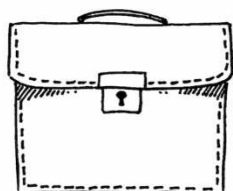


Technology & Assessment: ePortfolios

There are many different types of portfolios: classroom writing folders, artists' portfolios, teacher education portfolios, photo albums, and many more! Perhaps most, if not all, of us have used or kept a portfolio at one time or another.



port·fo·li·o

pɔrt'fɒlə,ō/
noun

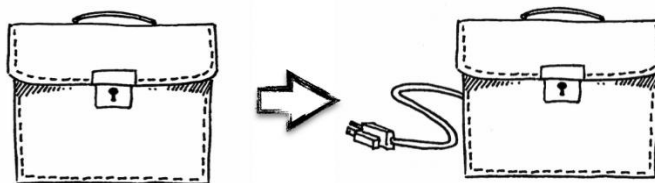
a large, thin, flat case for loose sheets of paper such as drawings or maps.

All portfolios are meant to “**tell a story**,” which makes me think that keeping a portfolio has less to do with the physical object (noun) and more to do with the process of communicating something about ourselves or our journey to a specific audience. An ePortfolio, consequently, should be less like a digital file cabinet and more like a **multi-format showcase of student learning**. Rick Stiggins (2007), asserts that “the desire to capture and communicate the **depth of student learning** has been at the heart of portfolio use for years,” and this should remain front and centre in ePortfolio use as well.

Stiggins (2007) goes on to state that:

A report card summarizes the story of achievement in one word at the same level of detail that a topic summarizes the story of a book: prejudice is a topic of "To Kill a Mockingbird", but that one word does not begin to tell the story.

An ePortfolio can provide a **rich assessment measure** because of its ability to tell so much more of "the story".



From Portfolio to ePortfolio: New Tools...Same Processes

The flat, thin case of the traditional portfolio has been replaced with a wide assortment of modern, digital equivalents that can be accessed on all sorts of devices including mobiles. These tools can be used to:

- **collect** work
- **reflect** on learning in multiple formats (including multi-media)
- **showcase** work online **to multiple audiences**
- provide a platform for **dialogue** about learning artifacts or to engage in reflections
- to provide **feedback/self-reflect** in order to improve learning
- **organize** student work to allow for global ease of access for teachers and students

Multiple Purposes:

There are many purposes for keeping an ePortfolio:

- to **show growth** or change over time
- as a means to track and set personal goals
- to help **develop process skills** such as self-refelction and goal setting
- to **identify strengths and areas for improvement** in own work and the work of peers
- to **track the development** of products or performances

Because the range of purposes is so diverse, an ePortfolio can fit nicely into a class or school assessment plan. An ePortfolio can "**fill in the blanks**" left by other digital communication tools commonly used to "tell the learning story" or to **capture learning** that is not easily captured in other conventional assessments.

There is a powerful **motivational** and **metacognitive** component to ePortfolios as well. As Paris and Ayers (1994) observe:

The overarching purpose of portfolios is to create a sense of personal ownership over one's accomplishments [learning], because ownership [stimulates] feelings of pride, responsibility, and dedication.

Telling THEIR Stories

Creating an ePortfolio can be a powerful learning experience when the subject of the portfolio (the student) is the author of the portfolio. When students take part in creating a portfolio, they:

- take notice of their learning
- track their learning
- set goals
- celebrate their learning
- build an understanding of who they are as learners
- nurture a sense of self-accomplishment
- share their learning with others

ePortfolio Tools

The use of ePortfolios is one assessment tool in your toolkit! It is an excellent supplementary way to communicate learning with students, parents, and students' education partners. Remember, ePortfolios can be used as formative or summative assessment of students learning. Be mindful that if you're using ePortfolios that they accurately reflect learning outcomes.

ePortfolio's offer many benefits to both teachers and students in the classroom, and there is no shortage of digital tools available. Here are some links to web 2.0 tools and various apps that you might use with students to create ePortfolios:

Web 2.0 Tools:

- [G Suite/Google Classroom](#)
- [Evernote](#)
- [Seesaw](#)
- [Freshgrade](#)
- [Lucidpress](#)
- [Moovly](#)
- [Glogster](#)
- [Mahara](#)

Apps - iOS/Android/Windows 8:

- [Shaddow Puppet](#)
- [Paper](#)
- [iXplain](#)
- [Voicethread](#)
- [Storycreator](#)

*Stiggins, Richard J., Judith A. Arter, Jan Chappuis, and Stephen Chappuis. "Chapter 11: Portfolios." *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Doing It Right -- Using It Well*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2007. 335. Print.

**Paris, S. and Ayres, L. (1994) *Becoming Reflective Students and Teachers*. American Psychological Association.

**Note: All the links provided in this resource are for convenience only; AAC does not guarantee the content or accuracy of the sites.