



# TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH ENGLISH

## MODULE 0 – WHAT IS REFLECTION?

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# Improving Your Communicative Teaching Practice Through Reflection

*What is reflection?*



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As a result  
of an in  
depth  
look at  
reflection,  
teachers  
will be  
able to...

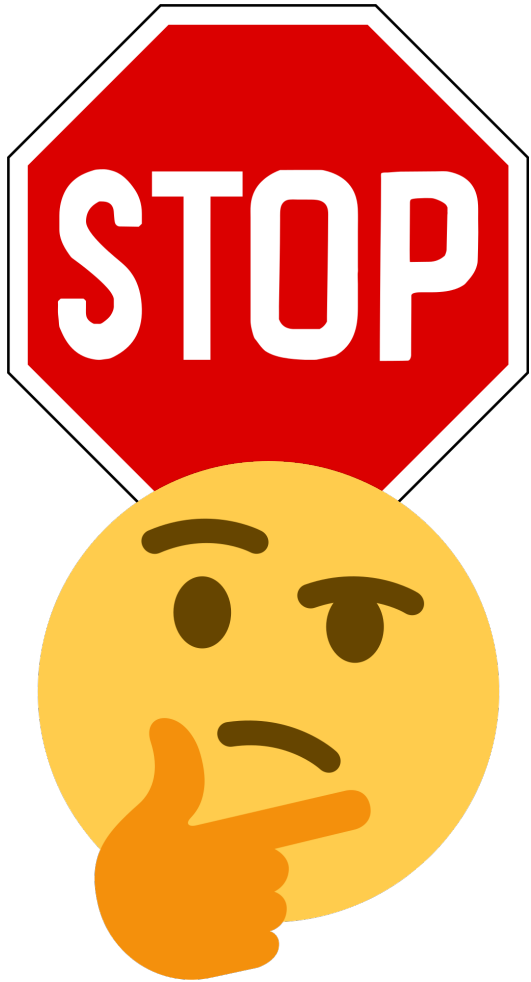
Consider what reflection and deep reflection are for English teaching professionals

Learn how reflection might be used to support your communicative English classroom

Demonstrate an understanding about why teachers should *reflect systematically and deeply* about their teaching practice

Articulate the value of the reflective process and its role in improving communicative English teaching practices in your classrooms

Current research indicates that  
the most effective teachers  
take a deeply reflective  
approach to their work.



# STOP & REFLECT

What does this mean...

...to teachers and other educators?

...to the students in our classrooms?

Is there a difference between reflection...

...and deep or critical reflection?

How do I reflect on my educational practice on a daily basis?

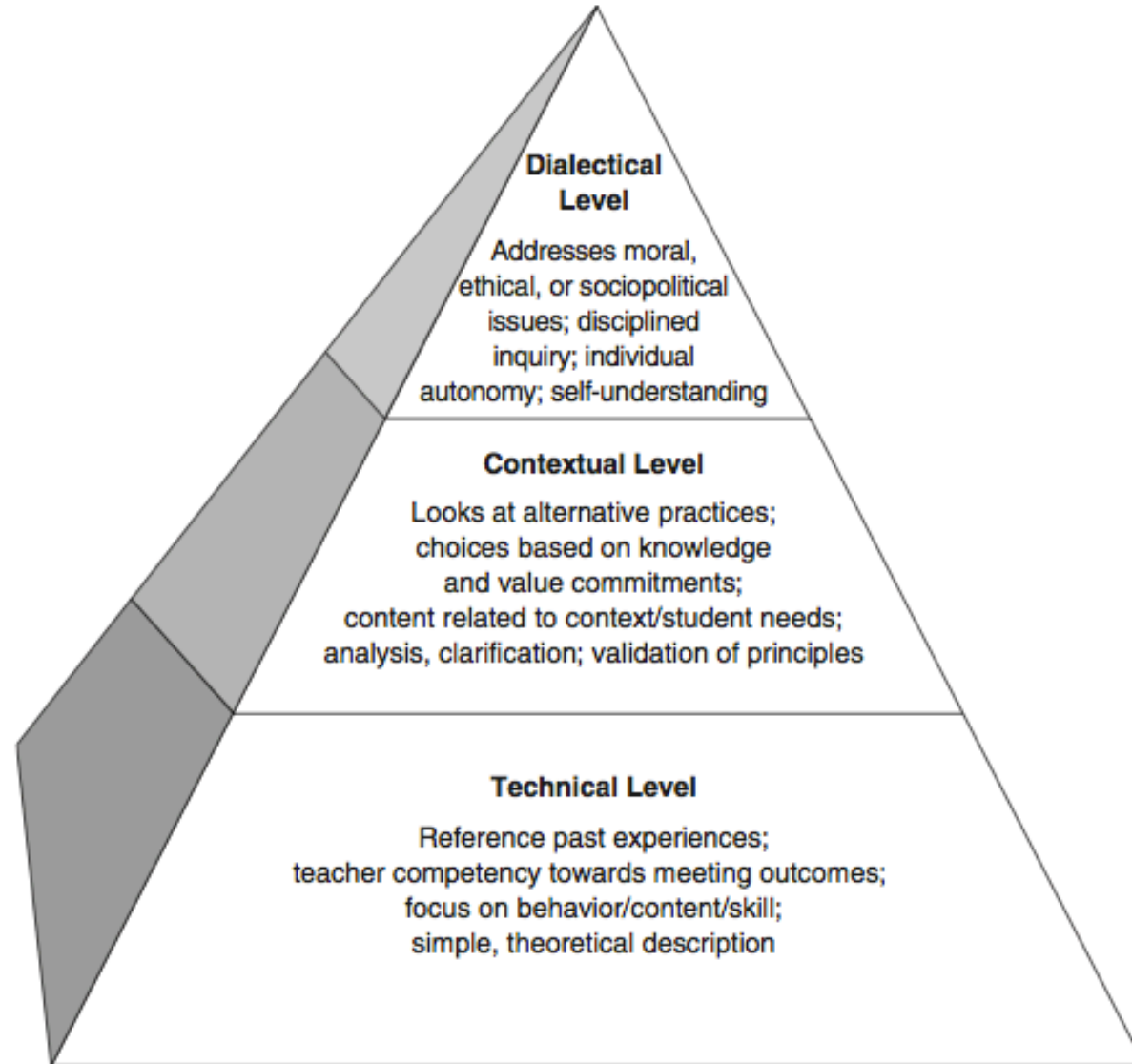
# Why is it important to reflect?

## Reflective teachers...

- are more open to **innovation** and build more **favorable relationships** with colleagues and students (Bolin, 1988; Munby & Russell, 1989)
- exhibit more **heightened connections** between theory and practice (Cruickshank, 1985)
- demonstrate **effective teaching** that correlates with levels of reflective dispositions (Giovannelli, 2003)

Taggart, G. (2005). *Promoting reflective thinking in teachers: 50 action strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

# TAGGART'S PYRAMID AND MODES OF REFLECTION



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# Technical Level of Reflection

- **Descriptions or observations**
- **Focus on describing behaviors, content, and skills from past experiences or observations**
- **Task oriented; presents teaching as a set of skills or competencies to meet**



# Contextual Level of Reflection

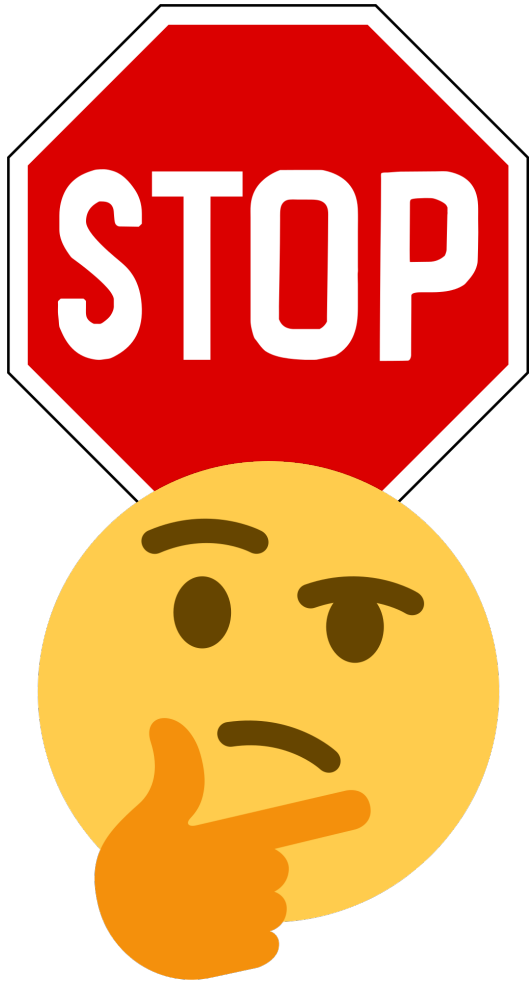
- Reflects on teaching practices; considers how they affect student's learning
- Reflects on decisions within the context of the situation – did something work?
- Relates theory to practice – connects actions to research and theory
- Looks for approaches to teaching that are based on knowledge (communicative classroom activities to promote student learning)
- Analyzes, clarifies, and validates teaching decisions based on educational theory

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# Dialectical Mode or Level

- **Systematically questions existing practices and seeks why**
- **Suggests alternatives and competing theories to result in new results**
- **Reflects on decisions made and resulting consequences that happen during the course of the action**
- **Brings moral, ethical, and student learning results to bear on educational practices**
- **Expresses ideas verbally and in writing with sureness, efficacy, and self-confidence**
- **Looks for change to promote desired results**

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# *STOP & REFLECT*

*What is your thinking with regard to the three levels of reflection?*

*Where does your own reflective practice currently fall within these three levels?*

# More on reflection!

In the 1970s, *Donald Schön* added to earlier research on reflection:

*Reflection-in-action*, or how teachers think on their feet. This involves examining our beliefs & experiences, and how they connect to our theories in use

*Reflection-on-action*, evolves from making connections between our subconscious actions and our knowledge about content/teaching theory/learning and making them visible to ourselves

# Reflection: The Bottom Line

Reflective teaching is evidence based.

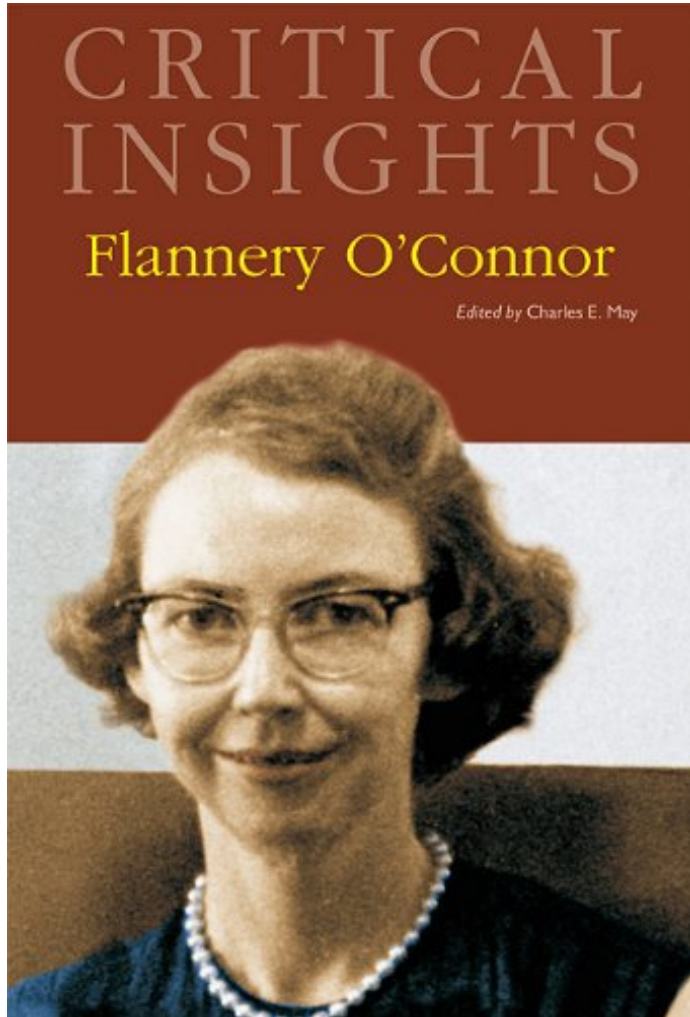
Educators collect data or evidence about their work.



Educators reflect on evidence to make informed decisions.



Changes emerge as a result of analysis of concrete evidence and not merely impulse, tradition, or random/quick thought.



I WRITE BECAUSE I  
DON'T KNOW WHAT I  
THINK UNTIL I READ  
WHAT I SAY.

~ FLANNERY O'CONNOR

*Try this out!*

## **Self-reflection on your classroom**

Think of one impactful moment in your teaching that had a profound influence on you and your teaching. Describe that moment and reflect on why it was significant. Try to describe it and its influence on you. What questions did it raise for you? What is or will be the significance for you and your students? Were there any changes you made in your teaching as a result of this moment?

**Achieving  
deep  
reflection is  
an active and  
ongoing  
journey.**





The  
journey  
starts  
here...