

Creating a teacher portfolio

What is a teaching portfolio?

A teaching portfolio is a record of your achievements and progress as a teacher.

Why is a teaching portfolio important?

All teachers who are committed to their professional development should keep a teacher portfolio.

When teachers select an entry for their portfolio, not only do they have to think or discuss, but they also need to write down their ideas and reflections. Reflective writing provides teachers with an opportunity to focus, organise, edit their ideas, and finally to reflect upon them in print. And, perhaps most importantly, the written documents are always available to be reviewed, and to serve as clear evidence of the teacher's thinking, reasoning, and actions.¹

The Teaching Portfolio: A Tool to Become a Reflective Teacher. Available from:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265538740_The_Teaching_Portfolio_A_Tool_to_Become_a_Reflective_Teacher
[accessed Nov 21 2018].

It demonstrates;

- Your own personal philosophy of teaching
- Evidence of your learning from training you have received
- Opportunities to record your self-reflection on areas of strength and those that need developing

It serves as a continuous tool to reflect, evaluate and monitor your own teaching and performance, in order to develop your teaching skills and continue to raise outcomes for the children you teach.

A suggested teaching portfolio contents structure is on the next page.

1. All About Me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name School Grade taught Any key responsibilities
2. My Teaching Philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are your goals as a teacher? Why did you choose to become a teacher? Has your approach to teaching changed as your career has progressed? What do you feel effective teaching looks like? What are your preferred teaching methods or strategies and why? What challenges do you face when teaching?
3. Workshops/Training attended	Keep a record of any training you have attended, including dates
4. Evidence of Change	Examples of where you have changed your teaching practice after training, research, classroom observations etc. Include sample of learners' work, lesson plans, photographs and so on if you can.
5. Lesson observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep evidence of any lesson observations from your peers or senior leadership team Show how you plan to develop the areas identified
6. Lesson Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of plans you have reflected on after teaching the lesson Note down where you have included new strategies or techniques
7. Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep a record of learner assessments to help you monitor their progress Record any assessment strategies you find effective and why Include examples of learners' work
8. Professional Development Action Plan	<p>Identify areas you would like to develop further.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will you do this? (peer observations / planning, research, training and so on) How often will you update your action plan? How will you monitor your own progress?
9. Personal interests	Include articles, newspaper clippings, photographs; anything that you think is interesting and you would like to reflect on as a teacher.

Characteristics of Good Teaching

Complete the column on the right by identifying the opposite characteristic from those of poor teaching in the left-hand column.

Poor Teaching	Good Teaching
Gives dull, poorly planned lessons	Plans interesting and exciting lessons
Doesn't treat learners with respect	
Rarely helps learners with their work, and never outside of lesson time	
Doesn't believe in their learners	
Explanations are muddled and confusing	
Is not approachable if learners have a problem	
Is often unfair, and seems to have favourite pupils	
Doesn't know everyone's name	
Makes fun of learners if they make a mistake	
Doesn't encourage learners to have a go at an activity or answering a question	
Is unwilling to be challenged on their knowledge	
Inflexible, and reluctant to acknowledge they have made a mistake	
Always serious, no jokes or sense of humour	
Doesn't protect learners' rights, or stop name calling	
No interest in learners, or what they do outside of school	

Self Assessment Activity - Step 1

Use a coloured pen to write an X in each column.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
My teaching style				
I am able to adapt lessons according to my learners' needs				
During lessons, I am more focused on learners needs than getting through the curriculum				
I teach the way I was taught, using traditional methods				
I ask questions to check learners' understanding				
I involve all learners in lessons, regardless of their ability or level of enthusiasm				
I encourage learners to work with and help one another				
Learner attitude and behaviour in class				
The learners in my class are able to debate, build on one another's points, and respectfully disagree with one another				
Learners are able to think about and solve problems creatively				
Learners are engaged in class				
Learners look happy and alert				
Learners feel comfortable to ask subject-related questions freely and openly				

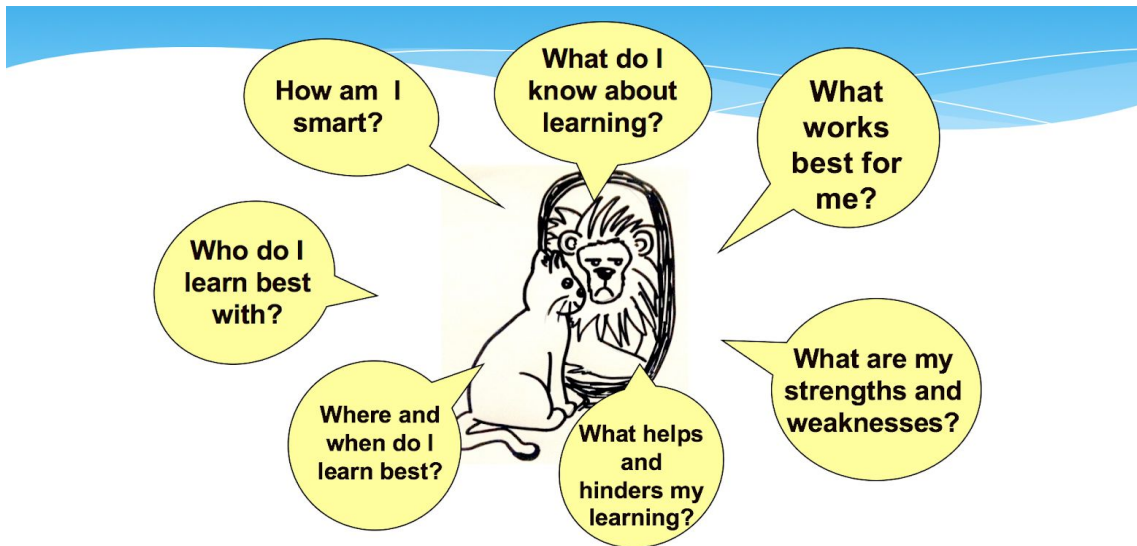
Self Assessment Activity - Step 2

1. Go back to the self assessment table you completed in Step 1. Use a different colour pen to complete the questionnaire once again - now that you have watched the recording. You should now have two x's in each row - each with a different colour.
2. **Regarding your teaching style (the first part of the self-assessment):** what are the similarities and differences between what you observed after you watched the video, compared to how you first completed the self-assessment table?

3. **Regarding your learners' attitudes and behaviours (the second part of the questionnaire):** what are the similarities and differences between what you observed after you watched the video, compared to how you first completed the self-assessment table?

Reflecting on yourself as a learner

The most effective teachers continually reflect on their own learning. Think about and complete the questions below, and then file this activity in your teaching portfolio. Refer back to it after each new piece of training you do, and see if how you think about learning has evolved.



<p>What do I know about learning?</p>	
<p>What works best for me?</p>	

How am I smart?	
Who do I learn best with?	
Where and when do I learn best?	
What is something I have learned recently? Why did I need to learn it? How did I learn it? Was it hard or easy?	
What helps and hinders my learning?	
What are my strengths and weaknesses?	

My Action Plan

What would I like to improve?	Why?	How will I do it?	When will I review my action plan?

Tip: Don't choose too many action points as it can be overwhelming. It is better to choose two or three key ones to start off with, and then review your action plan regularly. Share your action plan with your colleagues; they are a valuable resource to help you improve your practice. Update it with new areas to improve - and feel proud of those you have made progress in.