

From the IB Community Blog: Thoughts on the Importance of Reflection  
Excerpts from "Approaches to reflection" by Neil Bunting

The recent events in our world which are counter to our quest for a better, more peaceful world force us to look to our shared humanitarian values and employ our IB learner profiles as we endeavor to promote our common humanity and international mindedness. "Throughout civilization, reflection has been the foundation for further progress." We desperately need progress in our world relations and as fellow human beings on our journey through life together in a sometimes complex and chaotic world.

"The process of reflection defines how to move on, and how to learn from what has been created, to synthesize and define what comes next." As an IB World School, we want to encourage our students to use time and distance from these world events to gain perspective and objectivity that will be needed as we navigate toward a peaceful existence for all human beings.

Reflection also plays a vital role in the classroom, in sports and at home. As adults, we need to "build in windows of opportunity" for our children to share their thoughts and ideas on issues that are important to them. In sports, studies show that successful coaches and players actually spend more time analyzing and dissecting data, much like a scientist, than they do actually playing the game.

As lifelong learners, we must all strive to continue to grow. We must let our children know that it is okay to make mistakes and to learn from them...to reflect. "Failure is an option, and should always be an option. Without making mistakes, there is no learning." May we reflect on our place in the world and encourage our children to look for challenges and opportunities to grow. We cannot simply eat, work and sleep. We need more in our lives...more learning...more play. As we continue on the voyage to find balance in our lives, consider reflecting on ways that you might be able to encourage your child to grow in a new discipline or venue. It may be trying a new sport, traveling to an unexplored destination, learning to play a musical instrument or tackling a different language. And, as author Dan Eldon reminds us... "the journey is the destination."