

# Reflective Writing Experiential Writing

John Bennion and Amy Williams

Presentation at Writing across the Curriculum luncheon

# FREWRITE

- Describe the last time you had students write a reflection or describe the last time you had a discussion where you asked students to reflect on their learning.
- From that experience, what can you say about the value of reflecting?

WHY REFLECT?

To continually improve one's  
own efficacy and abilities

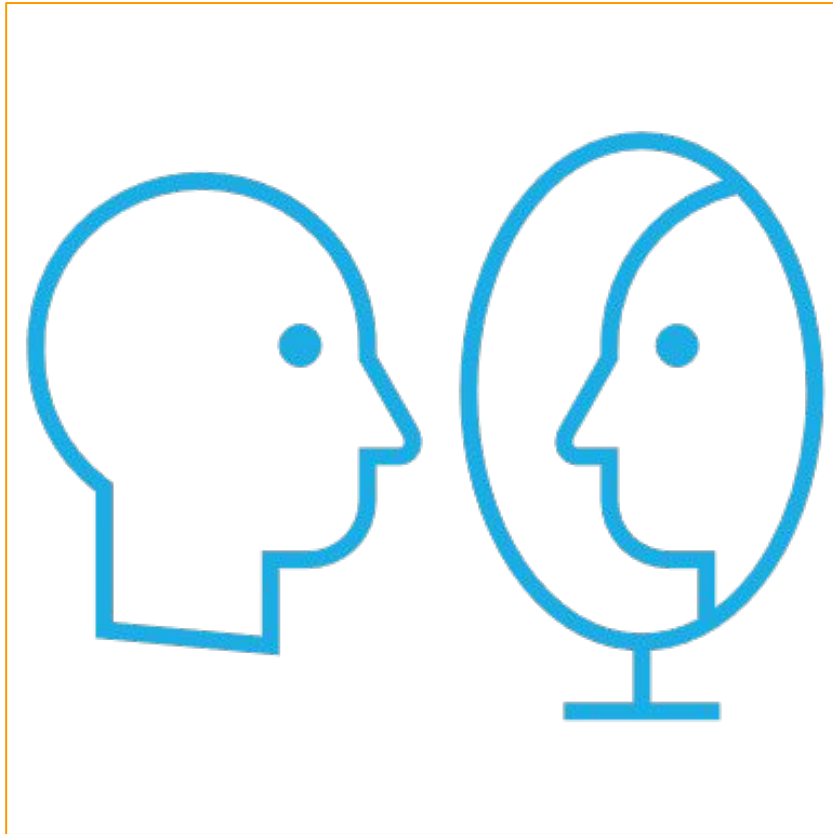
# JOHN DEWEY

- Reflection is the process of “reconstruction or reorganization of experience that adds meaning to the experience”
- Reflection is the “bridge of meaning that connects one experience to the next [and] gives direction and impetus to growth”

Rodgers, Carol. “Defining Reflection: Another Look at John Dewey and Reflective Thinking.” *Teacher’s College Record*, vol. 104, no. 4, 2002, pp. 842-866.

# REFLECTION AND LEARNING

- Helps students understand the knowledge and knowledge-making processes of a discipline
- Help students apply knowledge, skills, and processes to real-world issues
- Helps students improve self-regulated learning
- Helps students identify learning hurdles and paths forward
- Helps students increase learning enjoyment
- Helps teachers assess learning



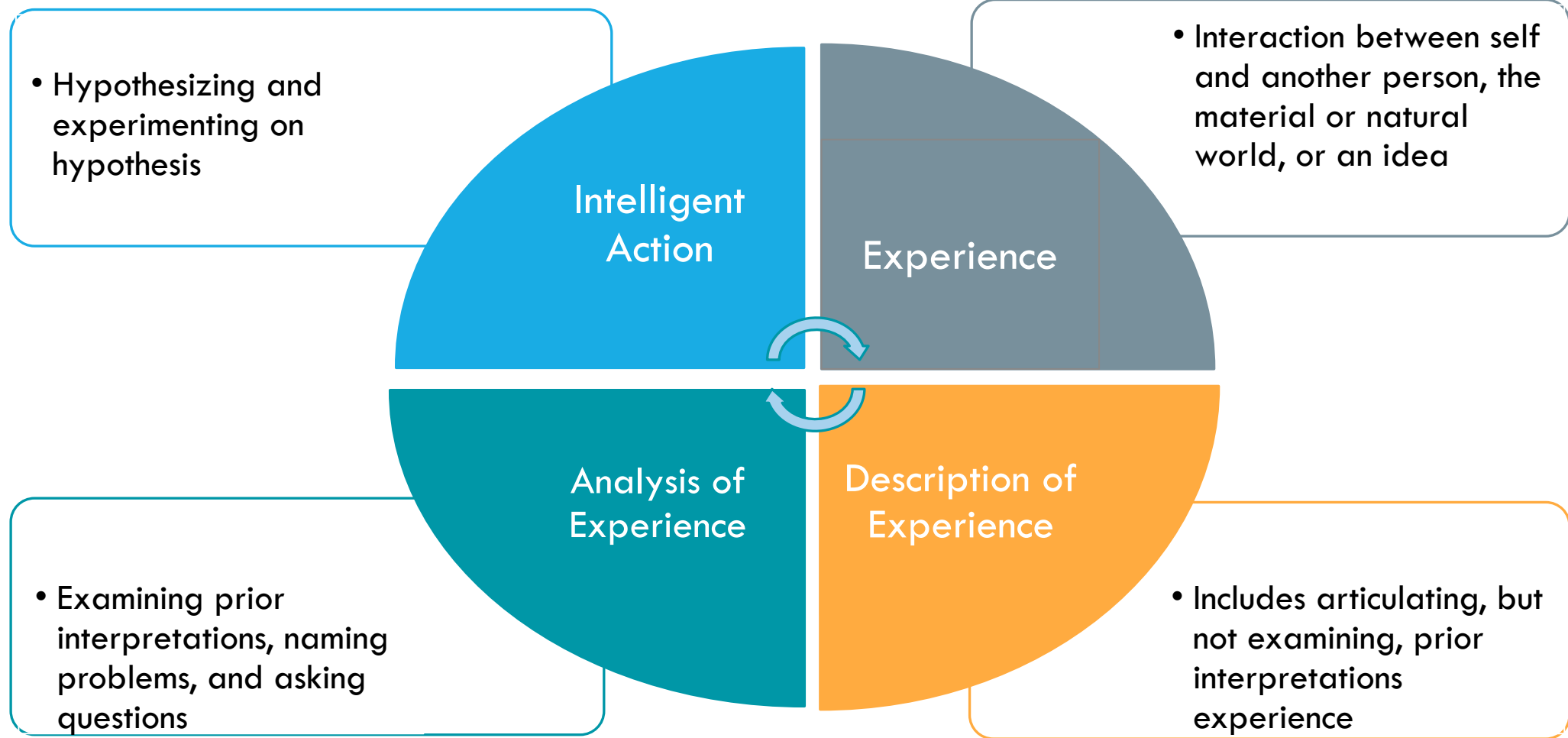
# A THEORY OF REFLECTION

Reflection is a mode of inquiry. It's a deliberate way of systematically recalling and evaluating experiences and choicemaking to frame or reframe the current situation and look toward future situations.

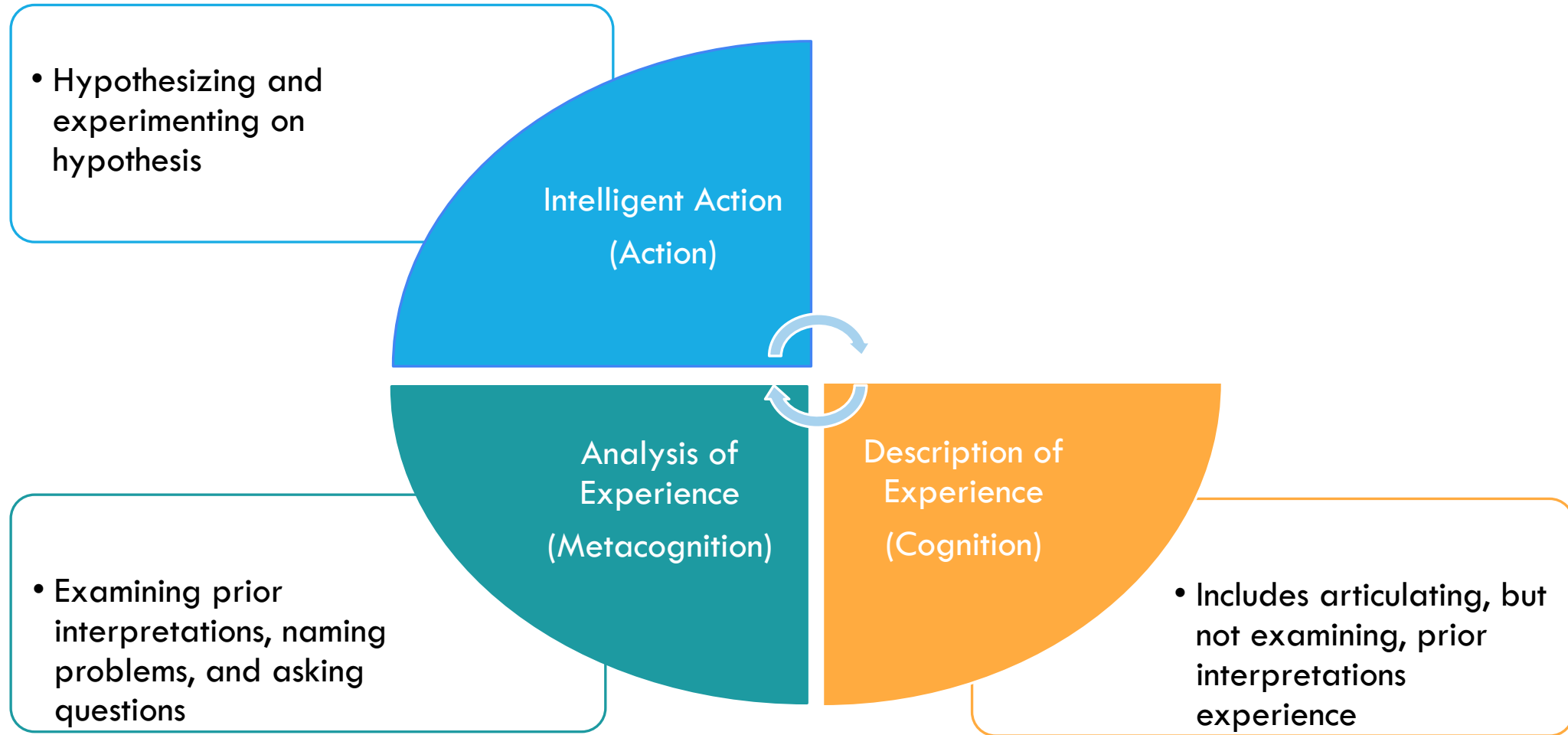
Reflection is a **process**, a **product**, and a **way of being**.

Reflection can look backward, forward, inward, and outward.

# REFLECTION (JOHN DEWEY)



# REFLECTION (UNIV 101 and WRTG 150)







# COGNITION (WHAT?)

I can recognize and articulate what happened or is happening in a particular learning moment.

I can see connections between learning moments.

# EXAMPLE PROMPTS FOR COGNITION

Describe your personal experiences, prior knowledge, or perspective on an event or issue related to a concept you've learned in this course.

- *Describe a time when you collaborated successfully with others.*
- *Talk about time when your writing process was successful.*



# METACOGNITION (SO WHAT?)

I can consider what my experience meant, including why I made specific choices in a particular moment.

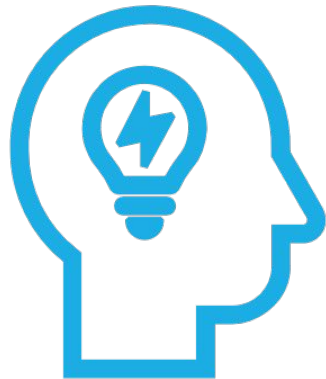
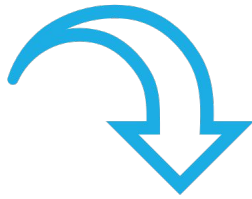
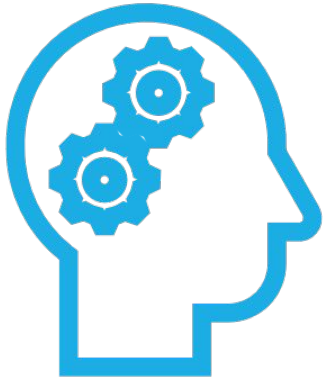
I can question my prior understanding and the understanding acquired during this new experience.

I can evaluate the **relevance**, **importance**, or **effects** of my choices or my understanding and how I feel about them.



# EXAMPLE PROMPTS FOR METACOGNITION

- Assess how your new knowledge affects your understanding of your experiences (*Because I understand X, I now...*)
- Thinking about your experience, show your awareness of alternative choices (*I could either do X or Y*)
- Thinking about your experience, justify your choices (*I did X because...*)
- Thinking about your experience, evaluate the consequences of your choices (*Doing X had this effect on Y, and that makes me feel...*)



# ACTION (NOW WHAT?)

I can consider how my learning might transfer to another context.

I can evaluate under what conditions I could/will use this knowledge again.

I can discuss how my growth or new understanding could/will lead to action.

# EXAMPLE PROMPTS FOR ACTION

How might your understanding of *concept x* help you solve a new problem?

- *What might you change about your writing process as a result of what you've learned so far this semester?*
- *How could you apply your understanding of the concept of the biological basis of health to your healthcare or to that of people around you?*

# FORMAL AND INFORMAL

- Think
- Think and share
- Verbal Response
- Freewrite
- Creative product
- Graded Written Reflection



# SEQUENCED OR CUMULATIVE

- Cognition (What?)
- Metacognition (So what?)
- Action (What now?)

# COGNITION PROMPT

Describe a time you successfully collaborated with others on a project.

# COGNITION & METACOGNITION PROMPT

Describe a time you've successfully collaborated with others on a project.

Evaluate that experience using what the chapter says about collaboration. What might the author of our text say contributed to the success of your project? What principle of successful collaboration might you propose the author add to this chapter based on your experience?

# COGNITION, METACOGNITION, ACTION PROMPT

Describe a time you've successfully collaborated with others on a project.

Evaluate that experience using what the chapter says about collaboration. What might the author of our text say contributed to the success of your project? What principle of successful collaboration might you propose the author add to this chapter based on your experience?

What will you change about your writing process the next time you collaborate on a project?

# PUBLIC HEALTH BIOLOGY COURSE

Describe how one or more concepts from this course (from course readings, lectures, tutorials, or assignments) relates to you personally or connects to your life

Consider how understanding the concept has changed or reinforced your understanding of the biological basis of health. Consider how and why you apply (or don't apply) the concept to your health.

Consider how might use your new understanding to improve your healthcare or to that of people around you.

# 360 DEGREE REFLECTION

- Backward—prior knowledge
- Inward—current writing situation and identity
- Forward—future writing tasks
- Outward—theorize how current identity fits in larger writing contexts

# Experiential Writing Project



John Bennion, Emeritus English

[experientialwriting.byu.edu](http://experientialwriting.byu.edu)

- Created with a grant from the College of Humanities (2021)
- Sponsored by Humanities
- Maintained by Ben Drewry, Manager for Experiential Learning, College of Humanities



# Website Logo: Experiential Writing Process



[experientialwriting.byu.edu](http://experientialwriting.byu.edu)

# Tour of experientialwriting.byu.edu

## Structure of the Website



Experiential Writing Project

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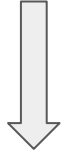
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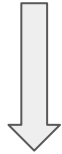
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Why?



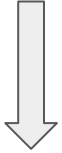
How?



What?  
(Contexts)



Lesson Plans  
Prompts  
Templates  
Rubrics  
Videos



Experiences  
with ExW

# APPLICATION

How might you apply reflection to your own curricula?