Portfolios as an alternative assessment

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Portfolios as an alternative assessment

Abstract
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This paper discusses the use of portfolios with a group of ninth grade students enrolled in an English course. These portfolios were a systematic collection of the students' work to demonstrate how (1) they have developed and grown academically and (2) how their attitudes and beliefs have become clearer or changed through their academic experiences. Criteria and recommendations for implementing educational portfolios at the high school level are provided.
PORTFOLIOS AS AN ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

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Abstract

During the past decade, there has been a shift in paradigms by educational reformers to provide a more authentic means of student assessment in our schools. These assessments need to be multidimensional and provide a more accurate picture of students’ abilities. The portfolio is one type of alternative assessment that has proven to do this. This paper discusses the use of portfolios with a group of ninth grade students enrolled in an English course. These portfolios were a systematic collection of the students’ work to demonstrate how (1) they have developed and grown academically and (2) how their attitudes and beliefs have become clearer or changed through their academic experiences. Criteria and recommendations for implementing educational portfolios at the high school level are provided.
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PORTFOLIOS AS AN ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

Chapter I

In the last few years, I have become more and more interested in how we, as educators, could find out what our students actually know and how well they understood the concepts being taught. Having worked with a wide range of students with varying abilities and my experiences for a number of years in the classroom, I felt the traditional teacher-made test really didn’t allow my students to demonstrate what the students I taught thought they were capable of doing. I believed there had to be a better way to assess students’ learning so I started to read research regarding alternative assessments. I was interested in Howard Gardner’s works regarding multiple intelligences and his notion that schools were only assessing two of the intelligences, verbal-linguistic and logical-matheematical.

During this same time, I had the opportunity to prepare my own professional portfolio. I found this experience in the summer of 1999 provided several educational benefits to me. It served as a means of self-evaluation; helping me to become self-aware of my strengths and weaknesses, and provided standards for me to judge my learning and myself. The more research I read on alternative assessments, the more I became aware that during the past decade, there has been a shift in paradigms by educational reformers to provide a more authentic means of student assessment in our schools. The research indicated these types of assessments needed to be multidimensional and elicit a more accurate picture of students’ abilities. “Multidimensional assessment” means students are evaluated on using a broader conceptualization of intelligence, ability, and learning.
Instead of the traditional standardized test, students are assessed on learning strategies, communication skills, and their knowledge as it applies to them in different situations. The portfolio is one type of alternative assessment that has the potential to do this.

For my graduate project, I chose to research the use of portfolios with ninth students. I researched the pros and cons of using portfolios as an alternative assessment, implemented a project using portfolios for a unit on relationships in freshman English classes, and developed the criteria for what should be included in an educational portfolio for high school students in an English classroom. The research questions I hoped to answer through my project were: (a) would using portfolios as an alternative assessment provide a more accurate picture of students' abilities and (b) should educational portfolios be implemented in all classes at the high school where I teach. Other points delineated in my project were: (a) important components that must exist for successful implementation of portfolios, (b) the benefits of using portfolios as alternative assessment to teachers and parents, (c) the paradigm shift that would have to take place on the part of teachers in their thinking and learning in order to implement portfolios, and (d) caveats in using portfolios as an alternative assessment.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Why use portfolios as an alternative assessment? The use of portfolios permits instruction and assessment to be woven together in a way that more traditional approaches do not allow (Paulson and Paulson, 1994). Paulson and Paulson point out that portfolios allow students to take charge of their own learning. In order for this to happen, they cite several components that must exist: (a) the end product must show that a student has been involved in self-reflection, (b) the student must be involved in the selection of what material to include, (c) the portfolio must be different from the student’s cumulative folder, (d) it must include rationale and standards for the contents, (e) the portfolio may have multiple purposes, (f) the purpose of a portfolio may change from the beginning of the year to the end, (g) the portfolio must show growth on the part of the student, and (h) the student needs to be provided with models of portfolios and examples of how others have developed their portfolios. In the last decade, there has been a call for increased use of meaningful assessments in which the student is actively engaged (Herman and Morrell, 1999).

Alternative Assessment

It is important to have an understanding of what the term alternative assessment means. According to Hancock (1994), alternative assessment is defined as:

An ongoing strategy through which student learning is not only monitored—a trait shared with testing—but by which students are involved in making decisions about the degree to which their performances matches their ability. (p. 3)
Assessment needs to be an interactive process whereby both the teacher and the student are actively engaged in the process and have ownership. This ascertainment by Hancock is supported by Gardner (1993) as cited in Kulieke et al. (1990). Gardner argues there is a resurgence of interest in the idea of multiplicity of intelligences, and that traditional schools emphasize only two of the intelligences, verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical. In his theory, Gardner also stresses there are other kinds of talents that individuals possess besides these two. They are as follows: visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical-rhythmical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. These other abilities are often omitted from the assessment process. Since two of these intelligences are most often being tested in schools, it sends a message to the students that these are the important ones. Gardner suggests that schools should demonstrate the value of all the intelligences and assess the various abilities and skills. This “multidimensional assessment” means students are evaluated on a broader concept of intelligence, ability, and learning. Instead of the traditional standardized test, students will be assessed on learning strategies, communication skills, and their knowledge as it applies to them in different situations. Portfolios incorporate assessing students on these.

Portfolios

Portfolios are defined by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia in Anderson and Bachor (1998) as:

A collection of students’ work, gathered by the teacher or student over a period of time, providing a rich array of information and evidence of learning...
must contain evidence of reflection and self-evaluation as this represents the student's efforts to learn about learning. Reflection and self-evaluation offer a concrete way for students to learn to value their own work, and by extension, to value themselves as learners. (p. 2)

Grant Wiggins, senior associate with the National Center on Education and Economy, as cited in Kulieke et al., (1990) offers this definition:

A portfolio consists of student exhibitions that demonstrate mastery of the skills of inquiry and expression. Credit is given on the basis of what students can actually do in "showing off" their knowledge and know-how. The exhibitions require reading, writing, questioning, speaking, and listening. Exhibitions are the culmination of a series of performances in an area, usually a graduation-level exercise or final class project. (p. 6)

Another definition of portfolio assessment is from Hancock (1994) in which he describes it as "an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in selecting samples of student work for inclusion in a collection, the main purpose of which is to show the student's progress" (p. 3).

For purposes of this project, I used portions of the previous definitions and the following definition developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association:

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's effort, progress, and achievements in one or more areas. The collection must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection. (Paulson, Paulson, and Meyer, 1991, p. 60)
Benefits of Using Portfolios as an Alternative Assessment

According to Mitchell, Abernathy, and Gowans (1998), the use of portfolios can be designed to meet the needs and objectives of individual students and curriculum. Each time portfolios are used in a classroom the goals, procedures, and evaluations can be different. Portfolios offer many benefits for both the students and the teachers.

Benefits for the Teachers

Rationale for the use of portfolios by teachers according to Mitchell (1992) are their benefits as a teaching tool, their role in the professional development for teachers, their role as an assessment tool (see Appendix A).

A teaching tool. Portfolios provide an opportunity for students to have ownership, motivate students, give them a sense of accomplishment, and allow active engagement in their own learning. One attribute of portfolios is that it requires the student to engage in self-evaluation. Portfolios provide opportunities for the students and teachers to sit down together to identify goals and reflect about students’ accomplishments. According to Mitchell et al., portfolios are helpful at parent conferences in providing an accurate picture of a student’s learning.

The professional development of teachers. Portfolios allow teachers to study curriculum and select and evaluate effective teaching practices. According to Stecher (1998), portfolio assessment has been associated with improvements in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs and with desirable changes in curriculum and instruction. Educators have found them beneficial in helping them to identify school strengths and areas that need improvement. According to Thomas et al. (1995) as cited in Stecher (1998), teachers who participated in the use of portfolios in language arts and mathematics in California
indicated that the experience had a ‘powerful impact on their understanding of what students can and should be learning and how they...might support that learning’ (p. 57).

**Alternative assessments to standardized testing.** More and more, portfolios are being used to serve as a college application and high school placement vehicle. In some areas, they are replacing competency exams and serve as a grade or end of year culminating activity. According to Mitchell (1992), some schools are starting to use them to provide program evaluation data and as supplements or substitutes for state assessment tests.

Stecher (1998) sums up the benefits of using portfolio assessment to teachers by pointing out the connections teachers can make between curriculum standards and organizing subject matter across disciplines to create more meaningful learning experiences for students. Teachers are better able to understand the learning process and become more effective instructional planners. Often there is more informal dialogue going on between colleagues which creates a more professional community in the school. He further goes on to support the research that points out the value of portfolios in improving communication between teachers, students, and parents. This is a win-win proposition for everyone involved. This shift in paradigm among educators improves instructional practices, which ultimately benefits the students. More and more educators are using portfolios to examine growth over time and student progress in the learning process. Educational reformers believe the use of portfolios instead of standardized testing will help teachers communicate a more meaningful picture to parents on how their child is performing (Anderson & Bachor, 1998).
Benefits for the Students

As noted earlier (Paulson et al., 1991), the use of portfolios permits instruction and assessment to be woven together in a way that more traditional approaches do not. Additional rationale for using portfolios with students is that it helps the student to construct meaning about his/her learning. The student learns the process, has a record of the processes associated with learning itself, and is able to assess his/her own learning. The use of portfolios creates a learning environment where both the assessment and instruction coexist in a compatible manner allowing the student to be actively engaged in the assessment process. Education moves from other people making sense of a student’s performance to the student becoming actively involved in his/her own learning. It allows the learner the ability to demonstrate his/her skills over a period of time, chart progress over time, and demonstrate the knowledge he/she felt was crucial to their learning experience (Herman and Morrell, 1999).

“If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always got.” This quotation appeared at the top of a memo from my principal this year. It seems to make a lot of sense to me in regards to the educational arena. A similar statement was made by Resnick and Resnick (1992) as cited in Stecher (1998) when discussing the use of portfolios to measure student performance. It is their belief that ‘You get what you assess...[and] you do not get what you do not assess’ (p.59). If educators continually assess student’s learning the way they always have, they will not have as true of a reflection of the students’ perceptions of their capabilities. According to Herman and Morrell (1999), the traditional objective test is too narrow in scope and only provides a small glimpse of a student’s capabilities. It limits the student’s ability to
Portfolios demonstrate the learning processes that have taken place on their journey. They state that education and our students can no longer be passive; education and our students need to be actively engaged. Because portfolio assessment allows the student to demonstrate his/her abilities over a period of time, it highlights the student’s strengths and accomplishments. Wiebersick (1999) summed up the need for portfolios as alternative assessment when she made the following statement, “Alternative assessment taps the power and diversity of active learning, creates multiple sources of information to support instructional decision making, and helps students become more reflective and capable learners” (p. 1).

Caveats Regarding Use of Portfolios

Even though there are many educational advantages for using portfolios, there are also some disadvantages that educators need to be aware of before starting to use them. According to Kortez (1998), some of these disadvantages are (a) difficulty in training readers to score portfolios consistently, (b) finding evidence that the results support the inferences that users wish to draw from them since tasks vary, (c) students receiving varying amounts of assistance, (d) variance in how much assistance teachers provided or number of revisions they allowed, (e) restrictions teachers placed on help from peers and other adults, and (f) assistance from peers. In this last one, scores may be lower because of the abilities of the peers. It is important that the educators implementing portfolios address the issues at the onset. Kortez indicated the biggest hurdle is in obtaining consistency in scoring of students’ work between teachers. These differences can be addressed with proper training and continual inservicing. He also cautions that
schools implementing portfolio assessment must have a means of assessing the portfolio process.

Other concerns, as cited by Black (1992), are time and grades. It takes much time to manage portfolios but it can be done efficiently if: (a) the teacher also changes her/his teaching styles and (b) the students are involved with more self and peer evaluations and cooperative learning. The grade issue has been addressed in some districts by changing their traditional letter grade report cards to report cards that have narratives and checklists. The last concern Black raised were problems with college admission offices where they still required class rank and grades. There is still a lot of opposition to using portfolios as an alternative assessment in admitting students to post-secondary schools.
Chapter 3

Methodology

In the summer of 1999, when I had the experience of preparing my own educational portfolio, I found the process provided several educational benefits. It served as a means of self-evaluation, helped me to become self-aware of my strengths and weaknesses, and provided standards for me to judge my learning and myself. I chose this project for my master's degree research requirement to see if portfolios would do the same for my students and to determine if educational portfolios should be something that should be implemented at the high school where I teach.

Next, I did extensive reading on using portfolios as an alternative assessment. I identified primary sources through a computer search and reviewed the literature, looking at studies that included recent research on portfolios as well as studies from the early 1990's. When I did my reading, I was looking for the rationale for using portfolios, caveats, and proper methods for implementation. By looking at a variety of studies, I was able to identify contradictory findings.

For my project, I selected a unit I would be teaching on relationships with ninth grade English students and developed it with portfolios as a culminating assessment tool rather than a traditional teacher-made test. While developing the unit, I kept in mind the literature I had read and carefully made sure I included all of the components necessary for proper implementation of portfolios. At the culmination of the unit, I collected data to determine the feasibility of continuing to use portfolios at the high school level.
Chapter 4

The Project

Current research indicated there were many advantages of using portfolios as an alternative assessment, so instead of a teacher-made test, I decided to use portfolios as a culminating activity on a unit called Relationships: Portraits From Life. The unit was divided into three sub-units as follows: (a) Bittersweet Memories, (b) Points of Conflicts, and (c) Commanding Respect.

Participants

For this project, I, as a teacher, worked with a group of seventy-five ninth graders in English classes at a Catholic high school in Davenport, Iowa. The students were mostly from middle to upper middle class homes. Students' abilities ranged from being identified for talented and gifted programs to meeting special education criteria.

Conceptual Framework

I first reviewed the standards set forth in the revised language arts education curriculum for the Diocese of Davenport (1999). Eight standards of what students should be able to do to demonstrate significant learning in language arts education as a result of schooling were delineated. They also specified what students who achieve the standards should be able to do. For this project, I identified how the use of portfolios would meet five out of the eight standards, the outcomes, and provided examples of sample assessment tasks.
Standard #1

The student demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process. Some outcomes for this standard would be the student would be able to (a) evaluate own and other's writing, (b) use brainstorming and clustering to gather ideas to choose a topic, (c) develop anecdotes to introduce and conclude a topic, and (d) use a rubric to evaluate elements in one's own and other's writing. Some sample assessment tasks would be to (a) write a poem, (b) use concrete details to describe a subject, and (c) use personal experiences as a basis for reflection on life in a journal.

Standard #2

The student demonstrates competence in the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing. Outcomes for this standard would be the student would be able to (a) use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas, (b) organize ideas to achieve cohesion in writing, and (c) use a variety of techniques to convey a personal style and voice. Some sample assessment tasks would be to use descriptive language that clarifies or enhances ideas and use a variety of techniques to convey a personal style and voice.

Standard #3

The student uses grammatical and mechanical convention in written compositions. Outcomes would be the student would be able to (a) use complex and compound-complex sentences in written compositions, (b) use a variety of parts of speech in written composition, and (c) use a dictionary to develop vocabulary skills. A sample assessment task would be the student's demonstration of learning appropriate mechanics by consistently participating in peer reviews and learning about specific errors in the context of his/her individual writing.
Standard #6

The student demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of literary texts. An outcome would be for students to be able to make connections among literary works based on a theme. A sample assessment task would be for the student to create a collage of pictures, which sums up the theme of a written work.

Standard #7

The student demonstrates competence in the general skills and strategies for reading a variety of informational texts. Outcomes for this standard would be the student would be able to scan a passage to determine whether it contained relevant information, and they would use discussions with peers as a way of understanding information. A sample assessment task would be to create a diary entry or write about a person they admire recalling impressions and expressing their feelings.

Educational Objectives

After determining the educational standards could be met, I defined the specific educational objectives for this unit. I classified them into the following three categories: (a) knowledge, (b) skills, and (c) affect.

Knowledge

At the culmination of this unit, students will demonstrate their knowledge in four ways. They will be able to (a) identify the different types of relationships they have in their lives, (b) identify certain character traits that are necessary for healthy relationships with others, (c) identify points of conflict individuals face and ways to overcome them, and (d) distinguish the difference between demanding respect and commanding respect.
Skills

The student will (a) write a reflection on each of the three sub units demonstrating his/her understanding of the sub unit and how it applies to his/her life, (b) use a computer and a scanner to create a timeline highlighting five significant relationships in his/her life, and (c) demonstrate his/her understanding of each sub unit by providing self-selected samples from a variety of mediums.

Affect

The student will (a) have more tolerance for others and work harder to have positive relationships, (b) will demonstrate their understanding of the influence people and relationships have had on them as they have grown through the years, and (c) articulate ways to be an active advocate in promoting healthy relationships.

Goals

Goals for using portfolios as a culminating piece for this unit were: (a) the use of portfolios would permit instruction and assessment to interweave, (b) students would become actively engaged and take more responsibility for their own learning, (c) the portfolio would serve as a culminating activity over a unit on relationships rather than the traditional standardized test used in the past, and (d) the teacher would have an effective tool that would be helpful in evaluating effective teaching practices.

Teaching Methods and Sample

Several weeks before I was going to teach the unit on relationships, I introduced portfolios to the students by giving them background information about the multiple
intelligences and explaining the rationale for using portfolios as alternative assessment (see Appendices B). I relied on the research of Paulson et al. (1991) as to the important components of portfolios (see Appendix C). At this point, the students brainstormed what they thought a portfolio was and what types of things might be included in a portfolio. Paulson et al. noted the importance of providing sample portfolios so I used my own educational portfolio as an example. The students reviewed it to see if it fit their definition of what a portfolio should be. Things they wanted added were CDs they could make and PowerPoint (Microsoft) presentations.

Introductory Activity

To introduce the unit on relationships and the portfolio assignment, I prepared a PowerPoint presentation using the information I had gathered previously from the students. Relying on the research of Paulson and Paulson (1994) on including rationale and standards for the contents, the basic requirements of the portfolios were clearly defined. Each portfolio would include: (a) title page, (b) dedication page, (c) table of contents, (d) a written reflection on each of the three sub units, (e) three examples illustrating their understanding of each sub unit with a brief explanation as to why they chose each, (f) a time line highlighting at least five milestones in their lives involving relationships, and (g) a concluding comment sheet (see Appendix D).

Evaluation Criteria

Since Paulson et al. (1991) pointed out student self-evaluation and self-reflection as two important components in using portfolios, I provided two assessment tools for the students (see Appendices E). The purpose of these assessment tools was to serve as guidelines as to what was expected in their final portfolio. One was for the quality of the
content of the portfolio and the other was to evaluate the process of preparing the portfolio. The students were required to complete the assessment tools themselves and turn them in with their completed portfolio. These assessment tools would be used during oral conferencing at the end of this unit so that the student and teacher could focus on the student's strengths and areas that needed improvement.

**Cycle Sheet and Reflection Questions**

I next went over a timeline for this unit, and the students received cycle sheets which explained how we would be studying the three sub units (see Appendices F). I stressed to the students we would have a celebration activity where they would be sharing their finished portfolios with their peers. Because of the nature of the topic of this unit, I let them know they would be able to take anything they were uncomfortable about sharing with their peers out of their portfolio prior to sharing it. Students would be responsible for turning in progress reports twice during the unit, and these were to be included in their portfolio attached to their assessment tools. On these progress reports, students were asked to include their choice of creative options and the result of work to date. I also provided a sheet of reflection questions to use as starting points if they were having trouble on their written reflection for each sub unit (see Appendix G).

**Activities**

Throughout the month, we read and discussed stories and poems and listened to music and tapes centering on the three sub units. Students were taught how to create timelines using the computers and scanners, taught about point of view, and how to write a pattern poem called "Poetic Conversations" (see Appendix H). Because of the recommendation from Black (1993) that students be involved in more peer and self-
evaluation when using portfolios, several days were spent as writer workshop days where students brought their portfolios to work on and peer edit.

Results

The writer workshop days provided a lot of motivation for the students. Once they saw what their peers were doing, they seemed to get excited and most of them started to push themselves to excel. There was a transformation in the classroom during this month. The students were actively engaged in their learning and were coming in before and after school and during study halls to work on them. I observed more collaboration between the students and saw learning become more student-centered and my role as a teacher moving more toward that of a facilitator. Students that normally had difficulty writing a few sentences on a topic were writing pages and pouring their hearts out about the relationships in their lives. They were bringing in things to share with the others about the three sub units. In all my years of teaching, I had never seen students this excited about learning. Faith Bicknese, a third year teacher colleague, summed it up best when she said, “When I was taking my education classes and decided I wanted to be a teacher, this is what I thought it was suppose to be like in the classroom.”

Culminating Activity

For a culminating activity, the students brought their portfolios in to share in a coffeehouse setting. Out of the seventy-five students in my classes, there were only three students that did not complete their portfolios on time. Within a week, these three were turned in.

The students and I felt the portfolios were incredible. It was obvious the students had worked hard during the month long unit, and their portfolios were a reflection of the
time and effort they had spent (see Appendices I and J). They shared their portfolios with each other and wrote comments. I found it interesting to note when reviewing comment sheets on how positive the students were with each other and the amount of respect they gave to their peers and their work. They later told me when they evaluated the unit that they knew how much of self went into these on the part of their peers, and they respected each other for working so hard.

**Evaluation**

For my part of the evaluation, I went through and evaluated each portfolio using the completed assessment tools the students filled out. After reading and evaluating the portfolios, I met with each student for a mini conference. In this conference, we discussed areas of strengths and areas they might want to work to improve in future assignments. For time management, I scheduled these before and after school and during my planning time when students had a study hall. I also had the students evaluate the unit and their feelings about using portfolios (see Appendix K).
Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

After implementing portfolios with high school freshman English students, I would certainly recommend implementing them across the curriculum at the high school where I teach. Benefits for the students, parents, and the teacher were consistent with the benefits cited in the research on portfolios as an alternative assessment.

Benefits for the Students

In the survey administered to the students at the culmination of the unit, some of the educational advantages they cited were: (a) students were required to take more ownership for their own learning, (b) students pushed themselves harder because this was an open-ended assessment, (c) peer evaluations were helpful in improving their proofreading skills, (d) the use of assessment tools made them be honest about their performance, (e) conferencing one on one with the teacher gave them a better understanding of their strengths and areas they needed to work on, (f) students were better able to make connections and see the relevance between what they were learning and real life, (g) students learned the importance of time management, and (h) the celebration day at the end gave them a goal to work towards. Some of the caveats mentioned were (a) they weren’t very good time managers and (b) this type of assessment required a lot more effort on their part than a teacher-made test.

I would recommend having students bring in samples of their work to show with their progress reports in the future. Some of the students did procrastinate and suggested that being required to show what they had accomplished rather than just writing it down would have helped them to manage their time better.
Benefits for the Parents

I had the opportunity to have parent conferences right after we completed this unit and used the portfolios in the conferences. Parents responded favorably to seeing concrete evidence of the type of work their student was doing. Some of the positives of portfolio assessment from a parent’s perspective were: (a) their student was required to take more ownership of his/her learning, (b) their student was required to do a lot more thinking, (c) their student acquired technology skills, (d) their student was involved in self-assessment and peer evaluation, (e) they liked the fact there was time for the student to conference one on one with the teacher, and (f) there was concrete evidence of their child’s work. A recommendation I would make when using portfolios as a final assessment would be to write a letter to the parents at the beginning of the unit to explain portfolios and the student expectations that accompany this type of assessment process. For the three students that did not turn in their portfolios on time, this type of communication at the start might have alleviated their procrastination.

Benefits for the Teacher

My experience with using portfolios as an alternative assessment supported the research. As a teaching tool, portfolios provided opportunities for students to have ownership and become actively engaged in their own learning. It was a very valuable tool at conferences to give parents an accurate picture of their student’s learning. By implementing portfolios, I forced myself to study the curriculum closer and to select and evaluate my teaching practices. There were so many neat things going on in the classroom, I found I had a renewed attitude. The portfolios gave me a clearer picture of our school’s strengths and some areas that needed improvement. Much like the teachers
in the California study cited earlier (Mitchell, 1992), I found I had a clearer understanding of (a) what students can and should be learning, (b) the multiple ways this can be accomplished, and (c) how I can better support my students.

"I'm not afraid of storms, for I'm learning to sail my ship." This quote by Louisa May Alcott sums up why it is important for students to become self-directed learners. The students in classrooms today are growing up in a completely different world than they did just five years ago. Educators are no longer preparing a generation of students to go out and learn the skills for a specific career for life. If our mission as educators is to prepare our students for all of the changes they will encounter, we must help them learn to "sail their own ships." With the use of portfolios, students will have a tool through which they can demonstrate the learning they felt was relevant as they embarked on their voyage.
References


Appendix A

Why Use Portfolios?

1. As a teaching tool
   - To provide students ownership, motivation, a sense of accomplishment, and participation
   - To involve students in a process of self-evaluation
   - To help students and teachers set goals
   - To build in time for reflection about students' accomplishments
   - To aid in parent conferences

2. Professional development of teachers
   - To study curriculum and effective teaching practices
   - To allow for better staff communication
   - To reduce the paper load
   - To identify school strengths and needs for improvement
   - To build a sequence in writing instruction

3. Assessment
   - To serve as an alternative to standardized testing
   - To serve as a college application and high school placement vehicle
   - To replace competency exams
   - To serve as a grade or end-of-year culminating activity
   - To provide program evaluation
   - To supplement or substitute for state assessment tests

4. Research
   - To examine growth over time and progress in students' writing
   - To look at the revision process

Appendix B

Portfolios are defined by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia as:

A collection of students' work, gathered by the teacher or student over a period of time, providing a rich array of information and evidence of learning... A portfolio must contain evidence of reflection and self-evaluation as this represents the student's efforts to learn about learning. Reflection and self-evaluation offer a concrete way for students to learn to value their own work, and by extension, to value themselves as learners (Anderson & Bachor, 1998, p. 2).

Grant Wiggins, senior associate with the National Center on Education and Economy, as cited in Kulieke et al., (1990) offers this definition:

A portfolio consists of student exhibitions that demonstrate mastery of the skills of inquiry and expression. Credit is given on the basis of what students can actually do in “showing off” their knowledge and know-how. The exhibitions require reading, writing, questioning, speaking, and listening. Exhibitions are the culmination of a series of performances in an area, usually a graduation-level exercise or final class project.

Northwest Evaluation Association:

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's effort, progress, and achievements in one or more areas. The collection must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection (Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991, p. 60).
Appendix B (continued)

THE ORIGINAL SEVEN INTELLIGENCES

To arrive at this enhanced view of intelligence, Gardner studied the cognitive profiles of gifted children, people from diverse cultures, idiots savants, and brain-damaged individuals. He realized that intelligence was expressed in multiple forms—in addition to linguistic and logical-mathematical abilities, he identified kinesthetic, visual-spatial, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. The seven identified intelligences are as follows:

Linguistic intelligence is the ability to think in words and to use language to express and appreciate complex meanings. Linguistic intelligence allows us to understand the order and meaning of words, and to apply metalinguistic skills to reflect on our use of language. Linguistic intelligence is the most widely shared human competence and is evident in poets, novelists, journalists, and effective public speakers.

Logical-mathematical intelligence is the ability to calculate, quantify, consider propositions and hypotheses, and carry out complex mathematical operations. It enables us to perceive relationships and connections, to use abstract, symbolic thought, sequential reasoning skills, and inductive and deductive thinking processes. Logical intelligence is usually well-developed in mathematicians, scientists, and detectives.

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence is the capacity to manipulate objects and use a variety of physical skills. This intelligence also involves a sense of timing, and the perfection of skills through mind-body union. Athletes, dancers, surgeons, and craftspeople exhibit highly developed kinesthetic intelligence.

Spatial intelligence is the ability to think in three dimensions. Core capacities of this intelligence include mental imagery, spatial reasoning, image manipulation, graphic and artistic skills, and an active imagination. Sailors, pilots, sculptors, painters, and architects all exhibit spatial intelligence.

Musical intelligence is the capacity to discern pitch, rhythm, timbre, and tone. This intelligence enables one to recognize, create, reproduce, and reflect on music, as demonstrated by composers, conductors, musicians, vocalists, and sensitive listeners. Interestingly, there is often an affective connection between music and the emotions, and mathematical and musical intelligences may share common thinking processes.

Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with others. It involves effective verbal and non-verbal communication, the ability to note distinctions among others, a sensitivity to the moods and tempers of others, and the ability to entertain multiple perspectives. Teachers, social workers, actors, and politicians all exhibit interpersonal intelligence.

Intrapersonal intelligence is the capacity to understand oneself— one's thoughts and feelings and to use such knowledge in planning and directing one's life. Intrapersonal intelligence involves not only an appreciation of the self, but also of the human condition and is evident in psychologists, spiritual leaders, and philosophers.

Appendix C

Important Components of Portfolios

A. The end product must show that a student has been involved in self-reflection

B. The student must be involved in the selection of what material to include

C. The portfolio must be different from the student’s cumulative folder

D. It must contain rationale and standards for content

E. The portfolio may have multiple purposes

F. The purpose of a portfolio may change from the beginning of the year to the end

G. The portfolio must show growth on the part of the student

H. The student needs to be provided with models of portfolios and examples of how others have developed their portfolios

(Paulson et al., 1991)
Appendix D
Relationship Portfolio - English 9

Students will create a portfolio around the theme “Relationships.” Due Date: February 23

I. Your portfolio needs to be divided into three subunits:
   A. Bittersweet Memories
   B. Points of Conflict
   C. Commanding Respect

II. Each subunit must contain a written reflection on the theme and three different examples illustrating that theme.
   Examples may be:
   1. Poetry
   2. Art Work
   3. Short Stories
   4. Music Lyrics
   5. Photography
   6. Journaling
   7. Miscellaneous

III. Your portfolio must also include a timeline illustrating the various milestones (5 to 10) you have already experienced in your life. These must be illustrated and captioned.

Each portfolio must be set up in a three ring binder or folder in the following format:
- Title Page
- Dedication Page
- Table of Contents
- Contents
  - Bittersweet Memories - reflection - three examples
  - Points of Conflict - reflection - three examples
  - Commanding Respect - reflection - three examples
- Time Line
- About the Author Page
- Comment Page

Include your rubric and progress reports inside the front cover of your portfolio.

A written progress report needs to be turned in on Friday, February 11th and Thursday, February 17th. They need to be neat and legible and include your name, choice of creative options, and result of work to date. These will be returned to you and must be attached to your assessment sheets when you turn in your final portfolio.
Appendix D (continued)

Relationships

English 9
Mrs. Draude
Your portfolio will be divided into three sub units.

- Bittersweet Memories
- Points of Conflict
- Commanding Respect
Appendix D (continued)
Appendix D (continued)
Commanding Respect

Commanding Respect
Appendix D (continued)

Each subunit must include:

- Written reflection on the theme
Appendix D (continued)

Three examples illustrating each of the sub themes.

- Poetry
- Artwork
- Short Story
- Music
- Lyrics
- Photography
- Journal Reflection
Each portfolio must be set up in a three ring binder or folder.

- Title Page
- Dedication Page
- Table of Contents
- Contents
- Time Line
- About the Author Page
- Comment Page
- Assessment Tools and Progress Reports.
Title Page

- Title of Portfolio
- Titles of Three Sub Units
- Your Name
- Teachers' Names
- Section

Relationships

Points of Conflict

Bittersweet Memories

Commanding Respect

Kyle Shradel
Mrs. Draude/Mrs. Boardman
Sixth Period
The dedication page should dedicate your portfolio to someone who has made a difference in your life.

I would like to dedicate this to all the writers that can express so much emotion. After doing this project, I realize how difficult it is to write. Authors can write so much and at the same time never lose your interest. They have such a skill that should be highly respected. You don’t know how hard something is until you’ve tried it.
Appendix D (continued)

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents should have the following sections:
- Title Page
- Dedication Page
- Table of Contents
- Bittersweet Memories Reflection & Examples
- Points of Conflict Reflection & Examples
- Commanding Respect Reflection & Examples
- Time Line
- About the Author Page
- Comment Page
Appendix D (continued)

Time Line

• This time line should include five to ten milestones of your life.
  • Illustrated with photos
  • Captioned
Appendix D (continued)
Appendix D (continued)

First Day of School, September 1, 1994
Oh boy! I loved preschool! I was so excited! I wanted to be just like my big brother, Michael!

First Communion, March 21, 1995
This was a special day for me. I even wore my mother's wedding veil. I was finally able to fully take part in the Mass.

Confirmation, April 14, 1999
This was a big step for me. With Ethel Puffy as my sponsor, I became an adult in the Church.
Appendix D (continued)

Graduation: May 26, 2000

It was a time of tears and smiles as I left the only school I had known all my life. Next up...high school!

State Cross-Country Meet, October 9th, 2000

What a job! I had worked so hard to get to state. I am my best, and I will never forget that awesome experience.
About the Author

The author of this portfolio is Shannon Cassel. Shannon resides in Bettendorf, Iowa and attends school as a freshman at Davenport Assumption High School. She completed preschool through eighth grade at St. Paul the Apostle School. Shannon at age fifteen leads a very busy life. She is involved in band, cross-country, basketball, and track. Shannon is also involved in her parish youth group. Her favorite things to do include reading, sailing, waterskiiing, diving, and swimming. Her favorite vacation spot is Lake Okoboji, Iowa.

Shannon's family consists of a mother, a father, two brothers (Michael age eighteen and Owen age twelve), one sister (Kenneth age nine), and a dog (Belle age three). When Shannon grows up she hopes to be an astronaut or a doctor. Her father is an orthopedic surgeon, but Shannon is unsure about what type of doctor she would like to be.
Appendix D (continued)

Comments:
You did a wonderful job! It can tell you handle a lot of work on this class all your notes! Megan Bledsoe
Progress Report

Shannon Carol
English IV
2/19/00

I have made good progress on my Relationship Portfolio. So far I have created a title page, a dedication page, and a comment page on my computer. I have made a rough copy of my timeline. I have revised my poetic conversation to use in my Points of Conflict section. I have found a poem (and written a short paragraph about it) to use in my Bittersweet Memories section. I have started to write a reflection about Commanding Respect and I have started to write my About the Author page.
Appendix E

Name: 
Section: 

Relationships Portfolio Assessment Tool

Title Page 5
Dedication Page 5
Table of Contents 5

Bittersweet Memories
Reflection 5
3 Examples (5 points each) 15

Points of Conflict
Reflection 5
3 Examples (5 points each) 15

Commanding Respect
Reflection 5
3 Examples (5 points each) 15

Time Line 10
About the Author Page 10
Comment Page 5
Total Points Possible 100

Comments:
Relationships Portfolio Assessment Tool

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Comments:
Appendix F

English 9
Mrs. Draude/Miss Bicknese

Relationships: Portraits From Life

"In a package of minutes there is this we. How beautiful."
-Gwendolyn Brooks

Wednesday, January 19, 2000 - Day 1 - Department Day

Thursday, January 20, 2000 - Day 2
DOL Week 10 - Day 1
Intro duce unit - Relationships: Portraits From Life

Assignment: Read "Aunt Zuriehia" pages 293-302
Write one letter on page 301.
Write a paragraph about a favorite friend or relative.

Friday, January 21, 2000 - Day 3
DOL Week 10 - Day 2
Discuss "Aunt Zuriehia"
Literary terms: Characterization and symbols

Monday, January 24, 2000 - Day 4
DOL Week 10 - Day 3
Introduce LeChang's "Million"

Assignment: Read "LeChang's Million" pages 304-312
Study guide and vocabulary sheet 7 is due tomorrow.

Tuesday, January 25, 2000 - Day 5
DOL Week 10 - Day 4
Discuss LeChang's "Million"
Go over vocabulary worksheet
In class quiz over "LeChang's Million"

Assignment: Read "The Cub" pages 314-319
Writing option #1 - page 319 and vocabulary sheet 12

Wednesday, January 26, 2000 - Day 6
DOL Week 10 - Day 6
Discuss "The Cub"
Vocabulary and Comprehension quiz over "The Cub"
Appendix F (continued)

Cycle Sheet – Mrs Draude and Miss Bicknese
English 9

Friday, January 28, 2000 – DOL Wk. II – Day 1
Return papers
Quiz over "The Cub"
Discuss "Taught Me Purple" and "The Secret Heart"

Monday, January 31, 2000 – DOL Wk. II – Day 2
Model poetic conversations
Assignment: Write a poetic conversation using the pattern. This is due on
Wednesday and your final poem needs to be done on a computer.

Tuesday, February 1, 2000 – DOL Wk. II – Day 3
Power Point presentation and criteria sheet for Relationships Portfolio
Writer’s Workshop – work on portfolios or poem
Assignment: Poem is due tomorrow.

Wednesday, February 2, 2000 – DOL Wk. II – Day 4
Collect poetic conversations
Language Workshop
Page 328 – Combining Sentences
Assignment: Page 328 – Exercise 1. Write out the sentences.

Thursday, February 3, 2000 – DOL Wk. II – Day 5
Record DOL’s
Correct Assignment
Introduce Sub Unit – “Points of Conflict”
Assignment: Read “Annie John” pages 333-338
Write out the following from page 339:
First Impressions
Second Thoughts
Broader Connections
Do the vocabulary activity on page 340
Appendix F (continued)

English 9
Mrs. Draude/Miss Bicknese

Monday, February 7, 2000 - Day 2
DOL Week 12 - Day 1
Discuss "Annie John"
Discuss different types of conflicts and review parts of a plot

Assignment: Page 342 - Journal Writing Reflection

Tuesday, February 8, 2000 - Day 3
DOL Week 12 - Day 2
Turn in journal reflections
Listen to tape of "Fish Eyes" and follow along in your books
Discuss questions - page 348

Assignment: Test tomorrow over "Annie John," "Fish Eyes," conflict, plot, and vocabulary

Wednesday, February 9, 2000 - Day 4
DOL Week 12 - Day 3
Test

Assignment: Read "The Hitchhiker" pages 350-360

Thursday, February 10, 2000 - Day 5
DOL Week 12 - Day 4
Return test and go over
Orally read "The Hitchhiker"

Assignment: Progress report on "Relationship" portfolio

Friday, February 11, 2000 - Day 6
DOL Week 12 - Day 5
Collect DOL's and progress reports on portfolios
Finish orally reading "The Hitchhiker"
Lesson over subject/verb agreement page 367

Assignment: Page 368, exercises 1 and 2
Appendix F (continued)

Cycle Sheet
English 9 – Mrs. Draude, Miss Blicknese

February 14, 2000 – Department Day
Happy Valentine’s Day!
Eleanor Roosevelt wrote, “Many people will walk in and out of your life,
But only true friends will leave footprints in your heart.”

Tuesday, February 15, 2000 – Day 2
Cycle Sheet – DOL Wk. 13, Day 1
Writer’s Workshop – Portfolios

Wednesday, February 16, 2000 – Day 3
DOL Wk. 13, Day 2
Subject/Verb Agreement pages 367-369

Assignment: Pages 368, Exercises 1 and 2
Read “Thank You, M’am” pages 373-377
Portfolio progress report

Thursday, February 17, 2000 – Day 4
DOL Wk. 13 Day 3
Mid-Quarter Reports
Collect portfolio progress reports
Correct page 368, exercises 1 and 2
Discuss “Thank You, M’am”

Assignment: Read “A Celebration of Grandfathers” pages 379-383
Write out Responding to Reading on page 384
Work on your portfolios. They are due on Wednesday, February 23.
There is no school on Friday or Monday.

Tuesday, February 22, 2000 – Day 5
DOL Wk. 13, Day 4
Discuss “A Celebration of Grandfathers”

Assignment: Work on portfolios. They are due tomorrow.

Wednesday, February 23, 2000 – Day 6
DOL Wk. 13, Day 5
Record DOL’s
Turn in portfolios
Pronouns – pages 400 and 401
Appendix G

Reflection Questions

**Bittersweet Memories**

1. What can cause more regret later in life—things that you have done or things that you have not done? Why?
2. Describe a generous person whom you know. In what ways is the person generous? Give specific examples.
3. Who are the big wheels in your life? What do you think of them? Are you one of them? Do they get special attention and special consideration? Are you envious of them? Do you have strong positive or negative feelings about them? Organize your thoughts and feelings and write a reflection called “Big Wheels.”

**Points of Conflict**

1. Sibling rivalry is an experience most families face. Depending on the family, it can be a minor or a major problem. Describe a rivalry that you know about firsthand. Use dialogue to add dramatic punch.
2. The title of your reflection should be “A Family That Prays Together Stays Together.” Tell me whether it is true or not as far as your experience is concerned. Use your own experience as your guide.
3. If you were given the opportunity to sit down at a negotiating table with the world’s leaders, what advice would you give them?
4. Describe a time when you wanted the ground to open and let you – or someone else – disappear.
5. The poet W.H. Auden called the age we’re living in “the Age of Anxiety.” Would you agree? Is there a lot of anxiety in your life? What specific anxieties do you face and what is their effect upon you?

**Commanding Respect**

1. Do really close friends or family members need to thank each other? Explain
2. When might you feel gratitude to someone for doing or saying something that caused you pain or discomfort?
Describe a time when an older person told you about the past. Describe the memory and how the memory affected you?
Appendix H

POETIC CONVERSATIONS—PART B
Student guidelines and sample poems

Suppose I had a strong disagreement with my daughter over withdrawing six hundred dollars from her college savings account in order to purchase a new stereo. Using the Wonderings pattern, I might try to think of things I do not understand about the situation that I could communicate to her.

Sample poem: I DO NOT UNDERSTAND (Father to daughter)

I do not understand
why your three-year-old stereo isn’t good enough
why you think college is going to be inexpensive
why you don’t play the music softer anyway
But most of all I do not understand
why this supposedly conserving, ecology-minded generation
must purchase only the finest of audio equipment
more suited to a recording studio than a home
(I’ve heard your music a block away on a clear day)
What I do understand is that your education is costing me thousands of dollars I haven’t even earned yet
an education that will outlast the finest stereo
an education that you could help pay for.

My daughter might reply like this:

Sample poem: I DO NOT UNDERSTAND (Daughter to father)

I do not understand
why adults always think the music is too loud
why parents forever worry about money
why college is so important anyway
But most of all I do not understand
why a modestly priced stereo
seems to mean the end of my education
and perhaps the entire world
(surely there are part-time jobs and scholarships available)
What I understand most is music
music that broadens my feelings
music that combines with words to help me see the world
music that is more than noise, as some claim,
music which flows through my life like a spring breeze.
Appendix H (continued)

POETIC CONVERSATIONS—PART B
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music that is more than noise, as some claim,
music which flows through my life like a spring breeze.
Appendix I

LANGUAGE ARTS
RELATIONSHIPS
PORTFOLIO
Appendix I (continued)

Reflection on my Freshman English Class

In English this year, I have learned a lot of things. One of the things that has made this class the most enjoyable is learning about myself. I have discovered that I am really creative and that I can really surprise myself with what I can do! This year in English I have had to be creative with my coursework. I learned that there are many ways to document what I do and that I was on my own in this area too. I also did a project on the literature of Shakespeare.

Aside from learning how to be creative and work hard, I have been exposed to two famous poets. I have read poems that I was taught in middle school so I was able to see how they can be understood in different ways. I think that the most important thing for me is that I was able to hear the beauty of poetry. This will enrich my life and give me more perspective on life. The second was for me to do everything that I can for my class as my college possibilities. I wanted everything I did to be the best work and be happy with the grades that I earned. I have done this completely. My final goal was for me to work hard and get a good grade on this course. I think that my biggest problem is the next set of my life priorities and responsibilities. This will enrich my life and give me more perspective on life. The second was for me to do everything that I can for my class as my college possibilities. I wanted everything I did to be the best work and be happy with the grades that I earned. I have done this completely. My final goal was for me to work hard and get a good grade on this course. I have done it fully and I am happy with the grades that I earned. I have done it fully and I am happy with the grades that I earned. I have done it fully and I am happy with the grades that I earned. I have done it fully and I am happy with the grades that I earned. I have done it fully and I am happy with the grades that I earned.
I dedicate my Relationship Portfolio to Linda M. Wessel, my mom.

My mom is always there to give advise and help me out. She always knows what to do. We have had our bitter sweet memories and our conflicts. She put me on this world and has been a part of all my milestones. She has helped shape me. Most of all, I respect my mom so much. She is wonderful.

*By: Molly Wessel*
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Bittersweet Memories
Bittersweet Memories Reflection

Bittersweet, by definition, means mingling bitter and sweet qualities or mingling pain and pleasure. To me, however, it means much more. Well of course when I hear those words, the first things that come to mind are the stories in our subunit and this portfolio. But when I think of bittersweet memories, other things come mind as well.

One time, my trip to Wacky Waters got cut short half way through because of rain. Another time, my mom and I got tickets to the Barnum and Bailey Circus, but my aunt came down with Toxic Shock Syndrome. We had to travel to Rockford to be with her in the hospital. This caused us to miss the circus.

For me, the BITTER in a bittersweet memory usually outways the SWEET. The bad things come to my mind more easily than the good things. It seems strange to me that bitter things stick in my mind. I think this happens because it is easy to dwell on anger and disappointment. It can be so hard to forget. It is funny that sometimes it is harder to think of the sweet memories but the bitter memories come to my head right away.

I think that the song "Bittersweet Symphony", by The Verve, says it the best. "It's like a bittersweet symphony, that's life." I think that that song says it the best because our whole life is made of memories, most of them with a good side and a bad side. Nothing is perfect. My whole life, my whole world, is made up of both positive and negative.

I guess you could say that everyone has bittersweet memories and there are so many ways to think of them. There are so many different ways to interpret things and everyone has their own special way to do this. What I just told you, well, that's my own special way.
Two-year-old drown in a swimming pool

Times Staff A 2 IU2-year-old toddler was pronounced dead on arrival at Washington Regional Medical Center Saturday after he reportedly drowned in an underground swimming pool.

The Washington County Sheriff's Office received an emergency phone call from a residence at 4884 Wolfdale Rd. immediately outside of Farmington city limits, according to a news release. The call was in reference to a possible drowning, the release stated.

Both the Farmington Fire Department and Central EMS reportedly responded to the call.

According to the release, the unconscious boy was pulled from an underground pool by an older sister. Family members and first responders reportedly attempted to resuscitate the boy until the EMS unit arrived at the scene. The boy was pronounced dead on arrival at the hospital.

Authorities do not know how long the boy was submerged in the pool but are still investigating the drowning.

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Let me try to explain this story for you. This story is about my extended step family. The little boy, C.J. Wessel, was my step brother. The older sister, Jessica Wessel, is my half sister. Jessica lives in Alabama with my dad. She goes to Arkansas every summer to spend time with her mother and other siblings. That summer was just like the rest at first. However this time, she didn't know she would find her brother dead in the family pool.

You may think, how is this bittersweet? So far all you've read is the bitter. But actually, the sweet is that my sister got to visit her family for a whole summer. She doesn't get to see them much and feels like she misses out on parts of their lives. When she does get to see them, she makes wonderful memories with them. When she looks back on that summer, she will most likely cry for the loss of her brother and the sadness it brought to their family, but will also cherish the good times she had being a part of their lives.
The news article and description about the death of my step brother is a bittersweet memory for my sister. Obviously, it is bitter because of the death of a child, Jessica’s brother. It is sweet because of all the great memories and fun times Jessica had with her brother and family in Arkansas. I chose this article as an example of bittersweet memories because it is the most meaningful explanation of bittersweet that I could find. It really hits home for me every time I hear or read about the death of a young child.
Appendix I (continued)
For my bittersweet memories, you have most likely noticed that this is the fourth example. The reason I did this is because I thought of four examples that would be very meaningful to me and I think they all deserve a spot in my portfolio.

This collage shows pictures of my friends and I having the times of our lives. However, it's a bittersweet memory because those times are gone now. I chose to do this collage because those times were wonderful, but my friends and I have moved on, gone to different schools, and have different and new friends. We have grown up and we have grown apart. We'll each make our own new memories, but will always have these pictures to look back on and remember.
A Favorite Relative

By Shannon Cassel

My favorite relative was my cousin Steve who died when he was only twenty. I was in the fourth grade. Steve was my favorite relative for many reasons. He was always smiling and positive no matter what the situation was. He accepted everyone for who they were and always brought out the best in people.

He was always volunteering and helping people out. He was involved in things such as Big Brother/Little Brother. Steve was a big help to his mother (my aunt) who has severe arthritis. He was like her right hand. One time when Steve was about five years old, my parents were up in Michigan visiting his family. There had just been a big snowfall and Steve and his little brother Mark (about three years old) decided to do something to help my parents out. They went into the garage and found two metal shovels to scrape the snow off the hood of my parents’ car. Well they got the snow off. Unfortunately, some of the paint came off the car with the snow.

Steve was an awesome role model in every way (athletics, academics, morals, and faith). It was extremely hard on everyone when we lost Steve. Everyone who ever knew him liked him and he was my dad’s godson. I still remember him today and the life lessons that he taught everyone. I will never forget Steve or the things he stood for.

A Favorite Relative

I wrote this journal for my portfolio for a couple of reasons. Steve was only here on Earth for twenty years, but he taught me so much about life. This is a bittersweet memory because he was such an awesome person and now he is gone.
This is a good example of a bittersweet memory because this was the last Peanuts comic and Charles Schulz died the night before it went in the newspaper. This comic made people laugh for such a long time that it is sad to think that it is over.
Appendix I (continued)

Points of Conflict
Points of Conflict Reflection

If you were given the opportunity to sit down at a negotiating table with the world’s leaders, what advice would you give them?

If I were given that opportunity, I’d have a lot of topics to cover. I’d tell them that each of their countries have many problems. Yet it seems like the leaders leave their own countries and try to solve other country’s problems. Not to say I don’t think it’s important to help others, but we each have so many problems in our own countries that we need to help ourselves first.

I would also tell them that segregation and social classes are not helping anyone. If the whole world could work as a team, as equals, we’d get a lot more done. I would tell them that we’d save millions of dollars if the government would stop giving aid to those who choose NOT to get a job. I would tell them to pass a law that says you have to be working and trying to better your situation in order to receive aid and then only for a determined period of time. The law wouldn’t allow people to just sit home, relax, and take money from the governments.

I would share with them my religious views on abortion and capital punishment. I would use analogies like the following. For example, by keeping abortion legal, the unborn baby that was aborted could have been the one human being to grow up and find a cure for a disease, save a life, be the world’s greatest athlete, or just be a good friend to someone who needed a friend at that time. I would tell them that when you condemn someone to death for killing someone that you are just doing the same thing they did, that is, take a life. Should we condemn the doctors who commit the abortions to death for killing unborn babies?

If I could sit at this table with the world leaders, I think that what I would say could make a difference if they would just listen to me. I would say so much and help them fix some of the problems they face. Together, we could really be helping a lot of people. I would love to have this opportunity.
"The Age of Anxiety"

*A Points of Conflict Reflection*

*By Shannon Cassel*

The poet W. H. Aden called the age we’re living in “the Age of Anxiety”. I believe that this is true in so many ways. Remember how your grandparents used to tell you stories about “the good old days”? Well, I think they were right. Our lives today are so full, so hectic, and so complicated that half the time I just want to sit down and think for a while.

I don’t mean to sound pessimistic but our world just moves too fast. I have so much going on in my life that some days I get up in the morning at 5:30 and don’t go to bed until midnight. I know that it is my fault that my life is busy but the problem is... I love everything that I do! The main anxieties in my life are maintaining straight A’s, running (sometimes twice a day), band, taking care of my dog (she has epilepsy), youth group, and everyday chores. All of these things combined with a social life and just being able to sleep in some weekends, add up to a pretty busy schedule. The main way that these anxieties affect my life is a lack of sleep. I often feel burned out, and this year I have been sick more that usual (which I am pretty sure has been partly caused by my body being exhausted). Although all my activities can cause some stress, I would never want to give up any of them. Unfortunately, because of my ambitions to become a doctor, I need to drop band next year so that I will have room in my schedule to take all the biology courses available. I am not happy about dropping band, but hopefully this change will help to ease my hectic life a little.
Overall I think America needs to take more time to stop and smell the roses. I once heard it said that today we are building higher buildings but have shorter tempers. I also believe that many people forget to keep God as number one in their lives. This is a difficult but important thing to remember. We need God to help keep balance in our lives. As for me... I think today I'm going to stop and smell the roses!
I Do Not Understand - Coach to Athlete
By Shannon Cassel
I do not understand
    Why you just cannot seem to focus some days
    Why you never seem to listen
    Why your motivation comes and goes day by day
But most of all I do not understand
    Why you do not always strive for the best even though you know
    how hard you have to work to be the best
What I do understand
    Is that you have very busy lives
    Is that you care about having fun and winning
    Is that you can only be the best that you want to be.
I Do Not Understand—Athlete to Coach
By Shannon Cassel

I do not understand
Why you push us so hard
Why you want to win more than anyone I know
Why you act like my parent and my best friend at the same time
But most of all I do not understand
Why sometimes our best is not good enough even when we have run a dozen sprints

What I do understand
Is that you put a lot of time and effort into helping us
Is that you must know what you are talking about because you've "been there...done that"
Is that you really do care about us.
Appendix I (continued)

Conflict With a Cupcake
Conflicts With a Cupcake

I choose this picture for a reason. It expresses how at a young age, we can find a conflict with just about anything. It was my first birthday and my parents had given me a cupcake. Well, I immediately ripped it apart. Well, it didn't make me too happy and began to throw a fit. Yet, at being so young, I didn't realize that I brought this on myself. I had created a conflict with a cupcake.
Conflicts between man and nature.
Conflicts between animals.
Conflicts in sports.
Appendix I (continued)

Commanding Respect
Most people underestimate the power of two small words—thank you. These small but meaningful words can say so much to a person. When you say "thank you" you are acknowledging that someone has helped you in one way or another. Everyone needs to be thanked once in a while. Just as Jesus told us to be servants to others, we also need to show gratitude when someone has served us in one way or another. Saying thank you is also a form of respect because you are showing that you approve and commend their actions.

Often times, people do not realize that they should thank everyone, even close friends or family members, for what they have done or sacrificed to better the lives of those around them. About five years ago, my cousin Steve died. This was a tragic and unexpected blow to everyone who knew him. This event changed my life in so many ways. It made me appreciate life and it also made me realize that we do not know when our life or someone else's will come to an end. Ever since I realized this, I have tried very hard to tell people "thank you" and "I love you" as often as possible. Just think how it would brighten your mother's day if you told her, "Thanks for making
Appendix I (continued)

dinner! every once in a while. Some people assume moms make dinner and do other things like that because they are supposed to. They are wrong. Your mother does what she does out of the goodness of her heart and her love for you. You should always be grateful for anything anyone does for you because you never know when you will see him or her again.
Appendix I (continued)

Madame Curie: Superman can them this Oberwoman or His X-ray vision. When the early 1900s refused to let her in, she started her own field: radiology. One-two punch: Curie won two Nobel prizes, one each in physics and chemistry.

The Queen (showing a common touch at a private home in Glasgnow this year) "delights in making her own tea," Burrell says.

"My plan was to sit around and do nothing," said Payton (bidding farewell to Chicago fans in 1987) of his retirement.
Appendix I (continued)

Psalm 95:6-7
Come, let us bow down in worship;
let us kneel before the Lord who made us.
For he is our God,
and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides.

Mark 1:7-8
The theme of his preaching was: "One more powerful than I is to come after me. I am not fit to stoop and untie his sandal straps. I have baptized you in water; he will baptize you in the Holy Spirit."

John 1:30
'After me is to come a man who ranks ahead of me, because he was before me.'

Romans 16:26-27
but now manifested through the writings of the prophets, and, at the command of the eternal God, made known to all the Gentiles that they may believe and obey to him, that God who alone is wise, may glory be given through Jesus Christ unto endless ages. Amen.
Respect Drawing

I included this drawing I made in this section because I feel that it is extremely important to appreciate and honor those that died to preserve our nation. They deserve our respect for all their courage and perseverance. We should always be grateful to them.
Appendix I (continued)

TIME LINE
Appendix I (continued)

"Me wrapped up in my blankie"
Born: June 4, 1985

"Me and my clown cake—my 1st birthday"
June 4, 1986

"Me and my Harley—my 1st motorcycle ride"
August 7, 1990

"My 3rd and final debut as a tap dancer"
June 6, 1991
Appendix I (continued)

"Me and Jackie at 1st communion"
May 12, 1993

"Me and my friends in front of Whoopi Goldberg's Las Vegas house"
March 1, 1994

"Me practicing a dance for Miss Pre-Teen"
June 13, 1995

"Me and dolphins-The Bahamas"
June 14, 1994
Appendix I (continued)

"Me and my cheerleading squad at nationals"
February 27, 1998

"Me and my friends at my surprise b-day party"
June 11, 1998

"Me and my 1st place volleyball team-champs"
May 11, 1998

"Me and my confirmation sponsor-Aunt Lori"
May 8, 1999

congratulations
Appendix I (continued)

"Me and my friends all dressed up for 8th grade graduation" May 25, 1999

"Me at my 1st major league baseball game—Cubs" August 6, 1999

"Me before my 1st Amtrak train ride" August 5, 1999

"My 1st place finish at a gymnastics meet" October 17, 1999
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

VITAL STATISTICS

NAME: Molly Lynn Clare Wessel
PHONE: 391-7002
AGE: 14
GRADE SCHOOL: John F. Kennedy
HEIGHT: 5'4"
EYE COLOR: Hazel
PARENTS NAMES: Jon / Linda

ADDRESS: Davenport, IA
SEX: Female
DATE OF BIRTH: 6-4-85
G.P.A.: over 4.0
WEIGHT: 104 lbs
HAIR COLOR: Brown
BIRTHPLACE: St. Lukes

Molly Wessel is a pretty normal teenager. She likes to shop, talk on the phone, play on the computer, do things with her friends, and practice "driving!" Molly enjoys cheerleading and gymnastics. Her greatest accomplishment was being nominated for Gymnast of the Year in Iowa. Although, she did not win, it was an honor to even be considered.

Molly's parents were divorced when she was two years old. Her father had to move to Alabama (because of a job transfer) and she stayed in Davenport to be raised by her mother. Molly has a stepsister who also lives in Alabama. In her life as a catholic, so far she has received four sacraments.

Molly is now a 14 year old freshman at Assumption High School and is doing exceptionally well and is having a lot of fun.
Appendix I (continued)

Comments

Peter - I hope your baby pics - they're really cute!
You had really good examples, too.
- Megan Campagn

Peter - I like now you scanned the pics. Eileen

Peter - This is the best ever. You get an A+!
- Ted

Hey Pete!
It's me your picture is awesome.
ok me is awesome.
on yeah you did good
on your portfolio, see you.
- John Bush (stud)

Great! I worked a lot!

Peter - I wish you the best.
- Lauren

PORTFOLIO 93
Appendix I

Peter - your portfolio is awesome!
You are a very talented student, and it was difficult
but you worked hard on this project.
- Mrs. Drake
Appendix J

Student Comments on Portfolio Unit

Advantages

Time Management Skills

It made me fine-tune my time management and organization skills.

Students Taking Ownership of Their Own Learning

I learned how to reflect on certain topics. The reflection questions helped out a lot. I learned how to scan pictures and how to use Page Maker. I learned computers aren’t as scary as I thought.

At the beginning of the project, I was a little intimidated because I wasn’t quite sure what was going on. Once I discovered there were examples to look at, I was okay.

Mrs. Draude helped to learn to do the coolest stuff on the computer, and I was about to figure out how to do some of the same things at home.

This project had to be one of the hardest projects I’ve ever done. I liked the challenge and pushing myself.

I thought the way you taught it was perfect. You gave us ideas, but you didn’t give it away.

I learned more about myself and what I have accomplished. I feel I became a better writer. I liked the way we had a lot of freedom and ways to do this project.

This was a good project. It allowed me to reflect back on my past, but it was also very challenging.

Peer Evaluations and Assessment Tools

I really enjoyed reading other people’s work. I liked seeing what they wrote and what they felt was important to them.

I think having assessment tools was a good idea because they challenged me to do the best I could.

It was fun to share with each other.

Grading myself helped me because it made me work harder.

I learned a lot about myself and found the portfolios challenging. It was hard to grade myself, but self-evaluation was good because it made me think.
Making Connections

From doing this project, I found out how I actually felt about the people around me. I found out that I had changed through the years. I liked the opportunity to use the creativity I have. I got to use my talents in writing poetry and my talents in drawing.

I learned that expressing yourself is not as hard as everyone says.

I think tests are a drag compared to the neat projects we do in English class.

All in all, I thought it was a pretty good project. It helped me improve my HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE grammar and usage.

This project made me think out of the box. It made me take a subject and relate it to other things. It was a self-esteem booster because it gave us an opportunity to talk and write about our accomplishments.

I liked digging up old pictures. It showed me how much things have changed.

The best thing I liked in this project is I got to draw in English class finally!

Caveats

I feel uncomfortable grading my own work.

The only thing I would do differently would be looking at the projects instead of just reading progress reports. I know that even I fibbed a little on mine.
July 12, 2000

Dear Kyle,

I'm doing a graduate research project titled: Portfolios As An Alternative Assessment. The portfolio you prepared in the unit over relationships last spring was exemplary. I would like to use excerpts from your portfolios as examples of a student's work. Please sign below that you agree to let me use your portfolio.

Carolne Draude has our permission to use excerpts from my relationship portfolio to use in her research project.

[Signature]
Student Signature

[Signature]
Parent Signature

In the event this research project would be published, Carolne Draude has my permission to use examples of my work.

[Signature]
Student Signature

[Signature]
Parent Signature
July 12, 2000

Dear Molly,

I'm doing a graduate research project titled: Portfolios As An Alternative Assessment. The portfolio you prepared in the unit on relationships last spring was exemplary. I would like to use excerpts from your portfolios as examples of a student's work. Please sign below that you agree to let me use your portfolio.

Carmine Drande has our permission to use excerpts from my relationships portfolio to use in her research project.

[Signatures]

In the event this research project would be published, Carmine Drande has my permission to use examples of my work.

[Signatures]
Appendix K

July 12, 2000

Dear Shannon,

I'm doing a graduate research project titled: Portfolios As An Alternative Assessment. The portfolio you prepared in the unit over relationships last spring was exemplary. I would like to use excerpts from your portfolios as examples of a student's work. Please sign below that you agree to let me use your portfolio.

Carmine Braude has our permission to use excerpts from my relationship portfolio to use in her research project.

[Signatures]

In the event this research project would be published, Carmine Braude has my permission to use examples of my work.

[Signatures]