PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENTS

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

By the end of this module, you should be able to define a portfolio assessment, distinguish between its two types, identify the benefits and challenges of using portfolio assessments, and know that there is a "what-who-how" framework that you can use to design them.

KEY CONCEPTS

Portfolio Assessments

Portfolio assessments are not a type of assessment item, but rather a compilation of student work. Portfolio assessments ask students or teachers to collect work products that show growth over a specific period of time.

There are two main types of portfolio assessments: "instructional" or "working" portfolios, and "showcase" portfolios. Instructional or working portfolios are formative in nature. They allow a student to demonstrate his or her ability to perform a particular skill. Showcase portfolios are summative in nature. They include samples of a student's best work to demonstrate mastery at the end of a unit of study, semester or school year.

Portfolio assessments offer several benefits.

- → Portfolios are a rich source of information about student learning.
- → Portfolios are versatile.
- Portfolio assessments can build students' self-confidence and "selfappraisal" skills through the opportunity they provide for students to reflect on and celebrate their accomplishments.

Portfolio assessments also come with challenges.

- Portfolio assessments can be timeconsuming to design and score in a consistent and unbiased manner.
- → Portfolio assessments also involve a great deal of logistical planning and organization.

How to Use a What-Who-How Framework to Design Portfolio Assessments

Portfolio assessments involve a great deal of detailed logistical planning and organization. You can use the first two steps of the assessment blueprint and a simple "what-who-how" framework to think at a high level about how to develop a portfolio assessment.



What

- What pieces of student work will you include in the portfolio to document students' mastery of the standards and skills you will assess?
- → Will you include any student reflections on the selections? How will you incorporate them?
- Have you made sure that these assignments are clearly aligned with the relevant standards and skills?
- → What guidance will you offer students if they select artifacts for their portfolios?

Who

- → What decisions will students make about their portfolios?
- How will you include students throughout the process to determine and understand the objectives and process of the portfolio?

How

- → When and how will you or the student place each piece of student work into the portfolio?
- → How might you use written procedures and project logs to stay organized?
- → When and how will you check in with students to review their project logs and help them manage the process to collect work products for their portfolios?
- → How will you score the individual components of the portfolio? How will you score the portfolio as a whole?
- → How will you ensure that you are all on the same page about the purpose and plan to implement and score your students' portfolio assessments?

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

Assessment Items

1. De	efine in one or two sentence	the difference	between working	and showcase portfolios.
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2.	Describe on	e benent and	one challeng	e or portrollo	assessments.

Answers

1. Define in one or two sentences the difference between working and showcase portfolios.

Instructional or working portfolios are formative in nature. They allow a student to demonstrate his or her ability to perform a particular skill. For example, a working portfolio may include a collection of lab reports from over the course of the semester that highlight a student's improving ability to create hypotheses.

Showcase portfolios are summative in nature. They include samples of a student's best work to demonstrate mastery at the end of a unit of study, semester or school year. A showcase portfolio may include several drafts of an essay with comments that indicate how each draft improves upon the last, with the most polished draft on the topic demonstrating a student's mastery of the relevant skills

2. Describe one benefit and one challenge of portfolio assessments.

Portfolio assessments are versatile. Teachers can use them to measure almost any content area or skill, and they can contain a wide variety of student work to demonstrate mastery of a particular standard. These work products can include essays, lab reports, reading logs, photographs, journal entries, presentations, copies of assessments, conference notes from teachers and many other types of materials. On the other hand, portfolio assessments involve a great deal of logistical planning and organization.