



WRITING REFLECTION PAPERS

Reflection papers can be daunting. These papers tend to break from the standards expected for other academic papers, such as the use of first person, and it can feel tricky to move into that zone after writing research and other types of papers. They can also be an enjoyable experience, because they provide opportunities to share how you felt about material or an exercise, what you liked and/or disliked about it, or even to argue or vent about it.

Like other papers, it is useful to have a thesis, focus, or purpose statement at the beginning. For example, if the material or exercise provided an epiphany for you, provide a statement in the first paragraph mentioning the enlightenment and then continue that theme in the body of the paper. This will help create cohesiveness.

Often, instructors are open to a more casual style or formatting for reflection papers. Unlike other academic papers, speaking in the first person is allowed. However, while instructors might be looking for something somewhat more relaxed in those ways, that usually doesn't include using informal language (slang/colloquialisms, contractions, etc.). Usually, an instructor wants to see some source material integrated, but the main purpose of reflection papers is to do just that – reflect. This means that the majority of the paper should have your thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Since each instructor can have different expectations, please check with yours if you have any questions!



Things to Consider

- ◆ Show you understood the course material
- ◆ At a minimum, have a clear focus or theme
- ◆ Write personally but not colloquially

Reference:

Seattle PI (2018). "Keys to writing a reflection paper." Retrieved from:
<https://education.seattlepi.com/keys-writing-reflection-paper-5796.html>

By Alena Rogers

Peer Writing Consultant,

Antioch Virtual Writing Center