

Figure 5.6: Metacognition Last Paper Directions

Step one: Read these excerpts from “Session 9: Thinking About Thinking—Metacognition” (Darling-Hammond et al., n.d.) in preparation for writing your paper.

“Sometimes people use the phrase ‘going meta’ when talking about metacognition, referring to the process of stepping back to see what you are doing, as if you were someone else observing it. ‘Going meta’ means becoming an audience for your own performance—in this case, your own intellectual performance. When a person is learning to play golf, for example, seeing a videotape of her own swing can help her to understand what she is doing well and what she is doing poorly. Typically, we do not know what we are doing when we do it, but it is very hard to improve a process that we are engaged in if we do not have a sense of what we are doing in the moment.” (p. 158)

“Even a skilled professional ballet dancer relies on mirrors to help him understand what he looks like and what he is doing as he dances. He has to be able to see his performance as others might see it before he can begin to improve it. The ability to view our own performance is particularly useful when we learn physical skills. However, cognitive work is often invisible and cannot be directly observed.” (p. 158)

John Dewey (1933), a progressive educator, said, “As long as our activity glides smoothly along from one thing to another . . . there is no call for reflection. Difficulty or obstruction in the way of reaching a belief brings us, however, to a pause. In the suspense of uncertainty, we metaphorically climb a tree; we try to find some standpoint from which we may survey additional facts and, getting a more commanding view of the situation, decide how the facts stand related to one another.” (p. 14)

Step two: Read these excerpts about three kinds of metacognitive knowledge from psychologist John H. Flavell (1979).

“Awareness of knowledge—understanding what one knows, what one does not know, and what one wants to know. (‘I know that I understand that plants need sunlight but I do not know why.’) This category may also include an awareness of others’ knowledge. (‘I know that Sarah understands long division, so I’ll ask her to explain this problem to me.’)

“Awareness of thinking—understanding cognitive tasks and the nature of what is required to complete them. (‘I know that reading this newspaper article will be easier for me than reading my textbook.’)

“Awareness of thinking strategies—understanding approaches to directing learning.” (p. 160)

Step three: Answer this question: Where were you in September, and where are you now? Write a paper (at least five pages using twelve-point font, single spacing, one-inch margins on all four sides, numbered pages, and a title page—not included with the five pages—with a creative title and proper heading). Make it a metacognitive summary of your year in this course. You aren’t limited to five pages, but that should be enough space.

Please address the ways you have grown intellectually, socially, and emotionally as a result of the coursework and pedagogical experiences of the past ten months. Use your metacognitive notes from your assessment portfolio to support your assertions. Remember these notes (and your scores) are the data, and your analysis will be your statements (grounded in the data) of the different ways you grew and developed.

Be sure to quote yourself and provide the date as an in-text citation. For example, if you quote yourself as having written “I stayed up so late studying for this test—I can’t believe I didn’t pass it” in October, include the month and year of the note following the statement. Later, you might quote yourself as having made a discovery: “After completing the two-week sleep journal, I realize that back in September I was studying more and sleeping less; now I sleep more and study less” (January 2019).

You may do outside research if you wish. If you do, please include a bibliography. If you don’t, no bibliography is necessary.

Source: Adapted from Darling-Hammond, L., Austin, K., Cheung, M., & Martin, D. (n.d.). Session 9: Thinking about thinking—Metacognition. Stanford, CA: Stanford University School of Education. Accessed at www.learner.org/courses/learning_classroom/support/09_metacog.pdf on July 22, 2019.