

Reviewing and Reflecting About Your Work

Reviewing and reflecting about your finished work is one of the most important and valuable aspects of any learning experience as it gives you the opportunity to do some or all of the following –

- Identify if you achieved your goals and to what extent.
- Discuss your achievements, both positive and negative.
- Identify your strengths and weaknesses.
- Set goals for the future based upon your reflective findings.

As your teacher I can learn a lot about what you have achieved by looking at the photographs and design work etc. However I often learn a great deal more from a well written evaluation.

How Long Should It Be?

This is a difficult question as there will be times when $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page may just be enough and other times when you might want to write 2 pages or more. So my answer is; it is long enough when you have said everything that needs to be said.

Vocabulary

Where and when possible try to use the terms and vocabulary that relate to the topic and work being undertaken. It shows me that you developing the language skills related to the subject and it makes you sound intelligent. Follow [this link](#) to a vocabulary guide that will help to get you started

The 'Feel Good Statements' Method

'I like my work'. 'My work is perfect'. 'I wouldn't change a thing'.

These are what I call 'feel good statements' that are written to make you feel good about your work and get you out of saying anything else about it. The problem is that they are just empty statements that have no supporting evidence to back them up.

So if you write a 'feel good statement' you must back it up with evidence to support it. Without the evidence, these types of statements will get you few if any marks.

A Procedure List Approach

Some students think that if they tell me what they did in step by step point form or write down all of the steps that I told them to do, that this is a good way to evaluate their work. Please don't do this!! I already know the procedure, so telling me again step by step is a waste of your time and is a boring read.

The Correct Process

Writing a reflective document of this type does not have to be a difficult task and by following a few simple steps you can do it with great success.

1.) Describe the Process.

- Briefly describe the task.
- Describe your overall vision and the specific goals you set out to achieve for this task. Discuss your brainstorming and design development, and your original plans. Were there particular sources of inspiration influenced you for this task? (Name specific photos/photographers, where applicable).
- Describe how your photo shoot/s went and any hiccups along the way. What changes did you make, and why?

Continued next page

2.) Discuss Your Results

- Look at EACH of your final prints. Tell me about the following;
- Subject matter
- Elements & Principles of Design & Compositional Techniques used (rule of thirds, framing, colour, pattern, texture, etc (see *Vocabulary Guide*)
- Camera Angles & distance from subject
- Focal length, sharpness, exposure & depth of field qualities. What settings did you use, and why? Was this intentional?
- Processing methods (using Photoshop or other) used
- Impact on the viewer- mood, atmosphere, emotional response, ambience (see *Vocabulary Guide*)
- Is this a successful photo? What could improve it?

3.) Evaluate Your Achievements

- How well did you achieve your goals for this task?
- What do you like best about your photos? What do you like the least?
- What problems did you have and how did you overcome them?
- What will skills or abilities did you learn?
- What would you like to explore or improve upon next time?

Finally

BE HONEST. You will not achieve higher marks by leaving out what went wrong. At the same time don't go beating yourself up about everything as even if your work is not as good as you want it to be there will always be some positives to discuss.

If there are issues, then try to identify a solution that you will try to put in place next time. Learning is as much about making a few mistakes as it is about getting it right. It only becomes a problem if you keep making the same mistakes over and over again and the thing is that if you are evaluating and reflecting properly this is less likely to happen.