



require that you leave it for them to review overnight or for a few days. Be prepared for each of these responses to your portfolio.

- Practice using your portfolio to illustrate aspects of your teaching as you practice answering interview questions. Practice turning quickly to the appropriate page by using well-placed dividers.
- Consider making copies of the most important pages of your portfolio to leave with your interviewer, or give them a highlight sheet.
- If you haven't been able to work your portfolio into your interview answers, ask for a little time to share it at the end of the interview. If you didn't get a request from your interviewer to see it, that is probably a hint that you should be brief in showing it to them.

Stage Four: *Maintaining your Portfolio*

Continue to develop your portfolio throughout your teaching career. Keep your resume up-to-date and request letters of recommendation from employers each time you leave a position.

Your Professional Performance Portfolio

Portfolios offer you the opportunity to demonstrate your teaching skills much more effectively than might be possible simply through a traditional interview. While school systems accustomed to using portfolios in the interview process may require certain items to be included in portfolios they review, there is no universal list of portfolio components, no single perfect way to present its contents. Your own teaching style and philosophy may lead you to emphasize things not mentioned here; however, the lists below give you an idea of the kinds of things you may ultimately want to use in your portfolio so that you can begin preparing now.

Stage One: *Gathering Information*

During each practicum and during your student teaching you should gather records of your work. Begin assembling these items now; it may be too late to recover many of them later.

Philosophy of Teaching

You will have the opportunity to develop and state your philosophy of teaching through your education coursework; keep a copy of this work to refine for your portfolio.

Photographs and Videotapes

- Take frequent photographs of children in your classroom as they work.
- Ask your cooperating teachers to take photos of you *with* the children as you teach or as they work.
- Arrange to have a videotape made of you as you teach.

Classroom Management

- Photograph and draw a diagram of your classroom arrangement
- List your classroom rules
- Include a description of your discipline method and the way you handle transitions

Evaluative Tools

- Save copies of tests, quizzes, paper and project assignments, etc.
- Save a page from your grade book or grade spreadsheet

Examples of Student Work

- Set aside examples of student work (tests, quizzes, papers, computer work, projects, journal entries, etc.)

Demonstration of Flexibility

- Save examples of ways that you have adapted your teaching techniques, management, etc. to meet the needs of the students
- Include information about demographic groups, disabilities, cultural diversity, etc.
- Be sure to have evidence of your having worked with a range of age groups

Planning

- Save pages from your planning book or other illustrations of lesson plans

Formal and Informal References

- Save *all* notes and comment sheets from cooperating teachers and supervising faculty
- Request letters of recommendation from anyone who can objectively discuss your ability to work with children or to teach at any age level.

Documents

- Assemble copies of your resume, transcript, Praxis results and state teaching certificate

Life-Long Learning

- List workshops, training, and other continuing education experiences you have participated in.

Other Possibilities

- List extracurricular and volunteer activities
- List honors and awards
- Assess and list your personal strengths

Stage Two:

Culling and Organizing Information

First, list the sections you plan to include. Begin assembling each section by outlining the contents of that section and giving a reason that each item is included. This ensures that you consider carefully what you include and eliminate all but essential items. The goal is not to overwhelm the interviewer; be brutal! Use a three-ring binder so that you have flexibility in choosing (and later changing) the order of sections.

Layout

Your portfolio is an important example of the quality of your work; make sure it shines! A well developed portfolio can demonstrate:

- your computer skills,
- your ability to create visually interesting, informative work, and
- your ability to organize information clearly.

Choose an attractive font to create headings and labels. Consider adding computer graphics if you have access to high-quality ones that reflect your style. Use high quality paper to mount your items on, and buy plastic sleeves to protect them. Use color effectively to draw attention. Be sure to have a clear table of contents.

Navigability

Arrange the items in your portfolio in such a way that you can instantly turn to the relevant pages when answering an interview question. Interviewers are less likely to review a portfolio from cover to cover than they are to allow you to point out highlights, so it can be helpful to put the best pages next to dividers. Don't completely overlook sequence, however, in case they ask you to leave your portfolio with them overnight.

Stage Three:

Sharing your Portfolio

Use of portfolios in the job search process is still fairly new, and like all trends is not universally accepted. Not all employers will ask to see your portfolio and not all will even *want* to see it. Others may