How Do I Write a Reflection Paper?

The point of a reflection paper is to demonstrate your analysis or reactions to an article or articles you have read. When the assignment includes several articles, you are generally expected to synthesize (put together) the articles by finding themes (similarities) or comparisons between the readings. The general formula for a reflection paper would be:

- Begin with a brief summary of the article or articles you have read.

- If you are integrating several articles, you may want to begin by stating an organizing theme (e.g. “Social media can affect our behavior on many levels” or “A common word like ‘love’ can have very different meanings depending upon the perspective of the speaker or the object of that love.”)

- If you have read several articles, you may want to provide some connective phrases or sentences as you move from the summary of one article to the summary of the next (e.g. “Abbott (2016) agreed with Costello’s (2012) basic proposition but elaborated by proposing…”)

- Once you have summarized the articles, present your own analysis of them. This could include any of the following:
  - Discussing any ways in which you agree or disagree with the information/opinions expressed in the articles. (But don’t just say, “I liked this article…” Explain more specifically what appealed to you or why you disagree with some of the conclusions. Provide supporting evidence from the article/s or from other sources.
  - Discussing how the information in the article/s applies to your clinical (or personal) experiences.
  - If you have read several articles, discussing how the articles are related to one another and then discussing differences between the authors’ perspectives.
  - Noting how the article is related to other information you have read about the topic

- Finally, add a brief conclusion which summarizes your main points or raises questions not answered by the articles.

Whenever you write a reflection paper:

- Make sure you cite any references with standard APA citation format
- Credit any ideas you quote or paraphrase with citations and page numbers
- Include a reference list at the end of the paper (unless you are told you don’t need one)
- “I” statements are OK in a reflection paper but do not use too many
Reflection Paper

Introductory Sentence/s

Brief paragraph summary of article 1

Connection between article 1 and 2

Brief paragraph summary of article 2

Your thoughts, or analysis about the article/s. Could be:

- Points that you agree/disagree with
- Application to clinical practice
  - How you might apply it
  - How it applies to clients you have seen
- Comparisons between the authors’ positions
- Connection to other readings

Or it could be all of these things (use of “I” statements is OK)

Brief conclusion sentence or two