

Reflective Practice Checklist

James W. Porcaro

Toyama University of International Studies

Contact: *porcaro@pa.ctt.ne.jp*

While looking through some old file boxes recently, I came across a list of 30 points of reflective practice. I had composed this list some years ago as an internal memo in my position as academic supervisor at a language college in Japan for the staff of native-English-speaker teachers. I was struck by the continuing relevance of these points as I myself reflected on each of them again 25 years after writing them. I now submit these points for ETD readers to consider, with the following initial thought from the legendary Mary Finocchiaro (1988, p. 2), also written many years ago, with the clarity with which she always communicated with her fellow teachers: “[the] real issue in the ‘real world’ [is] that of concentrating on the continuing, essential, always more perfectible growth and development of the teacher.” It is indeed always we teachers who make all the difference for our students. The following list may serve readers to advance that endeavor in some way. Teachers may want to self-evaluate in the space provided before each item from 1 (to a low extent) to 5 (to the full extent).

To What Extent Do You:

1. ___ formulate clear, concrete objectives for your teaching in each of the curriculum components you instruct?
2. ___ carefully and thoroughly plan each lesson, each unit’s work, each term’s work, each year’s work?
3. ___ efficiently manage time to carry out effectively the plans you have made?
4. ___ establish well-understood, accepted expectations for students and yourself?
5. ___ maintain the instructional integrity of each class period with substantive, meaningful work?
6. ___ consciously bring to bear on each class presentation the most effective elements of your particular teaching style, methods, techniques, and resources?
7. ___ plan and conduct student-centered, learner-focused lessons?
8. ___ communicate objectives and expectations to students simply and clearly?
9. ___ take care to train students well in the teaching/learning methods and procedures of your lessons?
10. ___ ensure that students work habits and patterns are clearly and firmly established?
11. ___ provide consistent, constant, positive reinforcement of students’ achievements?
12. ___ effectively manage the classroom environment for smooth, productive, meaningful work?
13. ___ establish and develop an atmosphere of mutual purpose, cooperation, and respect in the classroom?
14. ___ successfully, consistently motivate your students and direct the achievement of the highest possible level of excellence in their work?
15. ___ make careful, systematic assessment and evaluation of the accomplishment of goals, objectives, and expectations previously set?
16. ___ address the matter of students’ personal growth and development as mature, responsible young adult men and women in your classroom instruction and in your personal relations with them?
17. ___ carry out class procedures and demonstrate your personal manner in fair, steady, honest, consistent ways?
18. ___ seek to identify and address your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher?
19. ___ feel successful, always challenged, confident, and happy about your teaching work?
20. ___ address your growth and development as a teacher through discussions with colleagues, visits to other teachers’ classes, attendance at workshops and conferences, and reading – in order to expand and enhance your teaching repertoire of skills, methods, techniques, and resources in each of the specific English program areas you instruct?
21. ___ look forward to the next school day and the next school year, setting new higher goals?

22. ___ seek and attain a deeper knowledge of the social and personality factors of your students that can influence their learning?
(Finocchiaro, 1988, p. 2).
23. ___ seek and attain a deeper cross-cultural understanding of perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of your students and yourself?
24. ___ draw from and assert the cultural background and individual identities of your students for lesson content and classroom interactions?
25. ___ learn from your interaction with students in ways that enhance your own personal and professional growth and development?
26. ___ seek to nurture and maintain more positive attitudes toward students, fellow teachers, school staff, and yourself as well?
(Finocchiaro, 1988, p. 2).
27. ___ recognize, understand, and take care to be sensitive to the importance and nature of human relations in the context of working in a Japanese school and living in Japan?
28. ___ recognize that communication with students and in the work environment is a multi-channeled, interactive process, and accept your personal responsibility for ensuring its effectiveness and success?
29. ___ recognize, acknowledge, and extend gratitude to others – students, fellow teachers, administrative and office personnel – for helpful, kind things done for you?
30. ___ develop and maintain an independent, healthy, satisfying personal private life outside of school to nurture your inner needs?

References

Finocchiaro, M. (1988). Teacher development: A continuing process. *English Teaching Forum*, 26(3), pp. 2-5.