Reflective Practices in Living, Learning, and Teaching

A Responsive Approach for Teachers of the Arts

Barry Oreck, Ph.D. and Jessica Nicoll

As artists and teachers, we use reflection throughout our creative process – to stay present in the moment, to integrate feelings and ideas, to evaluate our progress, and to help us face and work through challenges. In the studio and in the classroom we share with students of teaching the reflective practices we've built over time. The practical and adaptable structures and tools we offer do not comprise a method or formula to be learned and followed. Indeed, our stance toward learning, teaching, and art demands that we avoid formulaic approaches. Our central goal is to invite students of pedagogy to experience and explore teaching as an artistic process through which they can uncover and develop their individual styles and voices. By using reflective practices, pedagogy students can develop as responsive teachers and creative artists, seeing their own work more clearly and learning to hear their students (and colleagues, friends, others) more fully. The ultimate purpose of reflection is to integrate body, mind, spirit and to deepen rather than interrupt experience so that we make meaning that leads to action and improvement.

When teaching about reflection we focus both on personal practices and pedagogy. What a teacher is able to see, hear, read, and understand about students depends on his or her ability to be present and responsive in the moment and to facilitate honest, meaningful reflection among students. It is challenging to slow down and make time to reflect amidst the demands of teaching, with its competing priorities, external pressures, and constant stimulation; this is why reflective practices must be consistent, systematic, and rigorous.

In all phases of teaching -- preparing and planning; facilitating and questioning; assessing, evaluating, instructing, and integrating experience -- reflection is central, not peripheral. John Dewey described reflection as "the *heart* of learning and what it means to be human." It is the connective "thread that makes continuity of learning possible" (Rodgers, 2000a, p. 845). For Dewey, reflection *is* thinking. It is not an add-on or follow-up to learning; it is how we make meaning of and apply what we learn.

In our work with teachers and prospective teachers – not only of the arts, but also of general education and various specialties -- we have found that deep engagement in artistic processes, connecting to personal memories, expressing ideas and feelings through

multiple modalities and symbol systems, and opening up time to process experiences alone and with others, can develop both the tools and commitment to build a more reflective practice and life.

Building a Reflective Pedagogy

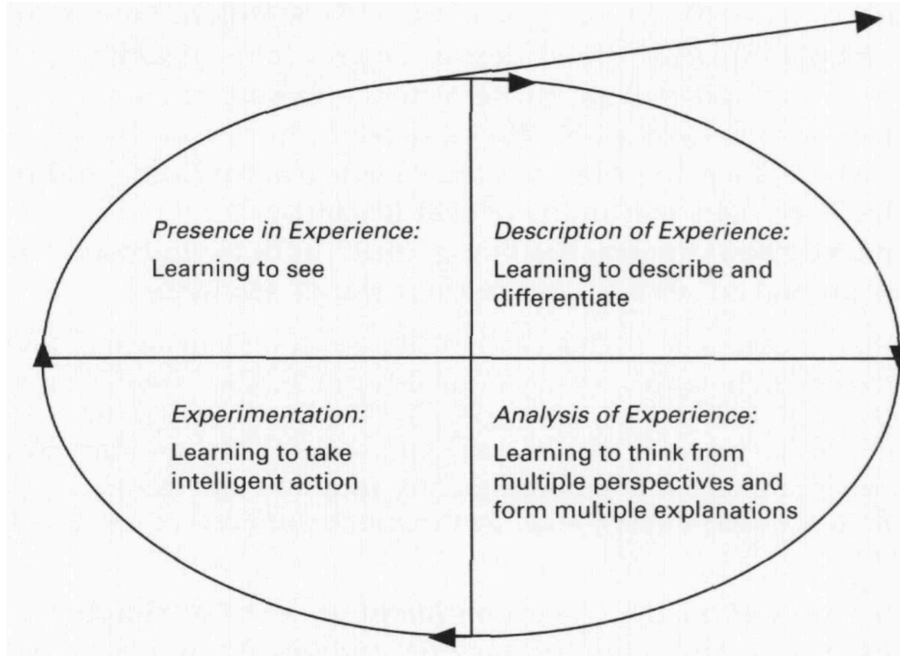
Our goals for teachers in developing their own reflective practice are for them to:

- be present in the classroom through the integration of body, mind and spirit;
- see, hear, and perceive students and classroom phenomena clearly;
- evaluate experiences from different points of view and through different conceptual lenses;
- develop responsive, flexible approaches to planning and curriculum design;
- recognize biases and preconceptions in response to students' ideas, questions and artistic creations;
- maintain curiosity and growth as a teacher and artist.

The processes we continue to adapt and develop as we work with teachers on reflective practice can be broadly defined in three dimensions: personal, perceptual, and pedagogical. The personal dimension involves raising awareness of one's own values in learning and teaching, finding means to be present in the moment, and taking time to process both during and after experiences. In the perceptual dimension we sharpen observation and listening skills, which brings a greater consciousness of our students' and our own responses, feelings, and learning. Within pedagogy we look at specific structures and processes that weave reflection into instruction; examine how to pose productive questions and inspire students to ask their own questions; and use readings and discussion to build theoretical understandings that support an ever-growing reflective teaching practice.

These three dimensions are, by nature, entirely intertwined in teaching. Reflective practice is an attitude and a state of being more than a set of activities or strategies. Carol Rodgers (2002b) describes this state as "presence" in teaching, which heightens our perceptions and directs current and future actions. Some refer to this state as "mindfulness" (Tremmel, 1993) in which we are fully in the moment -- "alive" as John Dewey described it, to students' "bodily expression of mental condition" and their words (1933, p.275). Rodgers' Reflective Cycle (Rodgers, 2002b, p. 235), drawing on John Dewey's

essential conceptions of reflection in teaching and learning, graphically highlights the interweaving of the personal, perceptual, and pedagogical dimensions in a continuous, self-sustaining process.



The cycle also illustrates the reinforcing past-present-future continuum of reflection. As we become more conscious and present in the moment—described by Schöen (1983) as "reflection-in-action"—we have more detailed information to reflect on past experience—"reflection-on-action"—and can anticipate and plan for the future more effectively. This continuum enables us to take intelligent action and stay open to growth and change.

In our work we draw on a variety of sources from art, psychology, and education to create an environment where personal experience, reflection, analysis, and theory are connected and mutually reinforcing. The descriptions that follow are best seen as a cycle of experiences rather than a sequential syllabus.

1. Personal Dimension.

Integration. In our teaching we invite students to process experiences regularly through a method called Integration. In Integration, drawn from the *Creative Behavior Process* (Smith, 1993) developed by Juanita and Eugene Sagan, individuals assimilate

important emotional, cognitive, and physical aspects of experience so that their learning can be a continual source of understanding and energy. Originally a school teacher, Juanita Sagan recognized that what is most important is not the information in one's head but what a person is able to access at any given moment. By addressing and creatively using a potential backlog of emotional and cognitive "baggage"—experiences that have not been fully integrated into the self—students can tap into their instincts for learning and creating. When we are un-integrated it is hard to be present, responsive, and creative. Un-integrated students are less able to learn and may display unhealthy behavioral and cognitive resistance.

The Integration process can be employed in daily life, in the classroom with students, and as part of artistic creation. Integration sessions can be as short as a few minutes to prepare for an experience or respond to one, to an hour or more to fully process, review, and share responses.

Key aspects of the process include:

- slowing down and connecting to the breath and body,
- directing memory through past experiences,
- taking credit for one's own actions,
- expressing feelings and ideas in different symbol systems (i.e. drawing, building, writing, moving),
- sharing with others.

Through Integration students can slow down and recognize their own thoughts, feelings and questions. Writings, drawings, and verbal responses from an Integration lesson reveal what students think is most important, how they are feeling about what they have learned, what they are still confused about, and other critical information about their perceptions and emotions in and outside of the classroom. Taking credit for their actions as well as recognizing times of frustration or resistance helps students validate their own process and establishes an atmosphere of honesty and mutual trust among peers and with teachers.

For teachers, Integration as a personal practice aids reflection in the moment as well as before and after teaching. The teachers we have worked with over many years, like those who worked directly with the Sagans, have found these techniques to be extremely

valuable as ongoing practices for themselves and for their students. The Integration process offers a solid structure for reflection – pausing to think and feel, allowing students' voices and bodies to be heard and seen, building an atmosphere of respect and safety.

Values Clarification: Discovering a Stance. Reflection helps bring our actions in line with our values. Recognizing our values in teaching is an ongoing and highly individual process. We all embody our own educational experiences to a great extent, influenced by our teachers as well as our own preferred learning and teaching styles. Because we teach others however, we must look at ways to transcend patterns and habits, to shift lenses and question assumptions in response to new students, new settings, and new information.

We regularly ask teachers to recollect their experiences as teachers and learners and to articulate and prioritize their values and goals in teaching. These personal aspirations become the baseline for looking at teaching strategies and practices that fulfill or work against those goals. Discovering where practice and values contradict one another can be sobering but is necessary for continued growth as a teacher. Reflection offers perspective, information, and insight to guide experimentation and self-scrutiny. A teacher's willingness and courage to change, break habits, incorporate new ideas is, above all, a stance -- an artistic, growth-oriented attitude toward life and teaching.

2. Perceptual Dimension.

Learning to See and Describe Experience. A reflective teacher and artist is continually working on the act of seeing. It is difficult to see clearly amidst the flood of thoughts and priorities in the moment-to-moment flow of teaching. *Really* seeing involves both detailed and big-picture observation, describing rather than assuming, recognizing our role in the teacher/learner power dynamic, and finding our own most effective methods for collecting our observations for further action, reflection, and evaluation.

We offer a variety of tools to help teachers sharpen skills in observation and description. These include vision exercises from the work of Andrea Olsen (2002) and others, Jules David Prown's (1982) approach to seeing and understanding culture, and a structured Video Description Process (VDP), developed by the ArtsConnection (Rich, 2005) and based on the work of Pat Carini and the Prospect Center Descriptive Review Process (Carini and Himley, 2000), that uses deep observation and description of learning in action.

We also use a range of improvisational and choreographic structures as material for careful observation and detailed description.

These processes aim to both fine-tune our visual senses and offer practice in describing observations clearly and objectively. Olsen's vision exercises explore different ways of seeing that help teachers consciously and seamlessly move between lenses – from wide angle views to close-ups – a crucial classroom skill. As an art historian, Prown employs artistic vocabulary and analysis to help describe observations and to uncover personal and cultural assumptions and biases. This approach brings new insights into the culture of the classroom and helps teachers carefully use observational data to reach conclusions and improve their practice. In the Video Description Process (VDP) we practice close, repeated looking at short video clips of students in learning situations. After each clip participants compare their observations, highlighting the many ways they have seen the same phenomena and the tiny details that reveal deeper understandings. Using video to examine the learning process helps teachers maintain focus on students' experiences rather than get caught in self-critique that can impede their ability and motivation to study what is happening in the classroom.

These observation and description skills are equally important in art-making and responding to our own and others' work. As choreographers, composers, and directors we need to step back, see what is actually happening as opposed to the images in our minds, and separate concerns, desires, external pressures from the work at hand. And as teachers and mentors to developing artists, we can play a crucial role in helping students see their work, stay in the creative struggle, and find their own intentions by guiding and encouraging reflection.

Whole Body Response. Reflection in compositional or improvisational processes is not limited to words. We introduce a number of structures in pairs and groups that involve physical, visual, and verbal responses. These structures can be used to develop work, enhance observation skills, build spontaneity and cooperation, or to help the choreographer gain new perspectives on the work. For example, in one such structure we call *Mover-Responder* one person in each group creates a short repeatable piece using a simple initial stimuli (such as an object or physical feature of the room). The observers, not knowing the impetus for the original dance, respond with a drawing, word, phrase, or

movement. The creator studies those responses and revisits the work -- sometimes expanding or editing/revising -- and performs it again. Finally the performer-creator and observers talk about the process and what was changed or deepened, revealed and understood. Changing symbol systems, as emphasized in the Creative Behavior Integration process, alters perspective and taps into feelings, thoughts, and intuition.

In *Dances from a Hat,* a group choreographic process adapted from Mary Joyce (1973), students create and perform short dances, followed by detailed audience observations that open the way into imagery and metaphor. Groups of four or five dancers choose a card on which an object or process is described, such as ice cream melting, frost forming on a windowpane, fire, the beginning of a storm. The dancers collaborate to embody the image on the card, creating a short dance that captures the shapes, motion, spatial design, and essential qualities of the given object or process. After the audience watches the dance they describe what they see, withholding guesses or images of what they think the dance represents. Finally respondents share images that came to mind and explore layers of metaphor. They might ask, for example, what qualities are shared by the images of a dying solder, a landslide covering a road, a candle flickering out and the melting ice cream image that inspired a dance they've just seen. The experience of becoming, describing, and re-shaping material in various ways through dance, poetry, and sound, links physical, perceptual, descriptive and expressive aspects of artistic creation through an integrative, reflective process.

3. Pedagogical Dimension

Incorporating reflection into daily practice takes both strong motivation and a solid repertoire of facilitation and planning skills. As a teacher builds those skills s/he becomes more adept and flexible in structuring time and establishing an environment for productive reflection. S/he can fluidly move in and out of reflective processes to help students integrate experiences during and after class time. S/he poses and invites questions that stimulate introspection and honesty and collects and documents responses in multiple ways. Underlying all of these aspects of reflection is what Carol Rodgers describes as a "passion to explore learning" and a "wide open acceptance of the learner that is free of judgment and filled with awe of his capacity to learn" (Rodgers and Raider-Roth, 2006 p.

271).

In our work with teachers we put particular emphasis on four key areas:

- Structures for Reflection
- Questioning and Discourse
- Documentation and Notetaking
- Assessment, Evaluation and Action Research

We will describe these areas briefly here. Additional description and background is contained in the appendix.

Structures for Reflection. We rely on basic structures for classroom reflection that can engage everyone and be adjusted to fit the time available. Whether a) looking at and responding to the creative work of oneself or others, b) integrating new skills or information, c) preparing for an experience, or d) evaluating one's performance, organized structures and response protocols can help establish the conditions for productive reflection. Those conditions -- safety, fairness, inclusiveness, and honesty – must be carefully maintained. Students need to know that they will be heard and that their opinions and feelings both matter and can effect change. They need time to think and time to share with others. Their choices about how and when they share personal reflections must be honored. The facilitator's ability to set clear guidelines concerning time, roles of listeners and responders, and acceptable types of response, protects the participants and encourages trust and openness. Through repetition and careful guidance students internalize and use the guidelines themselves.

By including reflection a teacher risks interfering with the flow of a class. To make time for reflection at any point – at the beginning, end, or in the midst of experiences – a teacher must plan and practice smooth transitions and effective and productive time management. For example, in the middle of a class, a one minute "turn and talk" – commenting on or responding to an experience with one other person – can, when well-timed, provide a momentary self-check-in and change of perspective without having to transition or re-locate. Forming and articulating one's ideas to one other person, can also be a useful prelude to a group conversation and encourage more students to speak in front of a group. A concluding, timed 5-minute "mini-lab", in which each person in a group will speak for one minute without interruption, provides time, safety, and support for everyone

while building listening and cooperative skills. Other modes of reflection such as drawing, writing, and moving can also be incorporated in these types of classroom structures. Further descriptions of structures and protocols are included in Jessica Nicoll's *Reflections on Reflection* (2011).

To facilitate productive discussions we have adapted elements of Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process (Lerman and Borstel 2003) to serve as a protocol for responding to creative work. Protocols establish a series of steps used to guide group discussions. Some protocols specify roles for the participants along with time limits. The Lerman process offers particularly effective tools for reflecting on creative work because of the ways in which it honors and supports the creator of the work being discussed. In the vulnerable process of art-making, this protocol begins (as many protocols do) with genuine affirmations from the observers, followed by an initial question posed by the creator of the work being observed. Open-ended, neutral questions from the audience are entertained next with a facilitator and the creator continuing to guide the discussion. The creator chooses how to use the questions and whether to respond in the moment. Audience opinions may be offered at the end with permission of the artist. A facilitated focus on questions and investigation of the work, rather than simple opinions or suggestions for improvement (e.g. "*I liked it*" or "*I think you should…*"), helps the artist hear, understand, and consider ways to use audience responses in the ongoing creative process. Due to time constraints the protocol may have to be shortened or adapted, but the key elements of starting with creator and observer questions should be maintained. A facilitator's skill in making on-the-spot adaptations, reminding participants of the guidelines without overly controlling the discussion, and supporting the efforts of creators and observers, is essential to the success of this process.

We use other protocols for collaborative teacher reflections on student work, such as the Collaborative Assessment Conference developed at Harvard Project Zero (Seidel, 1998). The purpose of this protocol goes beyond assessment and grading; it is designed to help groups gain deeper understanding of students' thinking and learning processes. In such collaborative work, teachers' ways of thinking, including assumptions and biases, can become more apparent, helping to raise self-awareness in a supportive environment.

Questioning and Discourse. Curiosity and questions are at the heart of reflective teaching: questions we pose to ourselves, questions we ask our students, and questions students ask. A teacher's ability to frame fruitful questions for reflection and make space for students' own questions is grounded in keen awareness of the learners' interests as well as of the social dynamics and power relationships in the classroom. Students are used to answering teachers' questions -- often their primary job in school. In reflective practice, questions are designed to inspire dialogue -- with self and with other people. The goal is not necessarily to generate an answer (or a "correct" answer) for the teacher, but to enter honest, independent, self-aware investigation and meaningful dialogue. Teachers support that dialogue both in how they pose and invite questions and in how they respond.

Reflective questions have many different purposes. Questions posed to and by student artists can help them see and develop their own work. Questions can prompt reflection on an experience, guide self-assessment, and stimulate new questions. Teachers need to distinguish questions for reflection from the other kinds of questions they pose. A clear introduction to the question can communicate expectations (e.g. "*Here's a question to think about – you don't have to answer it out loud*"), offer choices (e.g. "*You can share if you want to*," or "*You can write or draw your response*"), affirm the value of both positive and negative emotions (e.g. "*What was the best and worst part of the experience for you?"*), or inspire further questions (e.g. "*You can respond to this question or come up with your own question"*). In each case, the teacher and other students try to ask questions that are neutral and make space for the artist's own curiosity. Statements or opinions posing as questions (e.g. "*Can you make the opening of the dance move along faster?"*) can feel manipulative. A more neutral question (e.g *"Does the opening take the time you want it to?*") still encourages a student to look at his or her work in terms of a particular element, but keeps the focus on the work rather than on a teacher's opinion. *Why* questions (*Why did you do that? Why did you start there…?)* may help some students, though they run the risk of forcing an artist to verbalize or explain something not currently explainable in words. An artist's choices can be valid even without knowing *why* one made a particular choice. Again, the goal is to help artists look closely at their own work, not compel them to explain or defend the work.

The teacher's careful and disciplined use of questions establishes a context of openness and respect for learners. The practice of posing open-ended, neutral questions

helps a teacher reckon with the powerful impulse to tell others what to do, how to fix their work, or how to take the next step. This is not to say a teacher should never share expertise or offer opinions. But the more a teacher can engage in open, curious, non-judgmental discourse, the more students can experience their own power and autonomy to think, feel, and create. When students know their opinions and feelings, both positive and negative, can contribute to everyone's learning and will be respected; when they perceive that there is no single correct answer or path; and when they believe that candor is valued over a pre-determined response, teachers and students can be true partners in learning and teaching.

As important as teachers' use of questions is their ability to elicit and support students' questions. Most schools train students to believe that the most important questions and comments come from the teachers. But reflection helps students find and form questions – expressing curiosity, clarifying information and instructions, asking for help, and showing the desire to learn more. For developing artists, knowing they can pose questions when their work is under review can help avoid defensiveness and resistance to comments from teachers or peers. One student choreographer, for example, dismayed at a response that her work "looked like a party and lacked physicality," asked the questioner to be more specific about her comments. Her question, and the process that encouraged the student to engage with the commenter, shifted the student from feeling angry and defensive about a "misreading" of her work and re-established her own curiosity about what the observer had seen. She had acquired the tools to probe and transform the information. A student's ability to form and use questions puts him or her in charge of his or her own learning and artistic process. For more discussion of student- and teacher-generated questioning see *The Place of Questions* (Nicoll, 2017).

Documentation and Notetaking. In reflective practice we create tangible artifacts that help us slow down, process experiences, change perspectives and symbol systems, and deepen the dialogue with self and others. In Democracy and Education (1916/1944) John Dewey explains that "experience… is not primarily cognitive." "To learn from experience is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence," he said (p. 140). Making our reflections visible helps reveal what we know and feel and expands the cognitive connections backward and forward. In our work with teachers we emphasize careful, systematic documentation in a

variety of forms and response modes to help teachers and students collect, interact with, and use their reflections.

Though it is challenging to write down observations in the flow of teaching, it is a valuable skill; notes made on the fly capture details of actions and conversations, thoughts, questions, ideas. The teacher's notebook is a tool with long-term benefits. We strongly encourage the physical acts of writing and drawing, but whether in a paper record or electronic form, detailed notes help teachers make useful, individualized responses that engage students in discussions of both the work itself and the process. These kinds of conversations, grounded in specific observations, tend to stay focused on the work. This helps a teacher avoid generalizations and labeling and minimizes potential resistance and defensiveness on the part of students. In her influential concept of growth and fixed mindsets Carol Dweck (2008) strongly emphasizes the need for specific rather than general feedback on both students' products and process to support the development of a growth mindset and avoid unproductive labeling and fixed concepts of learning. Careful observation paired with specific notes provides the material for detailed responses and questions.

There are countless ways to incorporate a teacher's notebook as a pedagogical tool. Taking notes helps a teacher remember and return to students' questions and actions, some of which cannot be adequately addressed at the time they occur. Making notes on a group discussion and later sharing them with a class (including students' quotes) signals the importance the teacher places on the discussion and supports students' valuable contributions. Though a teacher may have a remarkable memory, making notes in the moment does two things effectively: 1) increases the chance that a small but meaningful response will not be forgotten, and 2) validates individuals' offerings as significant to the collective conversation. Structured note-taking methods such as a double-entry journal (one side for specific observation, the other side for reflections on what is happening) can also form the basis for action research and longer-term reflections on one's own teaching practice.

For students too, a reflection notebook offers a systematic way to collect and review personal responses and questions. It can also be a powerful part of the creative process for young artists. The artists' reflective notebook can become a place to develop creative work,

collect and review responses from others, generate ideas, gather memories, dreams, images, drawings, poems. For some, keeping a notebook or journal and adding to it regularly is natural. For others, it can be a chore or become overwhelming to their thinking. Teachers' support is critical: helping students to develop and productively use the material in their notebooks as well as to design and use alternate methods of documentation.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Action Research. Applying reflective approaches to assessment and evaluation involves all of the processes and strategies we have previously discussed -- including sharpening perception, shifting perspectives, collecting and analyzing data from a range of sources -- and adds more specifically defined criteria and analysis. Assessment brings the teacher-student power dynamic to the fore when it involves grading, advancement, status, and artistic opportunities and requires particularly well-defined and structured criteria and processes. Engaging students as partners in assessment—emphasizing intrinsic motivation and self-defined goals—while promoting high expectations and incorporating required external criteria and demands can be both rewarding and challenging for teachers. When students comprehend and are involved in defining criteria and when assessment tasks are authentic to the key skills and understandings to be assessed, reflective processes can make assessments more genuine, reliable, and useful. But it is hard work, particularly if including student voices in the process is new.

Facilitating students' self-assessment is an important part of a reflective approach to assessment. Self-assessment offers students opportunities to a) set their own goals, b) observe their ways of learning, c) monitor their behavior, d) evaluate their work (both process and product), and e) create their own plan for improvement. The main purpose of self-assessment is to put students in charge of their learning – to step back from experiences and think more deeply about their process and progress toward internal and external goals. Establishing the atmosphere and relationships for honesty and insight are key. Students must recognize the value of their independent and candid responses, in order to unhook from a search from the correct answer or what they think the teacher wants to hear.

Self-assessment can take many forms in instruction – from informal moments for self-monitoring of progress to formal grading using established criteria and rubrics. Both

ends of the spectrum require teachers to construct clear neutral questions and stimuli, make time and structure transitions, and process the experiences with students to develop their understanding and metacognitive awareness. Inviting students to identify their own learning goals is an excellent beginning. For example on the first day of a course we often ask students to write their answers to two questions: "*What do you want to get out of this course?"* and "*What will you have to do to get that out of it?"* Many students we have taught, from elementary to graduate school, are surprised to realize they might have a self-determined goal, especially in a required course. At the mid-term and at the end of the semester the students re-read these written "goals and responsibilities," using their initial ideas as a baseline for assessing their progress and newly discovered goals.

Productive self-assessment questions help students revisit their process, consider both positive and negative aspects of an experience, and explore their own intrinsic motivation. For example, questions such as, "*What has changed in my process since the beginning of the semester?" "Is anything easier or harder than I anticipated?" "How did my work develop?" "Was the outcome what I expected?"" What do I need to do to improve my work?" "Which of my goals have I achieved, are there any I'm still working on?" "What strategies can I use to reach those goals I haven't achieved?"* are at once evaluative and non-judgmental. Students are encouraged to recognize the non-linear nature of their learning and artistic processes and to gauge progress against their own expectations and standards. The development of such internal standards enhances self-regulation, persistence, and motivation in ways that tend not to occur if predetermined external expectations are the dominant or only criteria for assessment (Baum, Owen and Oreck, 1997; Rolheiser and Ross. 2001). A process orientation also helps students look at mastery of skills and understandings rather than only on evaluation of the final outcome (Dweck, 1996).

An increased use of rubrics in education over the past two decades has provided more opportunities for students to participate in creating their own learning goals and assessing themselves using defined criteria. A reflective approach to rubrics involves a variety of process- and product-oriented criteria including (but not limited to) affective (behavioral), interpersonal, creative, and metacognitive aspects of the experience. When done well, this approach to rubrics can stimulate higher order thinking and deeper reflection. Some of the potential drawbacks of rubrics – that students will try to follow the

criteria as a simple checklist in order to get a good grade – can be avoided by including a broader range of self-reflective criteria (Kohn, 2006).

As teachers pursue their curiosities into questions of learning and teaching and challenge themselves to scrutinize their own pedagogy, they can draw their data from reflective classroom practices. Systematic observation and description processes (described in the perceptual dimension section, above) along with other data such as field notes, observational checklists, video, surveys, rubrics, and lesson plans, allow a teacher to consciously and rigorously analyze and experiment – to conduct formal or informal action research, instructional evaluation, and alternative assessments. Empirical research heightens the need for keen observation, thoughtfully constructed research questions, and awareness of the power relationships in the classroom. In a time in the United States and elsewhere around the world where accountability through testing and external criteria of learning and teaching is on the rise even in the arts, teachers' abilities to use observational data and find alternative means of looking at and documenting students' learning and their own practices seem more important than ever.

Conclusion

In summing up our approach to reflective practice we return to Rodgers' Reflective Cycle. Each part of the cycle builds backward and forward connections in a continuous process. Reflection encompasses many seeming opposites. We process experience to simultaneously understand what happened and to prepare for what is next. Reflection is in part, an inward-looking process but is most successful, particularly in educational settings, when undertaken in a supportive community. As teachers, we use our expertise to help students move into reflective states of mind and productive structures but must actively step back from the role of "expert" to listen and stay open to what we hear that we did not—and cannot—anticipate. Reflective teachers face further contradictions when working in educational institutions incessantly pushing for coverage of more material and accountability based on prescriptive curriculum and tests. Reflection takes time. We must stay in the moment while taking the long view. Gaining experience with practical structures and various methods such as those we've outlined here can certainly help. But the attitude of openness and curiosity and the underlying belief that each person must make his or her

own meaning of experience cannot be boiled down to method or squeezed into boxes in a lesson plan. When we enter the artistic process of teaching, we embrace the unknown, responding to the shifting relationships and conditions that emerge and change through our own and our students' reflections.

References

Baum, S., Owen, S., & Oreck, B. (1997). Transferring individual self-regulation processes from arts to academics, *Arts Education Policy Review*, 98 (4), 32-39.

Carini, P. & Himley, M. (2000). *From another angle: Children's strengths and school standards*. NY: Teachers College Press.

Dewey, J. (1916/1944). *Democracy and education*. NY: The Free Press.

Dewey, J. (1933). *How We Think*. NY: Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Press.

Dweck, C. (1996). Social motivation: Goals and social-cognitive processes. In *Social Motivation,* ed. J. Juvnen and K. R. Wentzel*.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Dweck, Carol S.. (2008) *Mindset : The new psychology of success.* New York : Ballantine Books.

Joyce, M. (1973). First steps in teaching creative dance to children. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.

Kohn, A. (2006). The trouble with rubrics*. English Journal,* 95 (4) March 2006. Retrieved from http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/rubrics.pdf.

Lerman, L. & Borstel J. (2003). *Liz Lerman's critical response process: A method for getting useful feedback on anything you make, from dance to dessert*. Takoma Park, Md: Liz Lerman Dance Exchange.

McMillan, J. H. & Hearn, J. (2008). Student self-assessment: The key to stronger student motivation and higher achievement. *Educational Horizons*, 87(1). Fall 2008. pp. 40-49.

Nicoll, J. (2017). *The Place of Questions.* Retrieved from http://www.nicollandoreck.com/pdfs/The%20Place%20of%20Questions%20-%20Nicoll.pdf

Nicoll, J. *Reflections on Reflection.* (2011). Retrieved from http://www.nicollandoreck.com/pdfs/Some%20Reflections%20on%20Reflection.pdf.

Olsen, A. (2002). *Body and earth: An experiential guide*. Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England.

Prown, J. D. (1982). Mind in matter: An introduction to material culture theory and method**.** *Winterthur Portfolio***,** 17(1), Spring, 1982, pp. 1-19.

Rich, B. (Ed.) (2005). *Partnering arts education: A working model from ArtsConnection*. NY: The Dana Foundation. Retrieved from http://www.dana.org/Publications/PublicationDetails.aspx?id=44415.

Rodgers, C. R. (2002a). Defining reflection: Another look at John Dewey and reflective thinking. *Teachers College Record*. 104 (4), pp. 842-866.

Rodgers, C. R. (2002b). Seeing student learning: Teacher change and the role of reflection. *Harvard Educational Review*. 72(2), Summer 2002, pp. 230-253.

Rodgers, C.R. & Raider-Roth, M. B. (2006). Presence in teaching. *Teachers and teaching: Theory and practice*, 12 (3), June 2006, pp. 265–287.

Rolheiser, C., & Ross, J.A. (2001). *Student self-evaluation: What research says and what practice shows*. Retrieved November 23, 2005, from http://www.cdl.org/ resource-library/articles/self_eval.php?type=subject&id=4>.

Schöen, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How practitioners think in action.* NY: Basic Books.

Seidel, S. (1999). Wondering to be done: The collaborative assessment conference. In *Assessing Student Work: From grading to understanding.* David Allen (ed). New York: Teachers College Press, pp. 21-39

Smith, A. R. (1993). *Teaching children self-esteem*. Retrieved from: http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED387212.pdf.

Summary of Nicoll and Oreck Reflective Approaches
For Teachers and Students

- **Personal Dimension**
  - Integration
    - A process to integrate the physical, emotional and cognitive aspects of experiences
    - Changing symbol systems (journaling, drawing, moving, building, etc.)
    - Developing presence and awareness in teaching
  - Values Clarification: Discovering a Stance
    - Using recollection to clarify personal values
    - Self-scrutinizing coherence between values and practice
- **Perceptual Dimension**
  - Learning to See and Describe Experience (examples below)
    - Olsen's vision exercises
    - Prown Process
    - Video Description Process
  - Whole Body Response
    - Improvisational structures
    - Compositional structures (e.g., *Mover-Responder* – see, describe, and revise and *Dances from a Hat* – description and metaphor)
- **Pedagogical Dimension**
  - Structures for Reflection
    - Embedding reflection in instruction
    - Discussion and response structures (e.g., turn-and-talk, timed mini-labs, collaborative dialogue, written/drawn/physical response)
    - Protocols for responding to creative work and evaluating instruction (e.g., Liz Lerman's *Critical Response Process*, Harvard Project Zero's *Collaborative Assessment Conference*, and collaboratively-defined criteria)
  - Questioning and Discourse
    - Developing neutral questions for reflection
    - Making space for students' questions
    - Facilitating student autonomy in art presentation and response
  - Documentation and Notetaking
    - Making reflection visible
    - Using the teacher's notebook
    - Student journals for art-making and learning
  - Assessment, Evaluation, and Action Research
    - Student self-assessment (including goal-setting and responsibilities)
    - Intrinsic motivation and self-regulation
    - Exploring process and product
    - Use of observational data (e.g., field notes, checklists, video, surveys, rubrics, and lesson plans) in formal or informal action research, instructional evaluation, and alternative assessments