THE SERIES

This is the eighth publication in the "5 Things" series. The 5 Things we recommend are intended to be eclectic and thought-provoking. They may be journal articles, blog posts, podcasts, interviews, reports, or just about anything else that we think is important to read, watch or hear about this topic. For the general concept, this series is deeply indebted to the EDUCAUSE "7 Things You Should Know About..." reports.

THE TOPIC

Reflective Practice involves the process of continuous, critical reflection to foster self-learning and to improve subsequent practices. In higher education, it involves taking time to think and reflect on teaching and learning for evaluative purposes and to improve future teaching. Comprised of two components, reflection–in-action and reflection-on-action, reflective practices consists of activities that are deliberate and designed to stimulate a cyclic process of teaching, reflection, and revised teaching. The five articles selected by this year's committee are intended to introduce librarians to some of the foundational, theoretical, and practical works on reflective practices in education and its application to library and information science.

1. **Booth, Char. 2011. *Reflective Teaching, Effective Learning: Instructional Literacy for Library Educators*. Chicago: American Library Association.**

"Being an educator is about laying yourself on the line, opening up to criticism, and accepting vulnerability so that others may gain knowledge" (xi). Char Booth presents this challenge in the preface to her book, which functions as a textbook, complete with worksheets, tables, and other graphical data, for those invested in improving their instruction. Booth frames her work with the concept of instructional literacy, "the combination of skills and knowledge that facilitates effective, self-aware, and learner-focused educational practice" (xvi-xvii). Part one of this two-part book covers metacognition and reflective practice, learning theory, instructional theory, instructional design, and teaching technologies. Part two is a practical template for implementing the USER (Understand, Structure, Engage, Reflect) instructional design model. Overall, this is a concise and well-researched text that has both theoretical and practical uses for instruction librarians. **Approximate reading time: 4 hours**

2. **Drabinski, Emily. 2014. "Toward a *Kairos* of Library Instruction." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 40 (5): 480–85. doi:10.1016/j.acalib.2014.06.002.**

This article, which won the Ilene F. Rockman Instruction Publication of the Year Award for 2015, frames an argument about the contextuality of learning in terms of the effort to replace the ACRL *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (2000). Drabinski draws on the concept of *kairos*, from composition studies, which "refers to time linked to the occasion, the opportunity, and the action" (481). She then traces the occasions for the rise of information literacy, beginning from the term's historical appearance in the 1970s through its ongoing uses by the field of academic librarianship. By considering the standards as a response to the power structures and contingencies of their time, librarians today can guard against a sense of historical exceptionalism for their own revisionary efforts. Questioning the validity of such external structures, we can work to ground our teaching on our particular contexts and students' critical needs. This article is inspirational in its application to instructional design and reflective practice. **Approximate reading time: 30 minutes**

3. **Graf, Anne J., and Benjamin R. Harris. 2016. "Reflective Assessment: Opportunities and Challenges."** *Reference Services Review* **44 (1): 38–47. doi: 10.1108/RSR-06-2015-0027.**

This article explores the potential benefits of incorporating reflective practice into information literacy assessment. While acknowledging the importance of the culture of assessment that has grown up around information literacy programming, the authors suggest that we also need to consider how we are judging or evaluating our information literacy "successes." How we frame, or understand, our instructional practice determines, in large measure, the phenomena to which we pay attention. Reflective practice can help us pay attention to information that challenges our governing assumptions. The authors describe two strategies for reflection: unintended outcomes and guided group reflection. **Approximate reading time: 15 minutes.**

4. **Jacobs, Heidi L. M. 2008. "Information Literacy and Reflective Pedagogical Praxis."** *Journal of Academic Librarianship* **34 (3): 256–262. doi:10.1016/j.acalib.2008.03.009.**

In this thought-provoking piece, Jacobs posits that reflective practice, informed by praxis, defined as "the interplay of theory and practice," can drive transformative change in our daily work as instruction librarians. Jacobs suggests that we think of information literacy as an embedded cultural practice, one that is constructed and contextual by nature. Guided by the praxis-focused pedagogy in the field of composition and rhetoric as well as the problem-posing model of education by Paulo Freire, Jacobs emphasizes the fundamental nature of information literacy as one focused on question-asking and dialogue. In order for creative, reflective dialogue to be successful as a pedagogical tool, Jacobs asks that librarians think of themselves as "teacher-students" and model that we are also learning and "living the questions." **Approximate reading time: 25 minutes**

5. **Rogers, Russell R. 2001. "Reflection in Higher Education: A Concept Analysis."** *Innovative Higher Education* **26 (1): 37–57. [doi:10.1023/A:1010986404527](doi:10.1023/A:1010986404527).**

Rogers provides an in-depth critical analysis of some major theoretical approaches to reflection. The article identifies aspects of reflection and terminology that are common across major theoretical approaches to reflective thinking, as proposed by seven researchers: Dewey (1993), Schon (1983), Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985), Langer (1989), Loughran (1996), Mezirow (1991), and Siebert and Daudelin (1996). These approaches all conclude that reflection is a cognitive and affective process that requires active engagement, is triggered by a perplexing situation, and involves examining personal experiences for the purpose of impacting future experiences. The author examines implications and applications to higher education, giving some valuable techniques that can be utilized in the classroom and easily applied to library instruction. **Approximate Reading Time: 30 Minutes.**

If you have comments or questions about the "5 Things" publications, please contact the current IS Research and Scholarship Committee Chair, http://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/directoryofleadership/sections/is/iswebsite/committees/research