

Portfolios in a Student-Centered Classroom



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What is a portfolio?

- ONE ORGANIZATIONAL METHOD FOR DOCUMENTING AND COLLECTING A HISTORY OF STUDENT MADE PRODUCTS
- FOCUS IS ON STUDENT WORK

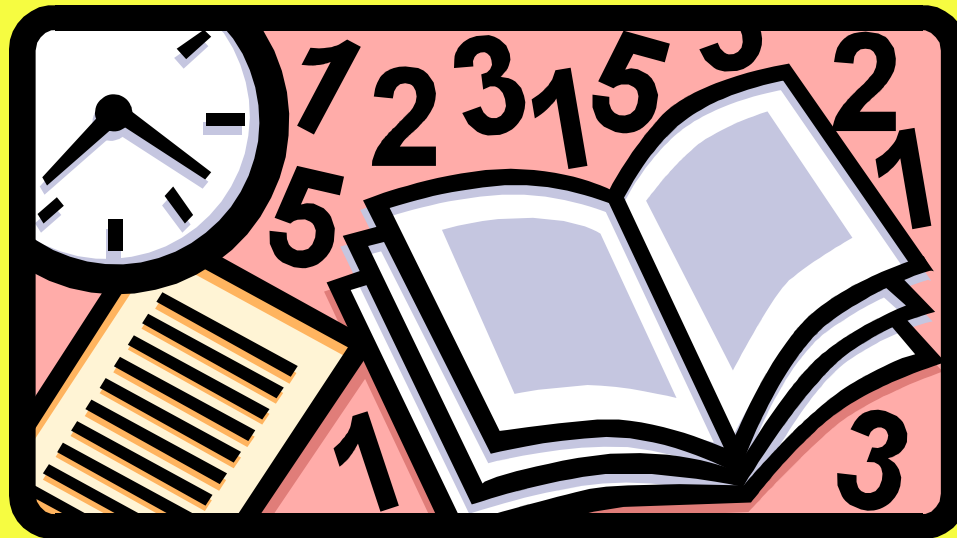
What do students talk about?

- BEST WORK
- STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES
- GOALS
- IMPROVEMENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



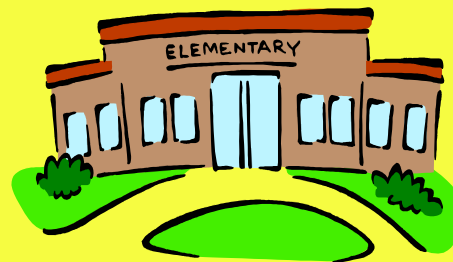
How long does it last?

- 20 MINUTES



What is the purpose?

- TO CREATE AN INFORMATIVE AND ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE STUDENT'S PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACADEMIC GROWTH



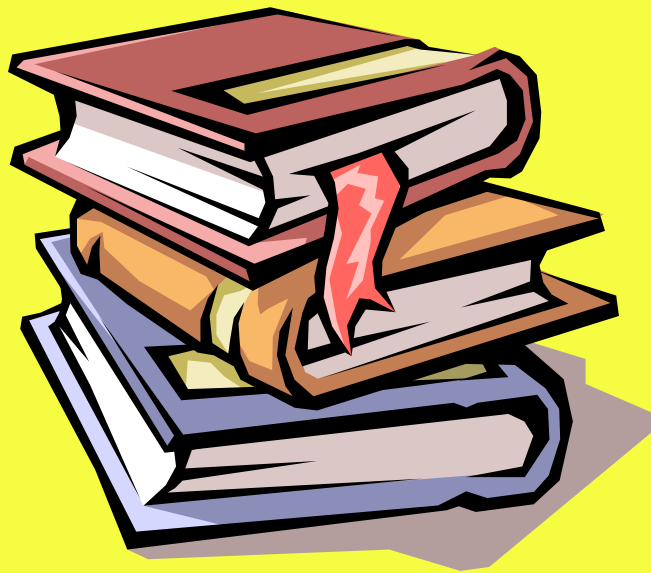
Why student-led conferences?

- THEY COMMUNICATE HOW A STUDENT IS DOING
- THEY COMMUNICATE SELF REFLECTIONS



How are they structured?

- STUDENTS LEAD THE CONFERENCES
- TEACHERS FACILITATE

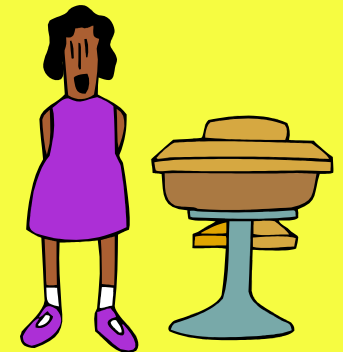


What materials are needed?

- STUDENT'S CONFERENCE FOLDER WITH BEST PIECES OF WORK
- STUDENT'S PORTFOLIO WITH WORK DONE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
- STUDENT GRAPHS FROM BOY, MOY, AND EOY PROFILES



- STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES ARE HELD TWICE A YEAR, ONCE IN THE FALL AND ONCE IN THE SPRING.
- PORTFOLIOS ARE KEPT AND ADDED TO THROUGHOUT THE YEAR IN PREPARATION FOR THE CONFERENCES.



Why are they valuable?

- CONFERENCES ARE BASED ON STUDENT PORTFOLIOS
- REASON FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS TO COLLECT AND MONITOR STUDENT WORK
- TEACHERS, STUDENTS, AND PARENTS HAVE THE CHANCE TO TALK ABOUT STUDENT WORK TOGETHER AT THE CONFERENCE.
- PARENTS SPEND TIME WITH THEIR CHILD AND THEIR CHILD'S TEACHER

How do we prepare our students?

- TEACH STUDENTS TO COLLECT AND ORGANIZE THEIR WORK THROUGHOUT THE YEAR IN 3-RING BINDERS, EXPANDO FOLDERS, OR A CARDBOARD BOX
- STUDENTS COLLECT AND STORE ONE PAPER FROM EACH SUBJECT AREA AND PLACE IN BINDER WEEKLY
- BINDERS STORED IN AN EASILY ACCESSIBLE PLACE IN THE ROOM
- STUDENTS NEED TIME TO REHEARSE THEIR PRESENTATION FOR THE CONFERENCE

- THE SUCCESS OF A STUDENT-LED CONFERENCE DEPENDS ON HOW WELL THE STUDENTS ARE PREPARED.
- STUDENTS NEED TO FEEL CONFIDENT AND IN CONTROL DURING THEIR CONFERENCE



What are the advantages?

- HELPS STUDENTS ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY, AND ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR LEARNING
- EVEN STRUGGLING STUDENTS CAN PRODUCE SOMETHING POSITIVE\ AN ART PROJECT, OR AN ESSAY.
- STUDENTS ARE IN CHARGE

What are the disadvantages?

- PARENTAL LACK OF PARTICIPATION IS A DISAPPOINTMENT TO THE STUDENT
- SOME PARENTS WANT TO SPEND MORE TIME TALKING TO THE TEACHER THAN THE STUDENT
- PARENTS STILL FEEL THEY NEED INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR STUDENT FROM THE TEACHER

Parent Responses

- “First parent/teacher conference we’ve attended where the student actively participated and truly seemed to be the focus of the discussion.”
- “I learned my child has developed some confidence this year!”
- “I believe the student led conference will teach our child how to manage time, organize himself, and develop leadership skills.”
- “It made the student an active participant in evaluation rather than as a ‘passive victim’. It gave him ownership of his learning.”

Student Responses

- “I was pretty happy when I saw my dad’s face while I was showing my ‘All About Me’ slide show.”
- “It made me feel good because I got to do most of the talking. I like telling my mom and dad about school and my work.”
- “I was shy, but I felt responsible.”
- “The student-led conference showed my parents that I can set goals and reach them.”

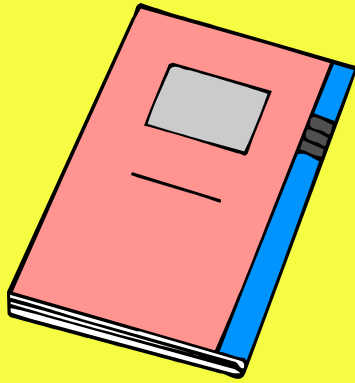
Where do I start?

- START SMALL! GO SLOWLY!
- Begin with a Collection Portfolio
 - * folder that holds an accumulation of a student's work
 - * wide variety of samples of many kinds of work, a pool from which to draw later

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What next?

- Begin with a Showcase Portfolio
 - * Selection of work representing a student's progress and achievements
 - * examples of best work and samples of work that show growth over time, to inform parents



- Make selections according to criteria
- Make selections on a regular basis
- Teacher selects items
- Students selects items



- “Portfolios are messy to construct, cumbersome to store, difficult to score, and vulnerable to misrepresentation. But in ways that no other assessment can, portfolios prove a connection to the context and personal histories that characterize real teaching and make it possible to document the unfolding of both teaching and learning over time.”--Lee Schulman (1988)