

## Chapter 11: Reflective Practice

Use the following questions and activities to reflect on and make changes to your practice.

1. Choose a concept or some essential information that you want your students to memorize, and use the space provided to phrase it into some kind of rhyme. Using the combined strategies of rhyming and repetition, have your student sing this information at the beginning and the end of a few classes. After a period of time of your choosing, check to see how many students recall this critical information and how well.

2. Write down a request you want to make of your students. Simply write it in your usual language. Now, reword the request and insert positive words whenever possible. Assess the impact of this strategy on your success rate. Will you use this strategy again in the future?

Original request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revised request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Think of an important concept you want your students to learn. Now, try to think of and write down ways in which you can make this into a visual representation of the idea. Remember the story from the chapter about having the two participants take steps to visually illustrate the impact of poor and good teachers. Try something similar, and see how this impacts student understanding.

4. Think about the one to three lowest-performing students in your class. Think about how you currently provide feedback to them on assessments. Now, with the Rita Pierson (2013) example in mind (minus eighteen becomes plus two), think of some ways in which you could turn the negative feedback into positive feedback. Write down your ideas, and implement this strategy over the course of the next several assessments and monitor the results.

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5. Choose one of your most challenging students, a student who you feel could do much better in your class, either academically or behaviorally, or perhaps both. Now, write down what you see as being the primary problem with this student. Next, do some research in the form of one or two low-key conversations with this student. The key here is to explore, not criticize or challenge. Attempt to find out what is going on from the student's perspective, not from yours. Now reassess. What is the primary problem here, and how might you address it?

The student's primary problem: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Notes from conversation 1:

Notes from conversation 2:

6. Write down a request that you want to make of your students. This could be with an entire class, a group of students, or of one student in particular. Now try the *door in the face* strategy. Make an outrageous request along the lines of what you want, but at the extreme end, knowing all the while the students will protest. Now make the actual request, what it is that you really want. Monitor the results.

Your outrageous request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your more reasonable request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Think about your experiences with the butterfly effect. Has there been a time in your career when a few well-chosen words, spoken softly and sincerely to a student, have had a profound effect on that student's future performance in your class, be it academically or behaviorally? Be vigilant for opportunities to have these kinds of brief but potentially powerful conversations with your students, and watch the results.

*Source: Pierson, R. (2013). Every kid needs a champion [Video file]. Accessed at [www.ted.com/talks/rita\\_pierson\\_every\\_kid\\_needs\\_a\\_champion](http://www.ted.com/talks/rita_pierson_every_kid_needs_a_champion) on June 14, 2021.*