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Formative Assessment through Reading Reflections

Julie Taylor
julie.taylor@csusb.edu

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<div align="center">**Formative Assessment through Reading Reflections**
By: Dr. Julie L. Taylor
Department of Communication Studies, CSUSB</div>

Rationale: I wanted to create an alternative to quizzes for incentivizing reading for classes. I also wanted a formative assessment that encouraged students to practice the critical thinking skills they would need for the final assessment in the course. Below are two iterations of reading reflections or an upper division course.

<div align="center">**Option 1:**</div>

Reading Reflections (7 @ 10pts each= 70 pts)

Papers are due at the beginning of class: For **7 out of the 9** class sessions we have readings, I would like you to provide a reading reflection. Of course, the expectation is that you will come to every class having read the material ☺ Reading reflections are intended to help you prepare for our Thursday group sessions and larger class discussions by engaging with the readings prior to class. Each entry consists of three paragraphs (1 page single spaced, or two pages double).

- The first paragraph should summarize the day's reading or explain a theme present if there are multiple readings. *This paragraph should be detailed enough to demonstrate you have read carefully (e.g., highlight concepts, pull quotations, etc.).*
- The second paragraph should summarize your reaction to the reading, applying the concepts in the reading, and/or connecting it to other readings from class.
- The third paragraph should be two to three discussion questions that you would like to pose to the class for that class session. These should be questions that encourage discussion, not yes/no questions.
- Entries will be graded on the following scale: **10/10** (The entry indicates that you have read, are processing the fundamental claims made by the author(s), and/or are ready to apply the material to the class); **8.5/10** (You have read, you are processing claims, but haven't fully demonstrated a grasp and ability to apply material in class); **7/10** (You have clearly read, but the assignment is missing the mark) **5/10** (The entry is incomplete or demonstrates only a cursory engagement of the texts), **3/10** (Incomplete) **0/10** (off-topic, or not submitted at all).

Teaching Reflection
When done well, these assignments were great; however, it was a lot of grading for just one class. Thus, I modified the assignment for the following quarter (see below).

Option 2:

Article Questions (5 @ 6pts each= 30 pts)

Questions are due at the beginning of class: For **6 out of the 8** class sessions we have readings, I would like you to provide reading questions. Of course, the expectation is that you will come to every class having read the material ☺ Reading questions are intended to help you prepare for our group sessions and larger class discussions by engaging with the readings prior to class. Each entry consists of two components.

- Definition: Define the course concepts according to the authors for that week. (2 Points)
- Questions: Provide at least 2 discussions questions. Question (2 pts per question)
  - Sample Questions: LeGreco (2011) "Policy Article"
    - 1.) LeGreco provides the "Circuit of Policy Communication" model to explain the complexities of stakeholder engagement with policy issues. Do you feel that this model is sufficient? Are there any 'nodes' that might be added to make the model more complete?
    - 2.) The author argues that "Organizational and public health initiatives are woven together through their policy texts; therefore, the introduction of new policy texts must be integrated into a larger system of texts and practices" (p. 57). What sort of obstacles might this integration entail? Is reflexivity the only effective 'remedy' or does the circuit of policy communication model provide other valuable insights for ameliorating potential tensions?

Teaching Reflection:
I actually preferred this strategy because it was fewer points and more direct on what I was wanting students to demonstrate in their learning. Also, the discussion questions really illustrated depth of learning and comprehension.