

# Reflection Pathways to Unearth Knowledge of Self and Students

In this section, I provide reflection pathways for unearthing and coming closer to yourself and your students. You can answer the questions on your own, in small (and safe) discussion groups, or through critical writing.

## YOURSELF

### My Identities

Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. Who am I?
2. What racial, cultural, and other identities do I identify with?
3. What have I come to understand about my different identities?
4. Have I ever experienced marginalization related to my identities?
5. Am I an anti-racist educator? Do others recognize racial justice in me, or do I only see it in myself?
6. What is the related genius and joy connected to my identities?

7. When did I discover who I am, and how did that feel? When did I come to self?
8. Why does identity matter in PreK–12 education?
9. Whose identities have been taught and not taught in schools?
10. When it comes to racial and cultural identities, what have I learned about diverse people?
11. What have I learned about Black and Brown excellence and genius?
12. Is identity development possible in PreK–12 schools? How might I connect the teaching of identity to art, health, math, science, English language arts, social studies, or other content areas?
13. What is one significant memory I have of a teacher (growing up) connecting pedagogy to one or more of my identities? How did that feel?
14. How does identity show up in my pedagogy and leadership?
15. How do I plan to learn more about my identities and the identities of others?

## My Skills

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Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. Why did I choose to teach this content area?
2. What is my self-efficacy in this content area?
3. What have I read and written related to my discipline?
4. Which scholars or thought leaders reflect my beliefs, methods, and practices?
5. Why do skills matter in PreK–12 education?
6. Why do I think the system is only designed to teach and measure skills?
7. Why aren't skills enough for human development?
8. Which skills do I/did I use from PreK–12 education? Which didn't I use?

9. How do skills show up in my pedagogy and leadership?
10. Do I believe that the teaching of skills alone is too difficult to add other pursuits?
11. How can I begin to contextualize the skills I teach to relate to students' lives and the world we live in?
12. What are some helpful methods, strategies, or approaches for teaching skills?
13. How do my students learn skills best? What helps them when learning new skills?
14. How can I relate state standards to any topic or theme in the world?
15. How do I plan to learn more about the pedagogical skills of teaching and learning?

## My Intellect

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Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. What does intellect mean to me?
2. Am I a scholar of my discipline?
3. Why is intellect essential in PreK–12 education?
4. How do I develop my own intellectualism related to my content area?
5. What interesting knowledge do I already carry?
6. Who has cultivated my genius and knowledge about the world?
7. What topics have I always wanted to teach (about)?
8. What do I know about the (cultural) history of the discipline(s) I teach?

9. How do I see the world in art, music, health, math, science, language, or history?
10. Which topics, themes, people, places, concepts, etc., did I learn as an adult that made me ask, *Why didn't I learn this in K–12 education?*
11. Do I understand the difference between skills and intellect?
12. What historical and contemporary topics are worthwhile for teaching?
13. What topics would my students like to learn about?
14. How does intellectualism show up in my pedagogy and leadership?
15. How do I plan to learn more about new topics of the world for teaching?

## My Criticality

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Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. What do I know about criticality and critical theories?
2. Where are my consciousness and anti-oppression thinking/practices?
3. What injustices have I seen or experienced in the world?
4. Which injustices haven't I seen or experienced in the world?
5. Do I believe I have to experience an injustice to know it is real and important to humanity?
6. Are there topics related to criticality that I am comfortable or uncomfortable teaching?
7. Is there a place for justice, power, anti-oppression, and equity topics in schools? Where?
8. Why should we teach students to have sociopolitical consciousness?

9. What are five social problems or issues that connect to the discipline I teach?
10. What long-term benefits are offered with criticality teaching?
11. Why do I think some people are against criticality teaching?
12. What if others don't invite or support my teaching of criticality?
13. What is one significant memory I have of a teacher connecting pedagogy to justice or social change?
14. How does criticality show up in my pedagogy and leadership?
15. How do I plan to nurture my criticality?



## My Joy

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Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. What does joy mean to me?
2. What gives me joy?
3. What gives me joy for this profession?
4. How do I cultivate my own joy as a professional?
5. Who cultivates my joy?
6. Growing up, what gave me joy in schools—that helped me to learn?
7. Do I understand the forms of beauty that relate to my discipline?
8. Why is joy essential in PreK–12 education?

9. Why is joy perceived as an unserious/unimportant learning goal sometimes?
10. Is joy only for early childhood and elementary education?
11. Where is my own joy today?
12. How do my students experience joy in the classroom?
13. What are some helpful methods, strategies, or approaches for teaching joy?
14. How does joy show up in my pedagogy and leadership?
15. How do I plan to engage in and sustain my joy?

# YOUR STUDENTS

## My Students' Identities

Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. Who are my students?
2. How have I or will I plan to get to know them?
3. What racial and cultural identities do they identify with?
4. Have they ever experienced marginalization related to their identities?
5. What is the related genius and joy connected to their identities?
6. What do I know about their ancestral genius, justice/abolition, and joy?
7. Do they want school to be a place to learn about self and others?
8. Do they feel loved and seen in our classroom?

9. Do they struggle or excel with a strong sense of self?

10. What areas of self would they like to cultivate?

## **My Students' Skills**

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Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. Are my students in love with the content area we teach and learn?

2. What is their self-efficacy in this content area?

3. What have they read and written related to the content area?

4. How do they learn skills best?

5. When learning something new, what helps them to excel?

## **My Students' Intellect**

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Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. What do my students already know?
2. What is their genius?
3. What do students want to learn about (topics) in school?
4. Where do students cultivate their knowledge of the world outside of school?
5. Do students want to learn how to apply skills to the real world?

## **My Students' Criticality**

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Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. Where are my students' consciousness and thinking about oppression?
2. What injustices have they seen or experienced in the world? What injustices have they not seen or experienced in the world?

3. Do they want school to be a place to learn about justice and what it takes to build a better world for all?
4. Are students able to distinguish between truth and falsehood in the world?
5. What social change would students like to see within humanity?

## **My Students' Joy**

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Start with one question and write down your thoughts.

1. Do my students have joy in the classroom learning?
2. How do I know when my students experience joy?
3. Do they understand the forms of beauty in the world?
4. Do they want to learn about beauty, truth, and happiness?
5. What artistic and creative sensibilities do my students have?