



About reflective judgment

It was John Dewey (1933), the great American philosopher of education, who first introduced the concept of reflective judgment. He suggested that the goal of education was not merely the accumulation of facts, but rather the acquisition of critical thinking skills—skills of reflective judgment. These skills enable students to reflectively work with facts. For example, when engaging a text, students who display strong skills in reflective judgment actively consider the types of evidence that could support important claims. Instead of memorizing what they find, they question it, use it, and evaluate its worth.

Since Dewey coined the notion, researchers have learned a great deal about reflective judgment. Perry (1970) and Kitchener & King (1994), showed that reflective judgment skills develop through a series of levels characterized by increases in breadth and depth of reflective capability, and designed assessments of reflective judgment based on their findings. These assessments have been used to address questions about the relation between reflective judgment and learning. Level of reflective judgment has been shown to be positively related to learning, academic performance, problem-solving, decision making, tolerance, adaptability, moral development, and ego development.

For references, see <http://www.devtestservice.com/rjreferences.html>.

Reflective judgment and educational consulting

Transitions from elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school, and high school to college are increasingly critical phases in students' lives. The LRJA can help you support clients in making successful decisions about these transitions, by offering information about students' reasoning capabilities—critical information that is not provided by other forms of assessment.

For example, as you know, academic programs vary greatly between schools. Some set a clear path, limit student choice, and focus on factual learning. Others offer students more academic choices, emphasize thinking, and focus on inquiry. Grade 7 in one school can be more like grade 8 in another. Student preferences, GPA, and conventional test results do not always provide enough information to determine which students are best suited to what types of academic programs. The LRJA can help. Adding knowledge about a student's level of reflective judgment (including how it relates to the reflective judgment skills of other students), can provide useful insights about (1) the kind of program in which that student is most likely to enjoy success, and (2) what that student can do to prepare for learning in a new environment.

We hope the information provided in this report will help you in your work with John

Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think: A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Lexington, MA: Heath.

Perry, W. G. (1970). *Forms of intellectual and ethical development in the college years*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

King, P. M., & Kitchener, K. S. (1994). *Developing reflective judgment: Understanding and promoting intellectual growth and critical thinking in adolescents and adults*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass

12:2		Approximate levels of curricular demands, grade 7 and up
12:1	Post	
11:4	Ph.D.	
11:3	MA	
11:2	Senior	
11:1	Junior	
11:1	Soph	
10:4	Fresh	
10:4	12	
10:3	11	
10:3	10	
10:2	9	
10:2	8	
10:1	7	