

# Polaroid Reflections

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## PURPOSE:

- To help the instructor quickly learn students' names
- To help students realize how much they can change in a short period of time

## SUPPLIES AND SETUP:

### On the first day of the semester:

- Polaroid instant camera and film
- Pens

### On the last day of the semester:

- Pictures taken the first day of class
- Pens
- Paper
- Envelopes

## DIRECTIONS:

1. At the beginning of the semester take a Polaroid photograph of each student. Have the students put their name or nickname on the photo. Use these photos for the first few weeks to "quiz" yourself on names.
2. At the end of the semester, return the Polaroid pictures to the student and invite them to write a letter to themselves, reflecting on the changes they have made over the semester and defining their goals for the upcoming year. They address and seal the envelopes and give them back, and you will mail them a year later. The pictures help them reflect on how much they can change in a short period of time. [ed. note: Another option is to ask students to include in their letter the most important lessons they have learned during the semester.]

## OUTCOMES/EXPERIENCES:

At the end of the semester, this activity tends to prompt class discussions about how different they feel and how much they have changed after 3 short months. Students can discuss how much they have learned and even some things they had forgotten (but now want to remember). Many students choose to put the picture in with the letter so they can have the opportunity to reflect on the ways they have changed from both the beginning and the end of their first semester when they receive the letter.

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