Learning Logs

Learning Logs are a simple and straightforward way to help students integrate content, process and personal feelings. They are especially powerful for developing metacognitive processing skills. Learning Logs are an effective method for supporting students' capacity to learn from writing rather than writing what they have learned.

The most common application of Learning Logs is to have students make entries in their logs during the last 5 minutes of class. Short frequent bursts of writing are more productive over time than are infrequent, longer assignments. You can join in the writing process to reflect on your teaching, note thoughts about your students, preserve anecdotes about their interaction with that day's material and their developing capacities.

To stimulate student thinking, question stems can be written on the board, or kept on a page at the back of their log books. The following types of stems are useful starting points for the learning log process.

- What are some things I learned today?
- What still puzzles me about today's content?
- What did I enjoy, hate, accomplish in class today?
- What strategies supported my learning?
- What did I contribute to others' learning today?
- What can I do to enhance my learning in this class?

Another option is to write four or five key words on the board based on the day's lesson. Ask students to free write about the words for several minutes.

You can collect the logs from time to time, read through them and share written comments with their students. This helps build stronger relationships with students and provides an excellent way to informally assess how well the class is doing.