

Learning through Reflection

Many of us grow up thinking of mistakes as bad, viewing errors as evidence of fundamental incapacity. This negative thinking pattern can create a self-fulfilling prophecy, which undermines the learning process. To maximize our learning it is essential to ask: "How can we get the most from every mistake we make?"

—*Michael Gelb and Tony Buzan*

In school, we see mistakes as learning opportunities to help us grow to become better teachers and it has been our culture that the teachers in AIPS consistently reflect on our lessons via our weekly reflections.

Reflective practice is a systematic process of collecting, recording and analysing our thoughts and observations, as well as those of our students, and then going on to improve future lessons. It is one of the most important sources of personal professional development and improvement. Effective teachers are first to admit that no matter how good a lesson is, their practice can always be improved.

Being reflective practitioners, we also provide our students the time and place for reflection, as we empower them as learners and thinkers. By allowing them to reflect on a lesson or on their own progress, it allows them to build skills in critical thinking that they can apply when they are problem-solving and learning on their own.

During lessons, we encourage students to describe their strategies for solving a problem and reflect on them to determine its adequacy. During such conversations, children build the Habits of Mind related to listening with understanding and empathy, thinking flexibly, managing impulsivity, and remaining open to continuous learning.

The ultimate intent of teaching reflection is to get students into the habit of reflecting on their own actions and constructing meaning from those experiences. Try this at home with your children and get them into the habit of reflecting as learning to reflect purposefully is an essential real-world skill!

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Life's most important lessons are learned through reflection.

- Michelle Shory, Ed.S. & Irina V. McGrath, Ph.D.
Education Week Teacher