

Student Professionalism: Reflection

Facilitator Resource Pack

Lesson Plan Outline:

Introduction	1 minute
Maze Game: A Week on Placement	15 minutes
Discussion:	7 minutes
Take Home Messages (GMC):	2 minutes
	25 minutes

The lesson plan is designed for a range of class sizes. It should be given by at least one facilitator, with the initial game done in pairs, followed by a discussion incorporating the whole class. A room layout consisting of smaller tables of 4-6 students is recommended.

Firstly, the session will start by a short introduction. Following this, students should be organised into two's per maze for the game, where there will be one narrator and one player. Finally, the class should regroup for the discussion and take-home messages.

The facilitator must read through and understand the lesson plan before the session takes place.

Resources:

Facilitator's Resource Pack:

- Lesson Plan (including the lesson, discussion & aims)

Player's Resource Pack:

- Instructions
- Maze
- Maze Cards (Plain Version)
- Reflection Checklist & Questions

Narrator's Resource Pack:

- Instructions
- Maze Cards (with Directions & GMC Justifications)
- Reflection Checklist & Questions

Introduction:

Read Out:

Arrange yourselves into pairs. One of you is going to be the player; a medical student going on an Obstetrics and Gynaecology placement where your week is set to be riddled with important decisions. The other is going to be the narrator; a supportive partner who will assist their friend on their journey. Make good decisions to try and navigate your way through the maze and find your path to success, by reaching the other end. In your pairs, the players will read their scenario cards and choose an option, whilst the narrators will inform them which direction their answers take them according to the colour of the arrows and options on their cards. Your decisions determine your fate!

*We are aware that reflection has not been mentioned yet. This is for good reason. The idea is **not** to introduce reflection explicitly as the theme until the discussion, to see whether students will realise that only through reflection will they to succeed! This will be explored during the discussion.*

Maze Game:

This maze is a metaphor for a clinical placement. If correct, the decisions the students make will help guide them to reach the other end successfully.

- Instruct students to decide in their pairs who will be the player and who will be the narrator, and then to carefully read the page titled 'Maze Game' in their respective resource packs.
- It's important that the students are made to play the game twice. The first time, they must not be allowed to go back on themselves. Once they have reached a dead-end, they have lost the game. Students should let you know once they've lost.
- Instruct these students to play a second time. However, this time let them know that they can retrace their steps and go back to the scenario where they went wrong to reconsider their incorrect earlier options. **Do NOT use the term reflection at any point as of yet.**

This gives the students the chance to reflect on their decisions and why they may have gone wrong. The scenarios are realistic situations a medical student is likely to find themselves in. The idea is to allow students to realise that without reflection, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to succeed and reach professional excellence - the ultimate aim. In this game, reaching the other end of the maze reflects 'success'. Students need to reflect on their decisions to ensure they make the right choices the second time round. Without reflection, they're at a dead-end!

Although it is much more preferable to play the game twice to fully understand the message, you can choose to play the game only once if time is an issue.

Discussion:

This part of the session should help students understand the aim of the game, and to open up a discussion on the importance of reflection.

Give out or ask the students to turn over their discussion sheet (as part of their packs).

1. Reflection Checklist (2 minutes)

In their resource packs, students will be given a checklist of points they should have done whilst playing the game. They are all points taken from the GMC Achieving Good Medical Practise document.

- Instruct students to tick the relevant boxes.
- Once they've done this, reveal to them that these are the GMC guidelines involving reflection taken from 'Achieving Good Medical Practise for medical students', and that the students have been playing a game which has forced them to reflect on each scenario they've been presented with for the last 15 minutes. You must make it clear that they only achieved these tick boxes when they were given a chance to retrace their steps during their second turn. The main point which must be stressed is that **without giving yourself a chance to go back and review your decisions, you can't move forward and succeed.**
- In a very small number of cases, students may manage to reach the end of the maze on their initial attempt. Although this may mean they have great judgement, you can point out that occasionally success without reflection is possible. However, to ensure it happens every time and improve upon previous experiences, it's necessary to go back and reflect. Even when situations go well!

2. Reflection Consolidation Questions (3 minutes)

Students will be given some questions to answer in their resource packs.

- Instruct students to answer the consolidation questions honestly, whilst keeping the game in mind. Students can discuss the answers between themselves on their respective tables.

3. **Open Discussion (2+ minutes – this part can be extended as desired)**

This part of the lesson plan should be an impromptu discussion involving the whole room where you can improvise and bring up any specific concerns/questions of the group. You could ask questions such as:

- **How do you personally tend to reflect?**
- **What techniques could you use to reflect?**
Some reflective techniques you might like to suggest to the class –
 - Document your thought process to see how your feelings have changed
 - Read reflective writings written by others to help with technique
 - Discuss situations with colleagues that were involved to consider different viewpoints
 - Think less about the details of how things happen, but more about how they make you feel
 - Force yourself to think of situations that make you feel uncomfortable
 - Creative writing. Making up hypothetical situations and stories allows you to find yourself considering scenarios you haven't been in yet, but might arise in the future
 - Make it enjoyable. Incorporate reflection into a game or therapeutic activity
 - Come back to reflective writings from time to time and update them with your improvements. This is encouraging and will give you the incentive to reflect more
- **How can we make sure we have reflected adequately and correctly?**
- **How do you think the way reflection is taught to students should change as they progress through their education/career?**

Session Conclusion (Take Home Messages):

- After the discussion, run through the three take home messages (aims)
- Hand out copies of 'Achieving Good Medical Practise for medical students' to all students
- Thank the students and close

Aims / Take Home Messages:

Read out the highlighted take home messages below. Use the text below the take home messages (aims) to reinforce these points

1. "True professionalism is about striving for excellence".

Reflection serves the ultimate purpose of achieving the best standard of care for patients. It is the only way you can put improvements into action. Often you will learn more from reflecting on a placement and reviewing scenarios, than simply observing.

2. "As a medical student, as well as learning basic skills and knowledge needed to treat patients, you also need to develop your ability to learn and acquire future skills".

Reflection is a skill the GMC expects doctors to routinely practise in the form of CPD, (Continuing Professional Development). But practice makes perfect, so it's important to start practising this skill from now.

3. "At its core, reflection is thinking about what you've done, what you did well and what you could do better next time."

It's easy to think that reflection is only required when things go wrong and not when things go right. Reflection is not just a tool for rectifying issues, but continually improving standards as a whole. There is never a finished product!

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