

Ideas to go...

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Just Do It!

A running record or diary is a useful reflection tool. However, it's easy to procrastinate—especially when you're busy or tired. Eventually—and reluctantly—I made myself sit down at the computer. *Just five minutes*, I told myself. *I can do that*. Amazingly, once I got started, my thoughts came tumbling out; the five-minute limit forgotten. Don't put it off any longer. Get started with your journal. You'll find this writing exercise very useful in improving your teaching and interactions with students.

—Shared by Katie Holmes, Mississippi educator

Six Habits for Effective Reflection

Remember that lesson plan that bombed? Or the well-planned activity that didn't go as you expected? Here are some useful tips for identifying what went wrong and how to improve for the next time.

- Don't overreact and overgeneralize about your teaching abilities when something goes wrong in the classroom. Remember the lessons that have gone well and your successes as a teacher.
- Attain emotional and temporal distance from the failed lesson. Wait a day or two so that you can objectively review the plan. Be specific about what did and didn't work well.
- Take responsibility for the factors that were in your control so that you own them the next time around.
- Account for the external factors that contributed to the failed lesson plan.
- Talk with another faculty member or a mentor about the lesson. Prepare questions to ask, and expect to be asked questions.
- Investigate. Your problem undoubtedly has been a subject of research. Read what the experts have to say and their suggestions for improvement.

—Shared by Max Malikow, New York educator



reflection

Have ideas to share? E-mail them to membership@kdp.org.