

## Chapter 8 Reflection and Reflective Practice

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### Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

- Identify the role and importance of reflection in the mentoring process;
- Suggest practical approaches that mentors can use to engender deeper reflection.
- Understand some common barriers to the effective use of reflection by school mentors and how these may be overcome;

### Introduction

The specific focus of this chapter is on reflection and how mentors can harness its potential to develop teacher's proficiency and self-efficacy. This chapter will consider critically how mentors can support teachers to develop their reflective skills and enhance the professional success of both parties. This is important, regardless of the career phase of the mentee, so that they can best respond to the challenges and opportunities of their role. Promoting reflection and reflective practice aligns closely with the aspects of mentoring that are set out in Chapter 1, most especially the counselling role, and it is an important element of the diverse functions of a mentor.

The notion of reflection in this chapter is encapsulated at a practical level throughout the chapter is given very succinctly by Hatton and Smith's (2005: 40) definition:

*'deliberate thinking about action with a view to its improvement'*.

This will be complemented by a second definition (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2012, p5), which encompasses both reflection and the associated actions, termed 'reflective practice'. This, more detailed definition provides a lengthier but more complete definition and alludes to the importance of the 'mind set' of the people undertaking reflection, the changes that are wrought by reflection and makes explicit reference to the intended changes:

*'A disposition to enquiry, incorporating the process through which student, early career and experienced teachers structure or restructure actions, beliefs, knowledge and theories that inform teaching for the purpose of professional development.'*

This chapter will focus on how to promote a sustained approach to actively and analytically thinking about the real-life situations encountered by a mentee. As the definition of reflective practice implies, reflection is inextricably linked to action and the chapter considers how mentors can use action as the focus of reflection and how reflection can inform future actions. Although reflection does not automatically enhance pupil performance, it is nevertheless a powerful mechanism to improve teaching and teacher understanding. By so doing, it supports the development of flexibility and responsiveness that are needed in a rapidly changing educational landscape. Crucially, it is a process and associated outlook that can readily be embedded into all mentoring interactions, making it a powerful and accessible strategy.

### **Reflection: a multi-faceted process**

Reflection is treated in the following chapter as both a 'lens' through which events are seen and analysed, and through its contribution to contextual analysis and action planning, a tool for enhancing practice. Although the chapter focuses on the practicalities of reflection, it is important that mentors and mentees understand that different writers have had different views of reflection. Three of these are described briefly to illustrate some of the many ways in which reflection has been considered. It should be noted that the models focus largely on teaching, but for those working with experienced mentees, it is possible to substitute other processes, such as decision making, leading, managing, as appropriate to the context.

**John Dewey** (1933) described it as a rational and sequential process, which may remind you of the scientific process, not least the use of the terms 'testing' and 'hypothesis'. He sees reflection as an intellectual process that happens recurrently, punctuated and fuelled by experience, that in turn form the basis of the next round of reflection. However, he does believe that reflection can ultimately provide a solution to the problem and, as such, can have an endpoint.

Figure 1 represents the relationship between the different stages of the reflective cycle, and signals the importance of analysis at all stages:

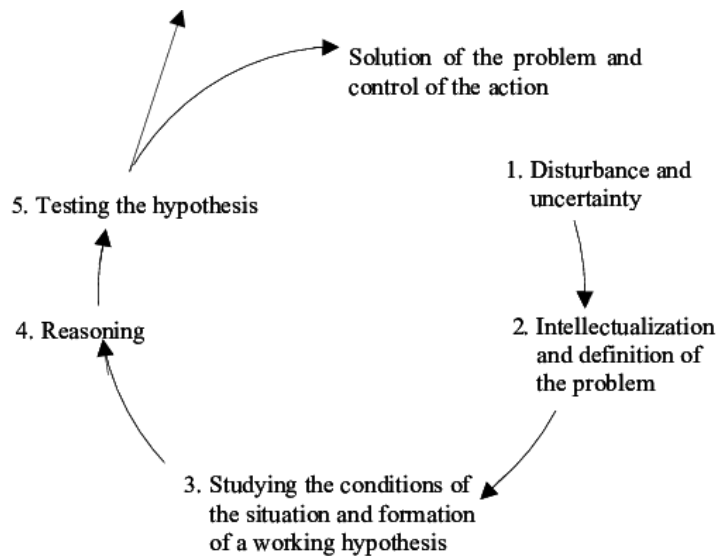


Figure 1. Diagram of Dewey's reflective cycle such as. the one shown [Copied from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255622722\\_Reflection\\_and\\_Continuing\\_Professional\\_Development\\_Implications\\_for\\_Online\\_Distance\\_Learning](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255622722_Reflection_and_Continuing_Professional_Development_Implications_for_Online_Distance_Learning)]

In line with the definition given above, he understood the focus of the process to be problem-solving he notes that those undertaking reflection need to bring doubt (brought about by a 'disturbance' to their deliberations). This questioning approach is what distinguishes reflective actions from the habitual 'intuitive' actions, which ones teachers do without consciously thinking about them.

A case study that illustrates how Dewey's ideas of reflection might look in practice is set out here, with the corresponding stages:

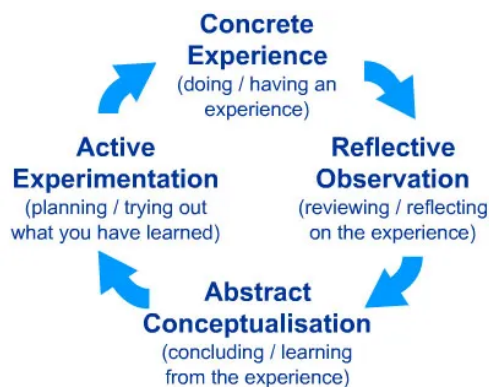
1. Disturbance/ uncertainty: *What challenges or difficulties did you experience during the lesson? Did anything happen that you weren't expecting? Were there any decisions that you made during the lesson but of which you weren't very confident?*
2. Intellectualisation/ defining the problem: *Was the main problem that she was disturbing other pupils, or that you felt she undermined your authority in the classroom? How has she behaved in other lessons that you have observed her in? Has she behaved similarly when other tasks were set in your lessons?*

3. Studying situation/ formulating a hypothesis: *Why were you hesitant about moving the pupil from where she chose to sit, when she was disruptive? Do you still feel that it's not 'your' class? Did you worry that you wouldn't have any options if she point blank refused to do what she was asked? Why do you think she was disruptive?*
4. Reasoning: *Your major issue is that she undermined your standing in front of the other pupils. A way to solve this would be to establish that you **are** the teacher and that the lesson runs according to your plan. This could be re-established by you starting the lesson with the regular class teacher nearby, but not in the room and signalling that **you** are leading the lesson. You noted that the task that triggered the outburst was an extended writing task. You understand that writing is important, not least for assessment purposes, but that there are alternatives in the short term. You will look at ways to promote learning that do not require a lot of writing and consider, in the medium term, how to develop confidence in writing for the pupils who find it challenging.*
5. Testing the hypothesis: The two hypotheses (either the loss of standing or being asked to write is the trigger for the outburst) will be tested by planning and executing a lesson that enables the exploration of the chosen options: *You will reinforce your role by ensuring a swift and purposeful start to the lesson, making it clear that this is happening because **you** have chosen this approach. You will choose an activity that is intended to be engaging to all the pupils, but that does not involve lots of writing, since this may have been what triggered the last confrontation.*

**David Kolb's** (1984) model differs in a few, subtle ways. Firstly, he explicitly states that personal experience is the 'engine' of reflection, with which it starts and upon which any intellectualisation rests. Secondly, he assigns a different role to the participant at each stage of the cycle. Thirdly, Kolb recognises the importance of experience that is not intellectual and so allows for the emotions and physical experiences that are important aspects of experience. A fourth distinction is that the learner moves through a four-part cycle again and again, with an end-point never being reached, because further experience inevitably presents new problems and questions. Like Dewey, Kolb understood reflection to be a purely intellectual process,

whereas more recent academics dispute this omission and suggest that emotional responses are an important part of any experience and also have a strong influence on subsequent thinking and actions.

Figure 2. Diagram of Kolb's cycle [This one is copied from: from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html> ]



1. The '*concrete experience*' stage puts the reflector in the role of actor in the situation. Their experiences at this stage incorporate sensory and emotional experiences, as well as observations. These experiences are captured as a description by the mentor (or video or audio recording, if permitted) of events. It must be noted that the actor's written account will inevitably be a retrospective observation and so may be prone to errors of recall and this is an important reason for conducting the de-brief as promptly as possible. Suitable questions for this stage would be simple prompt questions,

*How well did you feel the pupils met your learning intentions?*

*Which aspects of the lesson went best, did you think?*

*How closely did you manage to stick to your lesson plan?*

2. *Reflective observation* is the stage at which the descriptions of events and feelings are subjected to an in-depth analysis. The analysis seeks to link what happened to how the teachers understands it. Inconsistences in understanding, areas of unfamiliarity and unexpected events should all be probed through questioning and

seeking elaboration of descriptions. Questions that convey a suitably analytical tone might include,

*'Did (named aspect of the lesson) go as you had anticipated? If so, what aspects of your planning do you think underpinned that success? If not, what hadn't you predicted when you planned the lesson?'*

*'Has the experience of teaching the lesson identified any areas about which you now feel the need to find out more?'*

*'What was in your mind at the point when you moved away from the planned lesson and did something different instead?'*

The stage of reflective observation is very significant, as it marks one of the points at which experience is transformed to give it deeper meaning.

3. *Abstract conceptualisation* follows on and is the stage during which the understanding generated by reflective observation is extrapolated to identify possible future actions and responses. It is the point at which multiple possible explanations and actions can be explored and is crucial for the introduction of the 'doubt' that Dewey felt was important for reflection. Some would argue that identifying multiple possibilities is the key role of reflection, and is certainly the way in which reflection is raised from being formulaic to being authentically challenging of accepted and routine practices or beliefs. So, during abstract conceptualisation, the mentee's observation that he omitted part of his planned lesson because he realised that he didn't have time to complete everything he had planned for, might be met with questions such as,

*Are you generally finding it difficult to estimate how long activities will take? What strategies have you used to monitor timings of lessons? Was there any aspect of the earlier activities today that made them especially hard to plan for timings or take longer than originally anticipated? Were all the pupils slower in completing tasks than you had anticipated, or was it a sub-group who worked more slowly? If it was a sub-group, are they pupils who you might have expected to take longer? Were there*

*any 'down times' in the lesson, when time wasn't being used for learning that could have been? If so, what caused these and could they be avoided to give more learning time? In what different ways could you modify future plans, in the light of this experience?*

Note that the questions are open, and intended to stimulate thinking about the multiple possible causes, here of a mis-timed lesson, without privileging any one answer. At the conclusion of this stage, the to be taken in stage 4 should be agreed, to avoid the mentee leaving the meeting still unclear as to what to do next.

4. *Active experimentation*. This phase is characterised by the enactment of one or more of the solutions identified during abstraction phase. Since the identified solutions are only provisional solutions to the 'problem', their impact will then need to be reflected on further. Thus, the actions that arise provide further concrete experiences, which may well have a new focus, and so the cycle starts over again.

Reflective task 8.1 To what extent do your own experiences lead you to support the idea that professional learning is primarily an intellectual activity? Have you had any experiences, your own or someone else's, where the emotional response of the adult learner has shaped the learning? Where do you feel the balance between intellectual and emotional responses lies?

**Donald Schön** (1987) used earlier work to think about how professionals learn and how they can be helped to develop reflective skills to improve their practice. Like Kolb, he viewed experience as a key stimulus for reflection. A key difference, however, is that he sees reflection as a tool for making unrecognised knowledge, that informs Dewey's 'routine actions' explicit, and so open to questioning, change and improvement. The greater their understanding of why they do what they do, the greater their capacity to adapt and change rapidly. This is a characteristic of an expert teacher (see Chapter 12 on a description of expert teachers). Schön distinguishes, in a way very similar to Dewey, between '*knowledge-in-action*', which is tacit knowledge that informs daily routines, and '*reflection on action*', which is

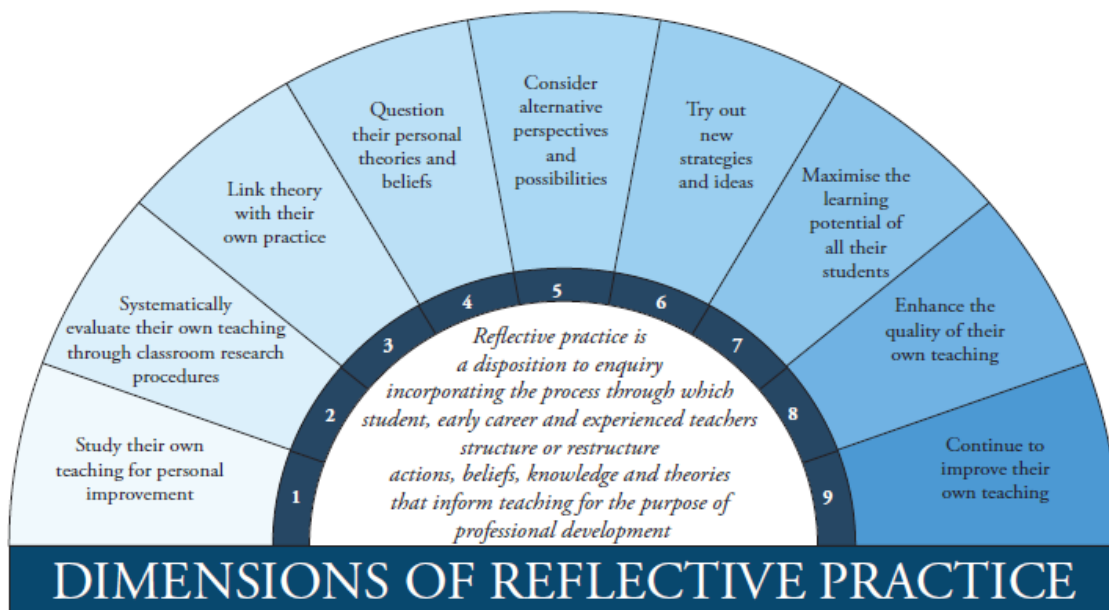
purposeful retrospective thinking about previous actions. This distinction augers the need for carefully structured questioning by the mentor in order to reveal the tacit knowledge, see the section on questioning below. He believes that repeated reflection on action will make teachers more able to respond to unexpected situations, because they have a wider range of rehearsed interventions to call upon. With repeat rehearsal, such reflection will enlarge the stock of intuitive responses that will only be evident in actions. This means that the accumulation of knowledge-in-action over a time is not just a way to improve the technical aspects of teaching, or even to achieve a greater understanding of the role, but gives rise to highly accomplished teaching. This long-term, holistic endpoint distinguishes the model from the Dewey's or Kolb's

Reflective task 8.2 Think about an excellent teacher with whom you have worked. Do you agree with Schön that much of what they did they did not have to consciously plan for? Or, were they able to talk about the basis of the decisions they made, if asked? As a mentor how would you go about enabling your mentee to reflect on action to improve their teaching?

A more recent author (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2012) has provided a framework for reflection that synthesises the ideas of many key writers, including those considered above, to provide a nine-part framework of reflective practice. This is shown, in summary, in Figure 3. Although drawing upon a vast body of literature, it is constructed to provide a clear summary of the key processes that underpin reflective practice by both mentor and mentee. Note that the dimensions are shown as intersecting at the description of reflective practice, but is as much a cycle as the previous models, since the final dimension ('continue to improve teaching' takes you back to dimension 1 ('study their own teaching')). The model provides a useful reminder of the different areas of focus during sustained reflection. This that can be shared and used to guide mentor and mentee practice. Although the last process (9.) is a medium- and long-term process, and processes, 7. and 8. the strategic intentions of mentoring, the earlier ones (1. to 6.) can be executed as soon as the mentee is teaching (or executing other skills, such as leading or managing).



Figure 3. Dimensions of reflective practice (Diagram in Zwozdiak-Myers, 2012, p.5)



Dimension 1. Study their own teaching for personal improvement This attitude of analysing how the teacher impacts upon learning is a crucial aspect of reflection and pre-cursor to development. Teachers need to understand that pupils and teachers' behaviours are hugely inter-related, and teachers need to be aware of how they can alter events in the classroom.

Dimension 2. Systematically evaluate their own teaching through classroom research procedures. This means that teachers need to consider evidence on the relationship between what they do and how pupils learn. For this to be studied over time, it is essential that teachers evaluate their work regularly and record their evaluations for future consideration. Their evaluations need to focus not simply on what they did but on evidence of outcomes, specifically the extent to which intended outcomes were met.

Dimension 3. Link theory with their own practice. This may be published theory but is likely also to be personal 'theories' and assumptions.

Dimension 4. Question their personal theories and beliefs. Theories are only as good as the practice they support and must never be viewed as 'beyond suspicion'.

Evaluation requires explicit recognition of theirs, formal or informal, and robust evaluation, preferably supported by a mentor or critical friend.

Dimension 5. Consider alternative perspectives and possibilities. Again, these may be identified by individual research, but are frequently offered by a mentor or colleagues.

Dimension 6. Try out new strategies and ideas. Knowing alternatives is not enough, they have to be considered seriously and implemented, as appropriate to the situation.

Dimension 7. Maximise the learning potential of all their students. The deepened understanding of their own role in shaping learning, and the concurrent recognition of the pupils as the environment to which teaching must be matched, will enable a teacher to become ever more effective.

Dimension 8. Enhance the quality of their own teaching This is achieved by carrying out the processes described in the earlier dimensions. It should be noted that the quality of teaching does not always bring about demonstrable rise in assessment performance but may also manifest itself in shifts in other ways, such as engagement in lessons or attendance at lessons.

Dimension 9. Continue to improve their own teaching. This dimension requires a sustained effort to critique practice, to understand changing educational situations in which their practice is located and to respond to unexpected events and opportunities.

Reflective task 8.3 Looking at Zwozdiak-Myers' (2012) definition of reflective practice, and the nine dimensions, to consider how they might use the 9 dimensions to assist the mentee in developing reflective skills and self-evaluation skills.

Reflective task 8.4 How do you think that you might apply each of the four models described (Dewey's, Kolb's, Schön's or Zwozdiak-Myers') to your own work as a mentor? Are there any modifications you would want to make in order to capture more accurately the process that you believe will best develop reflection in a mentee?

## **Personal and professional attributes for reflection**

As with all aspects of mentoring, the process of reflection should be mutualistic, with both mentor and mentee showing a 'disposition to enquiry'. Least this sounds slightly abstract, the following account, based on Dewey's writing, shows the qualities needed in order to foster deep reflection and undergo what Kemmis et al. (2014) call 'collaborative self-development'.

1. *Open-mindedness* As the previous exemplar questions illustrate, the willingness to consider multiple factors when analysing a situation is essential. This can include aspects that one of the pair consider implausible. For example, inexperienced teachers frequently see disruptive behaviour as simply a failure by a pupil to exercise self-restraint, whilst the mentor may need to advance the possibility that it was a symptom of the work being unsuitable in some way. These might include the work being too demanding, irrelevant or simply that the instructions were not understood in the first place. Similarly, open-mindedness requires mentors to consider alternatives to their preferred routines and guards against the limitations of an 'imitative apprenticeship' style of mentoring. Being open-minded requires both parties to accept challenge to their practices and beliefs, and to consider the validity of alternative views. For this reason, it can be an uncomfortable process, that needs handling sensitively.
2. *Responsibility* means the acceptance that decisions about actions will have consequences for all involved. As well as recognising this, a responsible teacher accepts the consequences of their decisions, whether they affect an individual pupil, a colleague, a whole class or the entire school's ethos. Exercising responsibility should not, however, make the mentor or mentee averse to any risk, as risk-taking can lead to breakthroughs in understanding. What should be thought about is how to mitigate it, for example by having a backup plan, arranging for additional help to be at hand if needed.
3. *Wholeheartedness* is a term that captures the interest in, and enthusiasm for, the subject being reflected upon. It can be equated to the motivation of the mentoring team to solve the problem at hand as effectively as possible. Wholeheartedness will be demonstrated by both parties being willing to engage in open-minded consideration of issues, and by their taking their respective responsibilities seriously.

Reflective task 8.5 Think about a mentee, or colleague, with whom you have worked and thought was making (or had already made) good progress as a teacher. Consider the extent to which they demonstrated the three qualities listed. Focus on what they said and what they did; what were the 'markers' of their 'disposition'? Now consider how **you** could demonstrate those same qualities in the way that you worked with a mentee.

Reflective task 8.6 Think about how you might set about introducing the idea of the importance of these qualities to a mentee with whom you were going to work.

### **How to promote reflection**

This chapter has considered what reflection is, the processes associated with it and what the potential benefits are. The following section looks at possible actions that a mentor can take to promote reflection in their mentee, as well as themselves.

1. *Model reflection yourself.* As part of this process, a mentor may need to model reflection as well as eliciting it in their mentee. Attitudes and beliefs need to be articulated and shared openly, and your mentee should also be able to observe the teaching that you do based on these. Admitting when you are having difficulties or having a teaching problem to solve does not make you a poor role model; it gives you a valuable opportunity to share how you undergo reflection to make progress with the issue. Work at demonstrating the three personal qualities of open-mindedness, responsibility and whole heartedness as you describing your reflections. Being open does not mean that you are competing with your mentee for attention, rather it reassures them that everyone has challenges and that these can be addressed by approaching them reflectively then acting upon those reflections. By being open, you give your mentee a plausible role model and will encourage them to share openly, in turn.
2. *Demonstrate mutualism in reflection.* This is closely related to 1. but should remind you that mentoring offers mentors valuable professional development if approached in this light. You should invite thoughts and ideas from your mentee about your own as well as their practice. Exchanging perspectives is

likely to give a more rounded analysis and a wider set of possible options to evaluate and draw upon.

3. *Ensure access to a range of other models of reflection.* Observing other teachers is eye opening, regardless of how experienced a teacher you are. However, observations are likely to result in much better learning experiences for the observer if they focus on a particular skill. Having access arranged to a variety of lessons, then listening afterwards to the teacher's reflections will give a mentee insight into different approaches to reflection
  
  4. *Have reflective conversations that encourage a shift in thinking.* The importance of matching questions to a reflective focus has been exemplified previously in this chapter and is part of the broader mentor role. For example, in Chapter 1 you met Shannon and Anderson's (1998) expectation that a mentor will clarify and probe. Likewise, Dewey's and Kolb's model both state the expectation that questioning will occur, even though they associate different types of questions at different stages in a reflective cycle. It is, therefore, useful, to consider possible questions according to the depth of reflection that they will engender. The framework that follows (Zwozdiak-Myers, 2012) rests on the work of a range of writers, but there is general concordance about the qualities of three distinct categories of discourse. They may well remind you of the conversations and questions associated with the first three stages of Kolb's (1987) cycle.  
The shift in the focus of the conversation are demonstrated by the differential use of a How? What? Why? When? Next? framework.
- A. Descriptive conversations. These are discussions about what, in the perceptions of those involved in the conversation, happened. These are almost a verbal reconstruction of events and are the most common type of comments made during lesson observations. Despite the unfiltered quality of them, it should be remembered that what is noted is what the observer judges as important enough to record and this is why a mentee might helpfully

suggest a focus for the observation. This stage of the conversation is characterised by 'What?' and 'Who?' questions. So, in a typically descriptive observer's account we find answers to the question of 'What happened?' 'Who were the pupils whose learning was not as expected?'

*09.00 Pupils come in, X greets them at the door and tells them to get their jotters and pencils out.*

*09.08 J shouts that she has no pencil, N. joins in saying that he has lost his jotter.*

Although these descriptions provide a hugely believable account of a lesson, they convey little meaning that can be used, in this form, to improve practice.

- B. Comparative conversations. These involve evaluative consideration of what happened. They may involve comparing different aspects of one lesson, or comparing the lesson taught to the plan that was prepared, or comparing the lesson to previous ones. At this stage, early teachers are commonly thinking in positivistic way, believing that there is one right answer. (More on the different stage of a teacher development are given in Chapter 12.) Such comparisons naturally give rise to questions about the reasons for the differences observed. These are typically 'What (was different or the same)?' and 'Why?' questions. For example,

*What was different about J. and N.'s behaviour today?*

*Why do you think that they behaved differently to the way they have behaved in your other lessons?*

- C. Critical conversations These are the conversations in which contextual factors are considered, and through which a relativistic understanding of the teachers role is explored. It corresponds to Orland-Barak's (2010) action of 'connecting experiences, beliefs and knowledge'. Such conversations look at the role of context and background factors in shaping events in the classroom. Over time, such conversations will help an early teacher to understand that there

not 'right answers' but that the best action depends on the situation. Nevertheless, there are important principles, such as upholding pupil well-being and treating all pupils equably, which set the boundaries to the range of acceptable solutions. These wider, contextual considerations should be brought to bear at this stage. Such exploration will be supported by further 'How?' and 'why?' questions, this time with a more analytical focus. 'Next?' questions, which may have been considered at the comparative conversation stage, will yield a wider range of alternatives at this stage, as the multiple contributory factors are brought into focus. For example, a mentor might wish to raise the question about how disadvantage or learning difficulties may have had a bearing upon events;

*How might J. have felt as you emphasised the need for a pencil at the start, knowing that she didn't have one?*

*How could you ensure that all pupils had the necessary equipment without causing distress to those who don't, or can't bring it?*

*Next lesson, what strategy will you try out to avoid disruptions regarding equipment? What alternative strategies can you envisage and why do you think that the one you have chosen is the best option in this situation?*

*Which school systems could you use to find out whether J. or N. have support needs that might explain their apparent lack of preparedness?*

5. Balance the demand and support provided by your intervention. In chapter 1, you met Daloz (2012) model, which shows the importance of offering high levels of both challenge and support for optimal development. Posing searching questions about practice, assumptions and belief can be productively challenging, especially if support is available to help the mentee act. However, a mentee who is feeling anxious may hear even questions intended to elicit description as veiled criticism. This is a judgement that a mentor must make each time they work with the mentee.

Reflective task 8.7 Consider these five strategies to engender deeper reflection and evaluate the relative importance of each of them in your own professional development and that of the mentees with whom you have worked.

### **Reflecting on the impact of reflection**

You should, by now, understand that reflection is an important way to enhance a mentee's practice, as well as your own. You may also appreciate that reflection requires commitment and time of both mentor and mentee. It is, therefore, important that you evaluate the impact that reflection and follow up action is having, in order to ensure that you are working as productively as possible. You have now encountered various frameworks with which to describe and self-audit practice, but assessing what you do is not the same thing as knowing that it is working! A word of caution, however, other studies have noted that reflection commonly does not produce a quantifiable difference in 'performance (Lee and Sabatino, 1998) but is, nevertheless, rated as very helpful by the vast majority of participants. The inference of this is that the affective benefits may be more discernible in the short term than the practical ones. The very slight increments in practice over the short time of an evaluative study is illustrated by the typical time scales given for professional development, shown in chapter 12.

Previously documented outcomes, which may serve as a marker of positive impact for which you can look, include:

- Participants feel that they have a safe space in which to explore issues and ideas without judgement. (Foster-Fishman et al., 2005)
- Learners who are guided in reflection show a greater ability to understand what they have been taught and how to apply the understanding in practice. Participants reported that this benefit endures after the intervention, which provides further evidence of long-term benefits that would require longer-term tracking to demonstrate (Lee and Sabatino, 1998).
- Reflection offers an enhanced learning experience, with learners reporting that they learn more easily and faster. This may be associated with the meta-



cognitive (thinking about learning) quality of reflective conversations (Lee and Sabatino, 1998).

- Possibly associated with the existence of a safe space in which to undertake exploratory conversations, coupled with the improved experience of learning, participants feel that they are more empowered in their learning (Foster-Fishman et al., 2005).

Reflective task 8.8 Consider your own experiences of being reflective, along with those of any mentees with whom you have worked. To what extent does the absence of discernible short-term impacts make you feel that reflection may be an over-rated tool for understanding or development? Can you identify other impacts of reflection, not listed here, that you have experienced or observed?

## **Summary**

The chapter has talked about some different theories about reflection and the ways in which it can be viewed, as either an intellectual and rational process, or a more holistic one. You have seen that there is a convergence of thinking on the idea reflection is deep and sustained thinking, with the aim of solving problems and enhancing practice. A cycle of reflection, as a way of understanding events, and, through this understanding planning future action is central to all the different models of reflection that have been considered. Effective questioning can lead to wide and deep thinking about the circumstances that cause a problem, and likely solutions. Personal attributes of both mentor and mentee, such as willingness to share experiences and ideas openly, empathy with the position of others and commitment to development, contribute to the success of reflection, and play a vital role in shaping probing conversations that will engender deep understanding. The different models concur that reflection takes the form of an iterative cycle, which enhances understanding and, ultimately empowers teachers and their development. Although quantifiable benefits of reflection may not be seen immediately it provides essential support in the short-term and enhances professional learning over the long-term.

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## Further reading

Zwozdiak-Myers, P. (2012). *The Teacher's Reflective Practice Handbook*. Abingdon: Routledge.