

General Comments:

Xavier University

Early and Middle Childhood Education

Reflective Journal: Student Teaching Experience

The journal writing process can be a highly individualized experience; some students find writing a tedious activity and others regard it with anticipation, much like getting together with a good friend. We believe that student teaching should be a reflective journey, both inward and outward. Writing provides a regular opportunity to stop and think about the experiences you are having on a daily basis. Problem solving often occurs during a thinking-through process, as does a greater understanding of the principles from which you create your thinking may be clarified as you move forward in your professional development. Your journal, when shared with your Xavier supervisor, will also provide her with a wider window to better understand you and your thinking.

The format in which you make journal entries is up to you. You will want to work out a system for sharing your journal with your Xavier supervisor. Create a system that works for you. That might mean hastily written daily notes that are only pulled together at the end of the week, or you may set aside a time each day when you write. Electronic journals work best for many student teachers.

Observation skills are important to hone. Begin by writing anecdotal observations of individual children that you will weave into your journal. Short narratives may be possible, especially in the early days of your student teaching experience, when you are observing your cooperating teacher.

Some entries you may include:

- Observational notes about particular children over the course of time.
- Notes on different children to encourage your observation of all the children in the class.
- Reflections on your notes, i.e. what have you learned about children or a particular child, how do these observations match the knowledge base you began with, what are you learning about your attitudes, values, etc.
- Include notes on classroom episodes that are noteworthy-uplifting or otherwise

Use it as a reference book for ideas, resources, books, and anything else you wish to remember.