



Reflection Cards

The ESY Reflection Cards

We use Reflection Cards with our students to prompt reflection and self-evaluation on skills, norms, and behaviors that are important in the kitchen and garden classrooms. The goals of this resource are two-fold: first, providing students with opportunities to reflect and evaluate themselves on areas specific to our classrooms supports their continual development and success in our kitchen and garden classrooms. Second, self-reflection and evaluation are important skills with significant benefits that we believe can be developed through practice. We believe that much of the most valuable learning in an experiential classroom - and in life - happens through the process of reflection and evaluation. The Reflection Cards are designed to support and develop these life skills.

In the Kitchen

We use the Reflection Cards in different ways depending on the lesson, the group of students, and our goals for student learning. Sometimes we introduce specific Reflection Cards during a Chef Meeting or small group circle as a focus for that lesson. Other times we may ask students to select a card for the group to focus on during the lesson. Either way, we prompt students to generate a brief explanation of what the card means, or describe examples of how it looks in the context of the kitchen. At the end of class we lead a brief group reflection and discussion on how that skill was practiced or not during class that day.

Other times we may select a Reflection Card as a focus at the end of class. For example, perhaps we noticed that many of our students were forgetting to clean up their stations as they went, instead leaving all the cleaning to the last second. During mealtime or right before eating, we may pull the “Clean as you go” card from the deck and prompt the group to reflect on how they practiced that skill. We find that prompting students to reflect on their actions and behavior tends to result in far more thoughtful and meaningful learning than when we as teachers tell students that they haven’t done something as well as they could. We sometimes even use Reflection Cards in one-on-one interactions as a tool for prompting individual students to reflect on specific skills or behaviors.

The Reflection Cards play a role in students’ experience throughout their three years in our program. They are always available for students to look at in the toolboxes at each table, and we have large versions of the Reflection Cards hanging in the kitchen as decorations to serve as a reference and reminder of expectations and goals for learning.



In the Garden

After we break out into groups and leave the Ramada one of the first things we do with our group is a 'Small Circle Check-in'. It's here that we have each student answer a "check-in" question which are provocative, fun and may not have anything to do with gardening. These questions can also relate to the lesson or theme of the day. Circling up as a small group is a great way to define yourselves as a team for the rest of class and is also a perfect opportunity to present the reflection cards.

- Present the cards and ask a student to look/read through the set of cards and choose one that speaks to them as something we will watch out for during garden class today.
- After every student has had the opportunity to engage in the check in question return to that student to find out what reflection card they have chosen and ask them to read it out loud to the group.
- Explain that we're going to circle up briefly at the end of class to reflect on how we did as a group in relation to the card chosen. Example; If the student had chosen the 'Justice' card we would reflect on accountability, sharing and fairness.
- At the end of class engage students in a quick whip around activity where they share out how they saw (or didn't see) accountability, sharing or fairness show up for them during class that day.

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