

Questions to Guide Students in Reflecting on Their Own Writing

Self-reflection can help students become better learners and more efficient writers. You can help students acquire a habit of reflective practice by asking them to write about one or more of the questions below on the day their paper is due. It is usually a good idea to ask them to do this writing in class and to limit the number of questions to three or fewer for any given paper.

Your goal is to prompt students to read the assignment and their own work carefully, to assess their own strengths and weaknesses as writers, and to provide other information that will help you to be a better reader of their writing.

Questions focused on the assignment, the paper, and peer responses:

- In your own words, describe the assignment to which you responded.
- Summarize your paper in six or fewer sentences; be sure to start the summary with your thesis.
- What did your other readers say about this paper?'

Questions on writing the paper:

- How well does this paper demonstrate your strengths as a writer?
- How confident are you about this paper? Why?
- Are there places in the paper about which you feel unsure? Why?
- About how much time did you spend writing this paper?
- Describe your writing process for this paper.
- If you were to revise this paper, what changes would you make?
- At this point in time, what are your strengths and weaknesses as a writer?

Questions on what was learned from comments on previous papers:

- What were the most useful comments you received on your previous paper?
- How did you try to incorporate the advice I gave previously into this paper?
- How has your paper improved based on what you learned from writing your last paper?
- What advice about writing would you give your peers based on what you've learned from writing this and/or other papers?
- Are there any comments you don't agree with or would like me to reconsider?