



## 10 Self- Reflective Questions that Teachers Can Debrief With Every Day

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For a long time we've advocated the use of self-reflective questions with our learners as a way for them to debrief their learning processes in the classroom in order to improve and grow. This is just as useful a practice for teachers as it is for learners, because in many ways teachers are still learners themselves. What self-reflective questions can teachers use for the same purposes? We've got some ideas below, but first, let's talk about why self-reflection is so crucial a practice in teaching, learning, and life.

Someone once asked veteran actor Sidney Poitier what his biggest goal in life was. He responded by saying, "to simply wake up every morning a better person than when I went to bed." How does one actually do this, actually wake up better than they were the day before?

Keep in mind this is the Academy award-winning superstar who was told by a casting director after his first audition that he should give up and go wash dishes for a living. What Poitier can teach us here is that a big part of benefitting from self-reflection is in having the *proper attitude*.

[Let's be clear about one thing: actor, teacher, dishwasher, or whatever you may be, the only one who can dictate your attitude about anything is you.](#)

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But what does all this have to do with teaching and using self-reflective questions? Because pinpointing our attitudes and outlook on our experiences is what reflective questioning is all about. We don't debrief to punish ourselves or succumb to another's opinion of who we are or what we can do. Reflective questions allow us to see past negativity and circumstance and ask ourselves, "how can I do even better next time?"

We do a grave disservice to our students as teachers if we deny them the opportunity to use reflective questions for self-assessment and improvement. By the same token, we must give ourselves permission to do the same thing. When it comes to a profession as challenging as teaching is, asking the right self-reflective questions can help you determine many useful things including:

- what works and doesn't work in your classroom
- where your biggest challenges are and how to overcome them
- how you can improve professional development

- what you are most fearful of in your profession and how to face it
- where you are bringing undue stress upon yourself
- how you can better foster relationships with learners/parents/administrators/colleagues

These are only a few examples of the insights teachers can gain from using self-reflection. Begin in earnest to use self-reflective questions as both a meditative practice and an active pathway to being better than you were the day before.

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## 10 Self-Reflective Questions for Every Teacher

1. What was my best moment today and how can I have more moments like it?
2. What was my most challenging moment and why? How will I respond next time?
3. Were my students excited to be in class? If not, what can I do to change this?
4. How was my mood with others today and how can I improve it?
5. How well did I communicate with others today and how can I do this better?
6. In what ways did my students surprise me most today?
7. How did I support my colleagues today and how will I continue to do so?
8. What are the biggest obstacles to improving my practice and how will I overcome them?
9. What did I do today for myself and why is this important?
10. What do I want *everyone* to be able to say about me at the end of the day tomorrow?

You have more strength than you realize and more support than you know, but in the end, change starts with *you*. Practice using these self-reflective questions as much as possible and watch how your teaching practices, your relationships, and your outlook all transform for the better.

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