

Tab 1

End of Session Reflection

Take 5 minutes at the end of every SCORES practice or class to reflect with your team about how the session went!

By using these tips below, coaches can facilitate meaningful and engaging reflection discussions that help Poet-Athletes connect their experiences to their personal growth and the America SCORES core values. These discussions provide a space for Poet-Athletes to express themselves, learn about themselves and their teammates, celebrate their achievements, and develop a mindset of continuous improvement.

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1) Reflection Questions

Ask a few of these reflection questions at the end of each SCORES session

General Reflection Questions:

1. What was the best part of today's practice? Why?
2. Did you learn something new today? What was it?
3. What was challenging for you during today's session? How did you overcome it?
4. How did you feel while participating in today's activities? Did your feelings change throughout the session?
5. What part of today's session made you feel most proud of yourself?
6. What did you enjoy the most about working with your teammates today?
7. Was there a moment when you felt like you really understood something better? What helped that happen?
8. What would you like to improve on for next time?

9. How did today's activities connect to your goals in both soccer and writing?
10. If you could give yourself one piece of advice based on today's practice, what would it be?

Team Collaboration and Communication Discussion Questions:

1. How did you support your teammates today?
2. Were there times when communication made a difference in how you played or participated?
3. How can you improve how you work with others in the next practice?

Personal Growth and Leadership Discussion Questions:

1. Did you have the chance to lead or help someone today? How did that feel?
2. What is one thing you will do differently next time to help yourself grow as both a poet and an athlete?
3. What does being a good teammate look like to you? How did you show that today?

Reflection on Mindset Discussion Questions:

1. Did you face any moments of frustration or self-doubt today? How did you handle them?
2. What positive thought or action helped you push through today's challenges?
3. Did you take any risks today, whether in soccer or writing? How did it turn out?
4. What does "success" mean to you in both soccer and writing? How did you experience that today?

Tips and Best Practices for Facilitating a Reflection Discussion

Here's a set of tips and best practices for a coach to facilitate an effective and engaging reflection discussion with Poet-Athletes at the end of a SCORES session:

1. Create a Safe and Open Environment

- **Set the Tone:** Make sure the space feels comfortable and open for everyone to share. Acknowledge that all feelings and thoughts are valid.
- **Encourage Inclusivity:** Let Poet-Athletes know that every voice is important, and that their contributions, no matter how big or small, are valued.
- **Confidentiality:** Ensure that what is shared in the reflection circle stays within the group to help build trust.

2. Ask Open-Ended Questions

- **Encourage Reflection, Not Right or Wrong Answers:** Use open-ended questions that promote deeper thinking. For example, instead of asking "Did you do well today?" ask, "What part of today's practice made you feel proud?"
- **Use "How" and "Why":** These types of questions help Poet-Athletes explore their emotions and experiences more deeply. E.g., "How did you overcome that challenge today?" or "Why was that moment meaningful for you?"

3. Give Time to Think and Respond

- **Pause Before Responding:** Allow a few moments of silence after asking a question. This gives Poet-Athletes time to reflect and formulate their thoughts.
- **Avoid Rushing:** Sometimes the best insights come after a pause. Let them know it's okay to take time to think before answering.

4. Use Positive Reinforcement

- **Celebrate Small Wins:** Acknowledge when a Poet-Athlete shares something meaningful or shows growth. Positive reinforcement encourages continued engagement and reflection.
- **Praise Effort, Not Just Results:** Recognize the effort and perseverance, even if the result wasn't perfect. For example, say, "I love how you kept trying after the first few attempts."

5. Be Patient and Supportive

- **Not Everyone Will Speak Right Away:** Some Poet-Athletes may need more time to feel comfortable. Be patient and give them space, but also gently encourage them to share when appropriate.
- **Avoid Putting Pressure on Anyone:** If someone doesn't want to share, let them know it's okay to pass. They might be more willing to participate at a later time.

6. Focus on Growth and Learning

- **Shift from Evaluation to Reflection:** Help Poet-Athletes focus on what they learned and how they grew during the session rather than just evaluating their performance.
- **Highlight Mistakes as Learning Opportunities:** When discussing challenges or mistakes, encourage Poet-Athletes to frame them as valuable learning moments. For instance, "What did that challenge teach you about yourself?"

7. Encourage Team Sharing

- **Create Group Conversations:** Rather than just having individual responses, try group sharing to encourage teamwork and community. For example, after one athlete shares, ask others how they felt or experienced something similar.
- **Foster Peer-to-Peer Reflection:** Have Poet-Athletes reflect on each other's progress and achievements. This helps build camaraderie and reinforces the idea that everyone contributes to the team's growth.

8. Keep It Structured and Focused

- **Use a Reflection Framework:** Have a simple structure for the discussion (e.g., start with highlights, then challenges, and finish with goals). This keeps the conversation

flowing and focused.

- **Keep It Short and Sweet:** Ensure that the discussion doesn't run too long. Poet-Athletes may lose focus or feel overwhelmed if it drags on. Aim for 5 minutes of reflection in each session to keep engagement high.

9. Make Connections to Core Values

- **Connect to Health, Teamwork, Leadership, and Writing:** Help Poet-Athletes link their reflections back to America SCORES' core values. For example, after discussing a challenge, ask, "How did you demonstrate leadership during that moment?" or "What does this experience teach us about being a good teammate?"
- **Use the Core Values as a Guide:** You can sometimes guide the conversation by asking questions that relate to these values. For example, "How did today's session help you grow as both an athlete and a poet?"

10. Engage and Empower Youth With Goal Setting

- **Focus on Forward Thinking:** Encourage Poet-Athletes to think about how they will apply what they learned moving forward. Ask questions like, "What's one thing you want to work on next practice?" or "How will you use today's experience in your writing or next game?"
- **Empower with Ownership:** Let Poet-Athletes take ownership of their learning. Encourage them to come up with their own goals and ways to improve. This boosts their confidence and fosters personal growth.

11. End on a Positive Note

- **Leave with Encouragement:** Conclude the reflection with a positive comment or encouragement for the next session. This ensures Poet-Athletes feel motivated and excited about continuing their progress.
- **Celebrate the Team's Progress:** Recognize the collective achievements of the team as a whole. This could be a great time to highlight teamwork, growth, or a positive team dynamic observed during the session.

12. Be Reflective Yourself

- **Model the Reflection Process:** As the coach, share a brief reflection of your own. For example, “Today, I learned that I can do a better job of giving clear instructions. I’m excited to try a new approach next time.” This shows vulnerability and sets a positive example for the team.
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