

## Working On It!

### Strategies for your writing process

## Reflective Writing Notes

Every writer has a different process that works for them. Writing reflectively is one way that writers can better understand their individual process, keep track of their progress when working on large projects, and help facilitate the revision process.

### **Try It!**

Reflective writing notes are like fieldnotes for your writing process: they help you document what you have done, your thoughts on your work, what you would like to do next, and the questions you have moving forward. To try incorporating reflective writing notes into your process, try adding 30-minute blocks of writing time after bouts of writing. These reserved windows of time can be used to reflect on the writing work you have done over the course of the day. Some questions to consider:

- What were you working on and how did this work link to other writing or research that you are doing?
- How did the writing feel that day?
- What, if any, sticking points or challenges did you encounter?
- If the writing session felt especially pleasant or productive, what contributed to that success?
- What, if anything, are you still thinking about or thinking toward with respect to the piece you were working on or any larger writing project?

Hang on to these notes for your reference either in digital or physical form. If you are feeling stuck in your writing, try looking back through them. You might find research threads to follow up on, or aspects of your practice you can try to help get yourself unstuck!

## **In Practice**

*I normally leave notes for myself in between writing sessions about ideas or aspects I want to be sure to include. For example, I might include notes about a potential transition or structure for a paragraph. This has helped me ensure that I don't lose any ideas and maintain a smooth flow of ideas. Where I normally miss out on is the editing. However, by formalizing my casual notes into a written reflection at the end of each session, I was able to highlight areas I wasn't happy about and wanted to improve. This helped me more easily identify sections to review and edit next time, shortening the amount of revision work I did at the end of the writing process.*

*When I finish writing I don't always have the mental capacity or energy to do an intensive reflection, so standardizing the content of my reflection has been very helpful. At a minimum, I ensure that I discuss ideas I want to write about, what I dislike or am uncomfortable with in the current writing, and what I want to improve in the future. Writing these reflections has been helpful and I will be continuing this in future practice in an abbreviated form.*

*--Elaine*