Gibbs' Reflective Cycle in more depth:

- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gbczr0IRf4> (EPM, 2019)

Kolb's Reflective Learning Cycle Diagram:

The Experiential Learning Cycle



(McPheat, No date)

Gibbs 6 Step Reflection Cycle:

Gibbs' 6 Step reflection can help practitioners think critically as it can help the practitioner to assess all levels of a situation by thinking in great depth and detail. The practitioner would think about previous experiences whilst using the 6 step cycle.

(Libguides, 2020)

Kolb's Learning Cycle:

- ❖ Kolb developed a learning cycle which consists of 4 different stages of learning from experience.
- ❖ Kolb's cycle can be entered at any point. However, all stages will have to be followed in a sequence for successful learning to take place.
- ❖ Kolb's cycle does not include reflecting on your own feelings.

(ISC, 2019)

Helpful video link to find out more about Kolb's learning cycle in more depth:

- ❖ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rycjUldMI3k> (EPM, 2020)

Disgrifiad byr o'r gweithgaredd (dim mwy na 50 o eiriau)
Brief description of the activity (no more than 50 words)

I completed a story telling session reading Goldilocks and the three bears with 4 children in the nursery class, the children were aged 3-4 years old. The activity took place in the nursery where I am currently completing work experience. The story telling session took place on the carpet.

Nod/Amcan y gweithgaredd

Aim/Objective of the activity

The aim of the activity was to engage the children's willingness to communicate thoughts and feelings by asking them questions throughout the story. The story telling session's objective was to encourage active participation and enhance the children's listening skills.

Eich rôl chi

Your role

My role consisted of me leading the activity by planning the activity in my spare time and choosing a suitable book to read to the children in the nursery class. I ensured to choose a specific book which is suitable for children aged 3-4-years old. The story telling session took place on the carpet in the nursery classroom. The children and I sat in a circle and I read the story to the children. I also took responsibility of the session by asking the children questions about the story throughout. It was my responsibility to take charge of the session by ensuring the children remained engaged in the activity and listened to me reading the story.

Agweddau cadarnhaol – pam? Sut gellid datblygu'r rhain ymhellach?
Positive aspects – why? How could these be developed further?

The children enjoyed the activity because I interacted well with the children by making sure that I changed my tone, pitch and volume whilst reading the story. They enjoyed this because it provided entertainment to the children and it helped the children to establish whose voice matched the character in the story. I communicated well with the children because I asked them a range of questions throughout the story, for example 'Why do you think Goldilocks did that?' and 'Why do you think the three bears were unhappy with Goldilocks?'. This helped the children think and it encouraged the use of their imagination. I ensured to keep the children engaged in the story because I used puppets whilst reading the story. The use of puppets captured the children's attention to help them focus on the story.

Agweddau heriol – pam? Cysylltwch a'ch arfer eich hunan.
Challenging aspects – why? Link to your own practice.

Whilst completing the story telling session, one of the children started to wander off towards the end of the story. I believe this was because the child may have got bored of the story and he may have heard the story too many times. The child may not have felt as engaged as the other children as he wasn't showing interest through the story as he kept trying to talk over me. This was challenging for me as I had to ask the child to come and sit down on the carpet a number of times before he listened. This made the other children unsettled and they kept watching the

child trying to wander off and they did not keep their eyes on the story book or the puppets. Reflecting on the story telling session, I should have asked the children what story they wanted to read to see if they had any preferences rather than choosing the story book myself because this would have grasped the children's attention better. I believe I should have asked the child who got bored some more questions about the story as I asked the questions generally to the group of the children and did not ask the questions to individual children. The story book seemed too simple for the children and the book was small in size.

Pa wybodaeth wnaethoch **chi** arddangos?

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

I worked well with the group of children because I have worked with the same group of children before and I was aware of what level they were working at. I also demonstrated great knowledge of the story telling session as I have currently studied this session in my University course where I have learnt why story telling is important for children. I demonstrated knowledge of the story book that I chose as I was very familiar with the story and this enabled me to create puppets for the story and I was confident acting as the characters by using different voices.

Pa sgiliau wnaethoch **chi** arddangos?

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

I ensured to demonstrate effective communication skills by actively listening to the children if they provided an answer to a question that I had asked, or if they had any questions themselves. I ensured to be positive and friendly throughout the session and used different volume/pitch throughout the session. I demonstrated non-verbal communication skills by making sure that I had a good use of body language, eye contact with the children, smiled and showed a good use of expression. I also used facial expressions and different voices for the characters throughout the activity.

Pa werthoedd wnaethoch **chi** arddangos?

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

I demonstrated a use of inclusion as I made sure that all 4 children were included in the story telling session. I wanted to make sure the children all felt involved by asking the questions to the whole group. I also ensured to respect all the children's answers when the children responded to my questions. I ensured to remain positive with their answers even if they were not correct by making sure I said, 'Good try' or 'Well done for giving it a go'. I did not want to make the children feel uncomfortable if their answers were wrong. I ensured not to rush the children for their answers by remaining patient. I remained enthusiastic throughout the activity because this created a happy environment for the children.

Beth allai cael ei wneud yn wahanol yn y dyfodol? Pam?

What could be done differently in future? Why?

In future, I will make sure to pick a story book that the children would like me to read and find out if they have any preferences in a certain topic/genre. This is because all the children would feel more engaged in the activity as they will have an interest in the story that they pick. If the children were unable to pick a book themselves, I could give them the choice between 1-2 books and let them decide which book they would prefer me to read. I will also ensure to ask more questions to the children and if a child becomes distracted, ask them a question individually and use the child's name to capture their attention. Next time I will ensure to pick a more complex story and a larger story book so the children can see the images clearly.

Area for further development (provide further details)	Why?	How?	Who/Where?	When?
Apply for PGCE Primary Education Course.	I would like to apply for a PGCE course as I would like to become a primary school teacher in the near future. Primary teaching has always been an inspiration of mine and my main career goal in life. One day I would like to achieve my dream goal of becoming a primary school teacher and I must complete the PGCE course before achieving this goal. I must ensure to leave sufficient time to apply and not leave the application until last minute. I must prepare well for the application and ask my lecturers or the career's advisor at UWTSD -	I will speak to the careers advisor regarding the PGCE course in the University and ask for some guidance/advice for when I wish to apply. I will look on different university websites to see if there are any other universities that will teach the PGCE course. Or if I would like to stay close to home and attend UWTSD, I will speak to the programme director of the PGCE Course in Primary Education to check if I have enough qualifications and experience. I will research the course in depth to see if it is something that I will definitely want to study. I will find out how to	I will look for PGCE courses online at home and also make contact with the Programme Director of the PGCE Primary Education course. I will research UWTSD PGCE Primary Education course by looking at the following website: https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/pgce-primary/ Location - My aim is secure a place at UWTSD for the PGCE Primary Education course as this university is my first choice.	I will apply for the PGCE Primary Education Course between November - December 2021. I hope to receive an offer from my chosen university course by July 2022 to study the PGCE Primary Education course.

	Mark Thomas , if I require any guidance/support with any of the application questions.	apply for the PGCE Course and ask my lecturer if I will need to apply for this through UCAS or a different way. I will have to apply for a student loan to fund my time on the PGCE course and I will apply for this through Student Finance Wales:		
Gain further work experience face to face with children.	I would like to gain further experience working with children face to face as I have not had the opportunity to do this since I left sixth form. I would like to have further experience so that this will help my application for when I apply for the PGCE course. My aim is to achieve at least 200 of work	I will find out from the PGCE Primary Education programme director if they can provide any advice or guidance in regards to volunteering in primary schools or other early years settings such as Flying Start. I will ask my old primary school if I am able to volunteer and gain work experience with children ages in the Infants/Juniors	I will look for work experience in a range of settings but I would like to gain experience in a primary school which is close to my house. If I am not able to gain work experience in a primary school that is in my local area, I will be able to drive out of my area and seek placement in an alternative school setting as I have a	I would like to complete this work experience with children by July 2022 as I would have finished my Early Years Education and Care Degree. I would like to have the experience ready for when I start my PGCE Primary Education course in September 2022 so that I am confident dealing with school

	experience in an early years setting or primary school. I would like to gain further experience face to face with children so that I can enhance my personal development and skills of becoming a primary school teacher.	department. I will ask the Headteacher of the primary school that I will attend one day a week to gain some experience working face to face with children. I will carry out at least 6 hours of work experience a week to ensure I gain as much experience as I possibly can. Once carrying out the work experience at a primary school, I will ensure to ask the teacher if I can carry out small group tasks with the children and also complete 1:1 reading tasks to expand my knowledge of the Teaching Assistant role.	Full UK Driving License.	children on my placement in primary schools.
Expand my use of the Welsh language.	I would like to expand my use of the Welsh Language ready for when I become a Primary School Teacher. I have	I will research some Welsh courses that are available to learn online as due to COVID19, some courses may be	I will speak to my programme director as I am aware that my university lecturers speak Welsh as their first language	I will complete this by the time I finish my PGCE course- July 2023. I would like to be able to speak more fluently in

	a Grade B (GCSE) in Welsh Full Course but I am not confident in fluently speaking in the language. I would like to attend a course online or face to face so that I can increase my Welsh vocabulary ready for when I complete my PCGE course and become a primary school teacher.	unavailable to learn face to face. I will make sure to attend every lesson that is provided to me and ensure that I engage with the course well so that I will have a better understanding of the Welsh Language before I become a primary school teacher.	and they may be able to point me in the right direction of a course that may be suitable for my level. I will also look online at different colleges to see if they offer any courses face to face. I can also attend a virtual course online or face to face by applying for a course via the Learn Welsh website: https://learnwelsh.cymru The Welsh language courses via Learn Welsh will be available to me at small cost and I will be able to fund this myself by using my student loan/personal funds.	Welsh by the time I graduate in the PGCE Primary Education course.
Attend a paediatric first aid course.	I would like to try something new that I have not completed before. I would like to apply for a paediatric first aid course as this will benefit	I will identify suitable first aid courses by looking on the internet and identifying which course will be best as some first aid	I will speak to the careers advisor or student services to see if they are able to advise if the university will offer any	I would like to complete this by goal by July 2023 ready for when I would like to start my job in a primary school.

	me for my future career as a primary school teacher. I would like to gain knowledge in first aid and having general knowledge in first aid may be beneficial for my current job role working in the Council.	courses do not include learning about babies and young children. I have identified a course available in Cardiff and this course is specifically for babies and young children and I can apply for this course via the Daisy First Aid website: https://www.daisyfirstaid.com/jo-paediatric-first-aid-wales/ I will have to fund the course myself and the costs start at £25. I will use my student loan/personal funds to fund this course.	paediatric first aid courses. If the university do not offer this type of course, I will contact the Daisy First Aid company by emailing any questions that I may have via : cardiff@daisyfirstaid.com I will be able to have free rail transport to the course as I have a staff train pass. If there are no train stations near by, I will be able to drive to the training course as I have a Full UK driving licence.	
Increase my GCSE mark in mathematics from a Grade C to a Grade B.	In order for me to apply for the PGCE course in Primary Education, I will have to pass a GCSE in mathematics and achieve a Grade B or above. I will be required to have this qualification if I wish to be a primary school	I will look at GCSE courses online to attend so that I can increase my knowledge in maths. I will look for courses that I can attend and then sit the GCSE at the end of the course so that I can achieve a Grade B or above in maths.	I will attend the course at Gorseinon College on a part time basis and I will be able to drive there as I have a Full UK Driving License. I will also speak to the programme director of the	I will complete this goal by August 2022 so that I have passed my GCSE in maths ready for when I start my PGCE course.

	teacher in Wales.	I will apply for the GCSE Mathematics course at Gorseinon College : https://www.gcs.ac.uk/part-time-course/gcse-maths-wjec I will attend the course part time and ensure that it does not interfere with my university timetable.	PGCE Primary Education course and ask if I will be able to complete a GCSE equivalency test instead of completing a GCSE maths course. This will be my section option if I am unable to attend the GCSE course due to conflicts with my university timetable.	
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