Chapter 7 - Portfolio Assessment

What is a Portfolio?

A portfolio is a purposeful collection of selective significant samples of student work accompanied by clear criteria for performance which evidence student effort, progress or achievement. A portfolio is different from a folder in that it includes:

o Explicit guidelines for selection
o Comprehensible criteria
o Clear objectives
o Selective and significant pieces
o Students' self-reflection pieces
o Evidence of student participation in
  selection of content

A portfolio can exhibit the student' s, progress, and achievement in several areas. The list below illustrates some of the items which might be housed in a student's foreign language portfolio to give a complete view of what the student knows and is able to do.

Figure 109 - Sample portfolio entries

work samples (graded and ungraded)
compositions/essays
journals
tests   pictures
checklists
projects
performances   audiotapes
videotapes   interviews
observations   formal
scores
self assessments   student
reflections

Because the purpose for a portfolio will determine some of the items to be included, teachers will want to customize portfolios based on their classroom needs.

Figure 110 - Pros and Cons of Portfolio Assessment.

Pros

1.   Provides tangible evidence of the student's knowledge, abilities, and growth in meeting selected objectives which can be shared with parents, administration and others
2.   Involves a considerable amount of student choice - student-centered
3.   Involves an audience
4.   Includes a student's explanation for the selection of products
5.   Places responsibility on the students by involving them in monitoring and judging their own work
6. Encourages a link between instructional goals, objectives, and class activities
7.   Offers a holistic view of student learning
8. Provides a means for managing and evaluating multiple assessment for each student. The portfolio provides the necessary mechanism for housing all the information available about a student's learning. It includes a variety of entries including test scores, projects, audio tapes, video tapes, essays, rubrics, self-assessments, etc.
9. Allows students the opportunity to communicate, present, and discuss their work with teachers and parents.

≠

> ### *Cons*
>
> 1.   Takes time
> 2. Present challenges for organization and management

What Are the Kinds of Portfolio?

Several kinds of portfolio can be organized. They are:

- o   Showcase (to display the students best work to parents and administrators)
- o   Outcome-based or assessment (to fulfill requirements and goals set by district)
- o   Working, process, or collection (ongoing, developmental)

When to Start a Portfolio?

The Guide to Classroom Assessment suggests beginning portfolio assessment at the beginning of the year, reviewing the contents of each portfolio on a regular basis (every month or two), meeting with students on a regular basis to review and discuss each student's work (1-4 times a year).

Teachers implementing portfolio assessment for the first time, may want to start small the first year with one classroom or may want to limit the use of portfolio to the assessment of one goal or one skill.

Guidelines for Using Portfolios

⇒ Identify purpose

⇒ Select objectives

⇒ Think about the kinds of entries that will best match instructional outcomes

⇒ Decide how much to include, how to organize the portfolio, where to keep it and when to access

```
      it
```

⇒ Decide who selects the entries (the student, the teacher, both)

⇒ Set the criteria for judging the work (rating scales, rubrics, checklists) and make sure students understand the criteria.

⇒ Review the student's progress
Hold portfolio conferences with students to discuss their progress

1. Identify Purpose
Without purpose, a portfolio is only a collection of student work samples. Different purposes result in different portfolios. For example, if the student is to be evaluated on the basis of the work in the portfolio for admission to college, then, his final version of his best work would probably be included in the portfolio.

In the foreign language class, portfolios can
help teachers and students document growth over
one year or over a period of several years.
Furthermore they can facilitate the placement
of students at the appropriate level once those
students reach the next level of instruction.

Figure 111 - Purposes For a Portfolio - How
could you use it?

*Which of the following purposes are of
particular importance for the portfolio system
you are developing?*

⇨*To show growth and change over time*

⇨ *To show the process by which work is done
as well as the final product*

⇨*To create collections of favorite or
personally important work*

⇨*To trace the evolution of one or more
projects/products*

⇨ *To prepare a sample of best work for
employment or college admission*

⇨*To document achievement for alternative
credit for coursework*

⇨*To place students in the most appropriate
course*

⇨ *To communicate with student's subsequent
teacher*

⇨ *To review curriculum or instruction*

⇨ *To conduct large-scale assessment*

⇨ *To evaluate Program*

⇨ *Other*

2. Select Objectives

The objectives to be met by students should be clearly stated. A list of communicative functions can be included for students to check when they feel comfortable with them and stapled to the inside cover. Students would list the title or the number of the sample(s) which address this function. Columns can be included for self-assessment and/or for teachers to verify that competency.

Second language teachers can organize the portfolio in a variety of ways. They can be organized around the seven goals of the *North Carolina Second Language Studies Standard Course of Study*:

1. Interpersonal Communication
2. Interpretive Communication
3. Presentational Communication
4. Cultures
5. Comparisons
6. Connections
7. Communities

Portfolios also can be organized according to the five C's of the national standards or according to the selected objectives addressing one skill such as writing. The selected objectives will be directly related to the stated purpose for the portfolio. At any rate, teachers must ensure that classroom instruction support the identified goals.

Figure 112 - Sample Goals and Objectives for
Year 1 - F. L. Study

COMMUNICATION	I CAN	IN THE PROCESS	NOT YET	ENTRY #
I can talk about myself, my family, and my classroom.				
I can meet and greet people.				
I can talk about time, weather, transportation, and travel.				
I can express likes and dislikes when asked.				
I can write simple sentences in present tense.				
I can write about myself.				
I can understand menus, schedules, timetables, signs, and maps.				
I can communicate with a native speaker regarding an event.				
I can use computers to write and get information.				

CULTURE	I CAN	IN THE PROCESS	NOT YET	ENTRY #
I know about the holidays, customs, recreation, foods, and art forms.				
I can compare and contrast what people do in the US and in the cultures I am studying.				
I participate in a variety of cultural activities.				

CONNECTIONS	I CAN	IN THE PROCESS	NOT YET	ENTRY #
I can use some of what I study in my other classes in my foreign language class.				
I use some of what I study in my foreign language class in my other classes.				
I can use graphs, charts, or diagrams to explain something I learned in the foreign language.				
I can use the language to share with others what I know and can do.				
I can read, listen to, and view works of literature and the arts in the language I am studying to describe everyday life.				

COMPARISONS	I CAN	IN THE PROCESS	NOT YET	ENTRY #
I can identify and produce the sound patterns in my own language and in the target language I am studying.				
I can identify and use some of the vocabulary, idioms, and word order of my language and compare them to the language I am studying.				
I can compare cognates and false cognates.				
I can explain how languages change in different places and in different times.				

COMMUNITIES	I CAN	IN THE PROCESS	NOT YET	ENTRY #
I can use the language beyond the classroom.				
I can locate and communicate with people, and use information in the language by means of technology, media, and materials produced by the culture I'm studying.				
I can locate resources in the community to learn more about the language.				
I can find opportunities in the community to meet or interact with people who communicate in the language I'm studying.				

Adapted from Carmine R. Zinn, Supervisor of FL, Pinellas County.

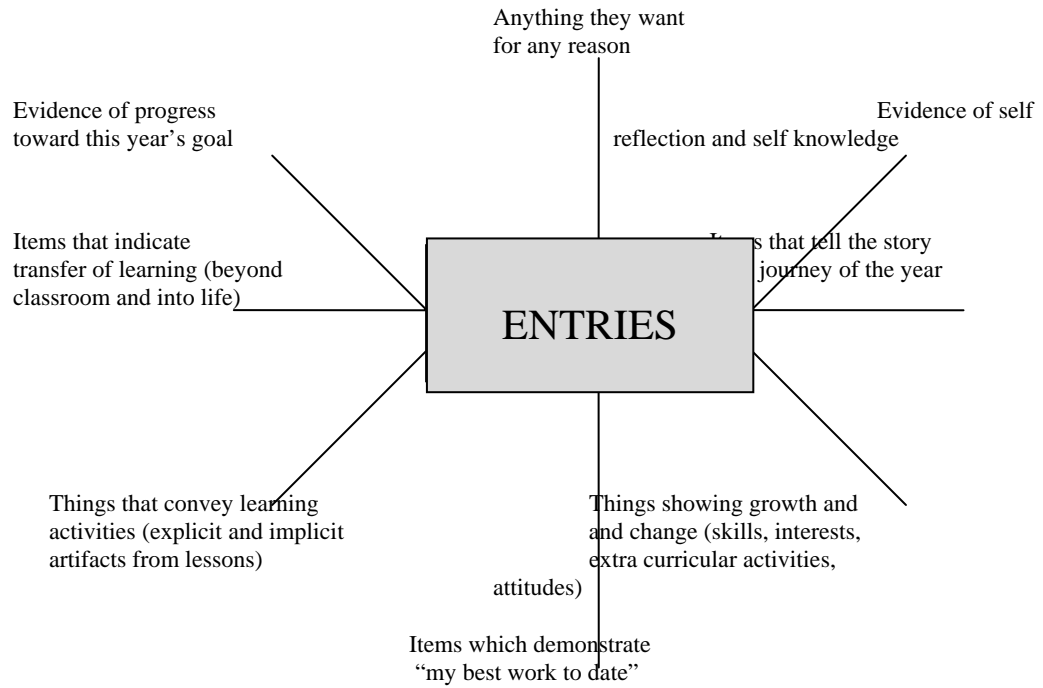## 3. Think About the Kinds of Entries That Will Best Match Instructional Outcomes.
The following entries may be included:

o A table of contents (can be attached to left side of portfolio for easy reference) or teachers may want to give a complete list of all possible assignments that could be included and due dates.

Figure 113 - Table of Contents, Submitted by Nancy Delargy, Watauga County Schools

Figure 114 - Table of Contents, Submitted by
Nancy Delargy, Watauga County Schools

o Student's samples such as cassettes (audio
  and video), essays, stories, themes,
  compositions, research papers, anecdotal
  information (logs, journals), work samples
  (including homework), projects or pictures
  (photos) of projects, tests, checklists,
  self analyses showing attainment of an
  objective (date), diaries, samples of
  conversations, grammar work, drawings,
  artistic projects.

Anything they want
for any reason

Evidence of progress
toward this year's goal

Evidence of self
reflection and self knowledge

Items that indicate
transfer of learning (beyond
classroom and into life)

Items that tell the story
journey of the year

ENTRIES

Things that convey learning
activities (explicit and implicit
artifacts from lessons)

Things showing growth and
and change (skills, interests,
extra curricular activities,
attitudes)

Items which demonstrate
"my best work to date"

o Pieces of which students are especially proud

o Reasons for selecting/including certain pieces. Evidence of student reflection (* most important piece, without it do not have a portfolio)

> This piece, I believe, is my best piece of work in my portfolio. I worked hard on it, and put down things that I thought that people might like to eat. I really like the cover of my menu. I am not exactly the best artist, but I took the time on designing the cover. It is interesting because it is not everyday you get to work at a Spanish menu.
>
> *Laura Jackson,*
> *Spanish II, Watauga County Schools*

Figure 115 - Questions and Answers About
Portfolio, Submitted by Nancy Delargy,
Watauga County Schools

o Guidelines for selection
  Guidelines for selection are helpful to
  students and provide direction on the kinds
  of information which can be included in a
  portfolio. These guidelines can be specific
  (e.g., you MUST include your family
  project) or can be broad (e.g., choose
  whatever you want for your portfolio as
  long as it addresses the objectives). More
  often teachers include structured
  guidelines (Students MUST include an
  autobiographical sketch) along with
  unstructured guidelines (Select one
  narrative or one piece you are especially
  proud of).

o Criteria for judging
  See page ? for information on criteria for
  portfolio assessment.

Figure 116 -Sample Portfolio Requirements and Guidelines from the Edison NJ HS project.

Students MUST include:

a. table of contents
b. an autobiographical sketch written in the TL and designed to introduce the student to the reader
c. a heading (can be in English for levels I and II) to each of the sections or categories of portfolio
d.   students' reflections on selected pieces (in English)
e. a summary statement at end where student describe how they feel about their portfolio
f. a graph of all tests and quiz scores
g. three pieces of work which have not been previously graded. (one of those can be the autobiographical sketch, another one is an oral entry, third determined jointly by T and student.)

Students include selected samples:

a. two oral pieces
b. two creative pieces (writings, art projects, skits, videos)
c. two text development pieces based on vocabulary and grammar of a specific lesson
d. two reading analyses

Figure 117 - Sample Portfolio Requirements from Claire Melville, MS teacher , Hamilton Wenham Schools, Mass.

I. Comments/Reflections/Goals
  a. introduction
  b. comment sheets by readers of your portfolio
  c. your reflection/self-evaluation form for each quarter

II. Projects
  a. Passport
  b. Me
  c. My family coat of arms
  d. Who is this? (including original and revised copies)
  e. For sale ad with picture

III. Quizzes/Tests
  a. two quizzes
  b. one oral performance grade sheet
  c. one skit grade sheet

IV. Homework
  a. four examples of daily homework
  b. one oral homework: grade sheet and cassette

V. Pen Pals
  a. one letter to and from you pen pal

VI. Other
Anything you would like to keep, that you are proud of, that shows what you have done this year, such as extra credit, peer tutor forms, photos, or other activities

Figure 118 - Sample from Hopkinton Middle/High School Portfolio Project -Modern Language Department.

Grade 7 Portfolio: Some written components in the target language, self-assessment in English.

I. Written component
A. Contents
    1.Your best piece of creative writing (short story, fairy tale, poem, etc.)
    2. Your best descriptive paper
    3. Your best descriptive paper
    4. Your best cultural paper (in English)
B. Format: The portfolio will contain the following items **in this order:**
    1. Cover: needs to be attractive and include the following information: name of
       student, level of language study, school year, name of school, name of teacher
    2. Table of Contents
          a. Number all pages
          b. Prepare table of contents with title and type of work
    3. Portfolio Checklist
    4. Preface: in narrative form, reflect on the works you have chosen for this
       portfolio and give your reasons for choosing them (in English)
    5. Presentation of the works
          a. all final work is corrected and neatly presented
          b. all drafts are included.

II. Self-Assessment component
A. Evaluate your progress from the beginning of the school year to the present in the following areas:
    1. your ability to understand spoken language
    2. your ability to speak the language
    3. your ability to write in the language
    4. your ability to read in the language
    5. your ability to appreciate the literature and culture of the language
B. Evaluate your overall progress from the beginning of the school year to the present.

III. Comment component
A. Peer reaction
B. Parent reaction

_____   _____
Parent Signature/Date   Student Signature/Date

Figure 119 - Hopkinton Middle/High School Portfolio Project - Modern Language Department

Level 3 Portfolio: tape and written components in the target language, self-assessment in English

---

I. Tape component

A. Contents

    1. Picture sequence   2 corrected recordings

    2. Directed responses   1 corrected group of 3-4 recorded responses

    3. Summary retelling   1 corrected recording

    4. Reading/recitation   1 corrected recording

B. Format

    1. Each student will have his/her own tape.

    2. Each tape will be labeled with a dated Table of Contents.

    3. The tape will be rewound to the activity/exercise to be corrected.

    4. Each activity will begin with a spoken title and date.

C. Support Materials

    1. Copies of clearly titled picture sequences will be included in the portfolio.

    2. Copies of reading/recitation materials, including biographical information, will be included in the portfolio.

    3. Rubric for teacher feedback.

II. Written component

A. Contents

    1. Your best explication de texte on class reading.

    2. Your best piece of creative writing (short story, fairy tale, poem, etc.)

    3. Your best position paper.

    4. 2 selections of your own choice.

B. Format: the portfolio will contain the following items in this order:

    1. Cover: needs to be attractive and include the following information: name of student, level of language study, school year, name of school, name of teacher.

    2. Table of Contents

        a. Number all pages

        b. Prepare table of contents with title and type of work

    3. Portfolio Checklist

    4. Preface: in narrative form, reflect on the works you have chosen for this portfolio and give your reasons for choosing them.

    5. Presentation of the works

        a. all final work is corrected and neatly presented.

        b. all drafts are included.

II. Self-Assessment component

A. Evaluate your progress from the beginning of the school year to the present in the following areas:

    1. your ability to understand spoken language

    2. your ability to speak the language

    3. your ability to write in the language

    4. your ability to read in the language

    5. your ability to appreciate the literature and culture of the language

B. Evaluate your overall progress from the beginning of the school year to the present.

III. Comment component

A. Peer reaction

B. Parent reaction

Parent Signature/Date   Student Signature/Date

4. *Decide How Much to Include and How to Organize*

Teachers may want to spend some time going over the purpose of the portfolio at regular intervals with students to ensure that the selected pieces do address the purpose and the objectives. At regular times, ask students to go through their entries, to choose what should remain in the portfolio, and what could be replaced by another work which might be more illustrative of the objective(s). Other material no longer current and/or not useful to document student progress toward attainment of the objectives should be discarded.

Limit number of entries for practical reasons. Get students involved in organizing the portfolio by completing checklist for record keeping of things to include and by including the dates on all entries. Ask them to staple that checklist to the front of the portfolio so it will be easily found.

Where is it kept? How is it accessed?

Teachers need to think about the housing of portfolios. Will they be kept at school and if so where? at home? Wherever the portfolios are housed, they need to be accessible to maximize their use. Teachers may want to color code folders for each class using portfolios to facilitate their retrieval.

Will they consist of envelopes, folders, boxes? Some teachers are choosing manila envelopes or folders, others are giving students the opportunity to be creative by devising their own storage holders, and still others are using milk crates, bookshelves, mail trays.

> A Richmond County teacher solved the housing dilemma by contacting her local pizza place who donated clean and empty pizza boxes for students to store the content of their portfolios.

> Students in Watauga County chose a variety of containers for their portfolios and decorated them to reflect their personalities.

5. Decide Who Selects the Entries

Figure 120 - Who " Owns" the Portfolio?

In your portfolio system, who will select work samples for the portfolio?
    Student only
    Teacher only
    Student and teacher together
    Other:

How will storage and transfer occur, if at all?

Who will have ownership of the portfolio?
    The student alone
    The teacher alone
    The student and teacher together
    The school at which the portfolio is created
    Parents
    The student and parents together
    The school at which the portfolio is currently stored and used
    Other:

Who will have access to the portfolios?
    The student and teacher who created it
    Any teacher who needs/wants information provided by it
    Counselors
    Anyone in the school where the portfolio is housed
    Anyone from the district who shares an interest in the student's educational welfare
    Parents
    Other:

From the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1992

What is the student's role?
The students' level of participation in the portfolio will be largely responsible for the success of the portfolio. For this reason, students must be actively involved in the choice of entries and in the rationale for selecting those entries.

o Selecting
The students' first role is in selecting some of the items to be part of the portfolio. Some teachers give students a checklist for making choices. Others leave students utmost freedom in selecting their entries. At any rate students should include their best and favorite pieces of work along with those showing growth and process.

o Reflecting and self-assessing
An essential component of self assessment involves the students in reflecting about their own work. At the beginning, students might not know what to say so teachers will need to model the kind of reflection expected from students.

This has been a really great year mainly because I am a senior but also because I had fun time in Spanish time. Classes are pretty great when you know you are not going to have to go in and do busy work all the time. This year in Spanish exemplified this. We were constantly doing projects instead of bookwork. Not only is this more fun, but it also helps us to learn better because we are going to remember it more easily. No one remembers anything when we do book work. Projects allow students to use their imaginations as well as learn at the same time which is a very good combination. My favorite project this year would have to be my Routine Diaria. My routine is included in this portfolio but my poster, regretfully

is not. This was an excellent assignment because I got to work with computers, learn Spanish, and use my imagination all at the same time. The other projects I learned from as well but my routine really sticks out.

Benjamin Welborn, Spanish II, Watauga County Schools

Another option is to provide some criteria for individual pieces; students can judge their work against the criteria. They can help develop the criteria and list some of the qualities that the work is supposed to illustrate.

What is the parents' role?
Parents should be informed early and often about the purpose, procedures, and benefits of portfolios and about the progress students are making. Some teachers send a letter home to parents to explain the new assessment and to outline students and parents' responsibilities. Some of the outlined responsibilities may include participating in student-led portfolio conferences, giving feedback to their child, and providing support for their child's effort and interest.

6. Set the Criteria for Judging the Work
Who evaluates the portfolio? Is it graded/rated? How?

There are two kinds of criteria needed at this point.

  o criteria for individual entries (refer to the section on   rubrics for details)

  o criteria for the portfolio as a whole

Assessing the individual entries in a portfolio is different from assessing the portfolio as a whole. If the purpose of the portfolio is to show student progress then, it is highly probable that some of the beginning entries may not reflect high quality; however, over several months, the student may have demonstrated growth toward the stated objectives.

Criteria can be established by teachers alone and/or by teachers and students together. At any rate, criteria for evaluating the portfolios must be announced ahead of time. Possibilities of criteria include teacher evaluation and/or observation, student self-evaluation, peer assessment, and a combination of several teachers' comments. Following is a list of suggested criteria for a portfolio as a whole:

- o variety - selected pieces display the range of tasks students can accomplish and skills they have learned.

- o growth - student work represents the students' growth in content knowledge and language proficiency.

- o completeness - student work reflects finished products.

- o organization - students organized the contents systematically.

- o fluency - selected pieces are meaningful to the students and communicate information to the teacher.

- o accuracy - student work demonstrates skills in the mechanics of the language.

- o goal oriented - the contents reflect progress and accomplishment of curricular objectives.

o following directions - students
  followed the teacher's directions for
  selecting pieces of the portfolio
  (i.e., if the teacher requested eight,
  the student provided eight, not six).

o neatness - student work is neatly
  written, typed or illustrated.

o justification or significance -
  students include reasonable
  justifications for the work selected or
  explain why selected items are
  significant

Figure 121 - Sample Criteria for Judging the
    Portfolio

Pride and Effort
The student has spent time and energy to make
the portfolio meaningful, orderly, attractive,
or creative. The reader sees a sense of
ownership in the work and a desire to ''invite''
the reader into the portfolio.

Content
The content of the portfolio demonstrates not
only mastery and competence, but an awareness of
and striving for quality.

Evidence of Progress
The student has clearly learned and grown during
the course of the instruction and the portfolio
should reflect an increasing mastery,
creativity, or complexity in the student work.

Evidence of Thinking/Problem-Solving
The student has demonstrated to the reader a
thoughtful, reasonable approach to problems. The
reader can understand how the student approached
and tackled problems as well as the results of
the problem-solving process.

Evidence of Reflection/Self-Evaluation
The student can articulately, rationally, and
accurately describe her strengths and the
weaknesses she needs to give further attention
to, as well as giving concrete evidence and
examples of how those strengths and weaknesses
are manifest in her work.

Portfolio evaluation may include a holistic
examination of the accumulated evidence;
however, teachers must ensure that students are
working towards reaching the stated objectives
so that students receive assistance as needed.
To facilitate this teachers may need to review
the portfolio every six weeks or so to make
sure students are making progress towards the

objectives. Furthermore, teachers may want to include factors such as willingness to take risks with the language and achievement of preset objectives as part of their scoring criteria to help students monitor themselves.

Figure 122 - Benchmarks and Rubrics for Portfolio Evaluation

Benchmarks and Rubrics

0 Unacceptable
There are not samples of evidence from each required category (written, spoken and figure); each document does not have a caption; documents do not present an argument that communication has been learned; there is no final reflection.

1 Below Average Performance
There is not at least one example of each prescribed category of evidence; only some document have captions; evidence is structured as an argument, but it is not convincing; the final reflection describes the process of portfolio development but does not describe learning.

2 Acceptable Performance
There is a t least one example of each prescribed category of evidence; each piece of evidence has a caption; the evidence is put together to make a compelling argument that the student has become more proficient in communication; the final reflection reports what was learned during the process of portfolio development.

3 Above Average Performance
While there are examples of evidence from each category, there are categories of evidence that were not prescribed; each piece of evidence has a caption; the argument presented by the document is compelling; the reflective statement contains unanticipated insights into personal learning.

Angelo Collins and Thomas M. Dana. <u>Using Portfolios with</u>
    <u>MG Student</u>, 1993

Figure 123 - Sample Portfolio Evaluation - Hopkinton High School - Foreign Language Department

To the Student: I have reviewed the items in your portfolio and want to share with you my reactions to the work.

Teacher signature: _____Date: _____

_____4: Excellent to very good
_____3: Good to average
_____2: Fair to poor
_____1: Very poor
_____0: Not enough to evaluate

	0	1	2	3	4
1. Your portfolio contains all the required items.					
2. Your portfolio provides evidence of your progress in speaking the foreign language.					
3. Your portfolio provides evidence of your progress in writing in the foreign language.					
4. Your portfolio demonstrates accurate use of the foreign language.					
5. The items in your portfolio demonstrate the use of a wide variety of the vocabulary in the foreign language.					
6. When creating items in your portfolio, you have tried to use what you have learned in new ways.					
7. The items in your portfolio provide an accurate picture of your skills and abilities in the foreign language.					

Comments:

7. *Review the Student's Progress*

Teachers can hold conferences with individual students or with several students to review the contents of the portfolios and to see if they are making progress toward the objectives.

Conferences are especially useful to provide some insights into the processes and strategies students use during their foreign language learning experience. For this reason, teachers may want to include some questions to encourage students to think about their own learning.

Figure 124 - Sample Questions for Conferences

> 1. What do you like about this work?
> 2. What do you think you did well?
> 3. How does it show improvement from previous work?
> 4. Did you have any difficulty with this piece of work? Can you show me where? How did you overcome it?
> 5. What strategies did you use to figure out the meaning of words you could not read?
> 6 Are there things about this work you do not like? Are there things you would like to improve?
> 7. How did you approach this task?

A successful conference provides time for students to review their work and to comment on what they feel is important. Initially, students may feel uncomfortable with conferencing and may not provide useful feedback. However, with time and exposure, students gain ease and contribute valuable insights about their own learning.

Conferences can also be led by the students as they present their work to the teacher and/or to their parents. Some teachers set up parents' night for parents to come to the school and to

participate in the portfolio presentation of
their own child. For this activity to be
successful, students need to have had previous
experience with conferencing in their classes
so that they can be clear on the purpose and
the focus of the conference.

Classroom Implications

Portfolio should not be something extra to do beyond everything else but should be part of the day-to-day instruction. " At the classroom level, portfolios reflect instruction and activities in ways that externally-imposed assessment does not" (Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners, p. 37). When planning instruction, teachers can look at their current approaches and activities and identify those which lend themselves to authentic assessment and inclusion in the students' portfolios. Unless the instructional activities are in place, students will not be able to produce needed evidence for their portfolio.

By ensuring that the portfolio reflects the classroom activities, instruction and assessment become closely linked.

When Portfolios Do not Work

Portfolios do not work when:

- o they do not belong to the student
- o the content is made exclusively by the teacher.
- o students do not evaluate their work
- o students do not have an opportunity to justify their contents
- o they are used infrequently.