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# Introduction

## Why Portfolios?

Portfolios are more than folders of writing samples. They are organised collections, utilised by students and teachers in observing a student's growth in knowledge, ability, and attitudes. Portfolio assessment also serves as a method to monitor effort, improvement, and accomplishment.

The use of process writing resulting in high quality work improves attitudes toward writing for many students. The reflection, collection, and selection of material to go either into a quality work portfolio or to be retained in a working notebook helps students see for themselves what they must do to create quality work.

## Why Use Rubrics and Assessment Sheets Together?

Most schools and states have encouraged the use of rubrics in essay writing but still require teachers to award letter grades on reports responding to percentages the students receive on work. The combination of the two types of assessment help the students to see both methods of evaluation. Each unit has several criteria introduced with the assignment which enable all students to have a better chance to succeed in at least one area. This success creates the incentive to improve in the other areas.

## Why Student Evaluation, Peer-Editing, and Peer-Conferencing?

Often, students will help their peers see content problems during the peer-conference times or mechanical errors during the peer-editing times more easily than a teacher who may not have the time for one-on-one conferences. The simple act of reading a writing piece aloud to a friend may be beneficial to the author.

## Why Reflection?

We all need to take the time to evaluate our performances, but often we are pressed to go on to the next task and do not assess what we have just finished. The reflection for each unit will help your students see how much they have learned and check to confirm that they are not repeating their past mistakes.

## Why Student Choice for Portfolio Selection?

Students who take an active role and ownership in their own learning will become stronger students. When students are allowed to choose which writing projects will be placed in their portfolios and which projects will remain in their working notebooks they will be recognising their strengths and weaknesses.





# Introduction *(cont.)*

## Why Reassessment?

Reassessment is a very important aspect of the writing process. If a student wishes to create the very best quality work, he or she will need time to rewrite or complete a project. Establish a specified time limit within which students must complete their revisions. The final grades need to be averaged with the original teacher copy to give a balanced view of the improving writing process.

## How to Use This Book

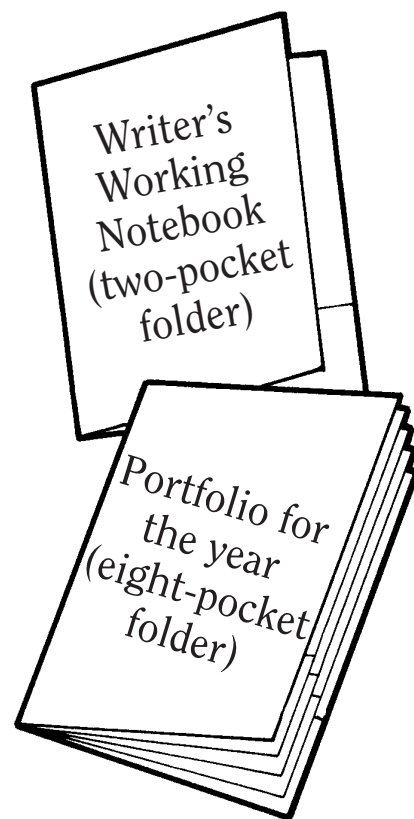
*Portfolios Through the Year* contains a variety of unit projects to be completed throughout the year. The finished projects will be included as part of each student's total portfolio package.

Each student will need the following materials:

- an eight-pocket folder for the year's portfolio
- a two-pocket folder for work in progress (This is called a Writer's Working Notebook. It is a great place to store brainstorming ideas, rhyming lists, and student skill lists.)

Throughout the units, each student will follow the process of brainstorming, writing a first draft, peer-conferencing for content, peer-editing for mechanical errors, followed by writing a second draft. The second drafts will then be submitted to the teacher for letter grades based on individual criteria and a rubric score. (Students should be apprised of the criteria and what will be expected of them when each assignment is given.) The teacher will then return the projects and the students will complete a final copy unless their second drafts were error-free. Finally, the students will fill out the accompanying reflection pages. At this point, the students will decide to file their projects in their portfolios for quality work or in their writer's notebooks for later reworking. The students may also rewrite their papers for reassessment.

The activities on pages 11 and 12 are designed to help students learn more about themselves. The unit on goal setting is a short project and is not necessarily graded by the teacher. Lesson plans for the teacher, a rubric, and a student assessment sheet are provided in each unit.





# Introduction *(cont.)*

## How to Use This Book *(cont.)*

Rubrics and traditional grades are combined in these assessments because most schools have not totally given up grades of A, B, C, D, etc. but are using rubrics, especially for writing assignments. The assessment sheets include several criteria for each project. More than likely, each student will at least succeed in one area and this will provide an incentive to rework other areas of the project to a higher degree of quality.

In addition, student planning sheets which model the correct form of the particular genre are included. Peer-editing, peer-conferencing, and student self-evaluating sheets are also available. Although these sessions can be time-consuming, students will discover both content and mechanical errors which will ultimately save time for the teacher.

Each unit also provides rubric and assessment sheets for the teacher to copy. Four assessment sheets have been economically placed on each page. These small-size assessments may be attached to the papers before returning them to the students.

After completing their reflection cover sheets your students will decide if their works are worthy of being put into their portfolios or just in their working notebooks for future consideration. A reflection is always encouraged. If the student requests it, he or she may submit a work a second time to improve any one of the criteria areas.

This portfolio book contains the following:

- ideas for portfolio and writer's notebook set-up
- different genres of writing
- poetry units—cinquains and couplets
- fiction—plot, theme, and character development
- personal narrative/fiction—personification
- figures of speech—hyperbole, simile, metaphor
- student evaluations/reflections
- rubrics and assessment sheets
- expository writing
- mini-lessons on writing leads and dialogue
- bibliography—suggestions of additional books on portfolios and writing
- resources for information

You may wish to punch holes in the pages of this book and store them in a three-ring binder to keep it intact.





# Lesson Plan: Learning Styles

**Objectives** Students will complete the questionnaire as honestly as possible. (The first answer is usually the best.)

Students will circle all of the numbers at the bottom of the questionnaire.

Students will complete the reflection forms to determine the best way to utilise the information they learned about themselves.

**Materials** copies of pages 15–18

**Introduction** Begin with a demonstration of several types of learning styles. Ask your students to participate in a demonstration. Have the students learn the same information in different manners. For example, one student might simply read the materials, one student might chant it to a beat, and another student might make out flash cards to review information. Point out that people have different learning styles which work for them. Discuss several types of strategies and techniques for studying, using the visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learning styles.

**Assessment** Students will be assessed on three aspects of the learning styles questionnaire and reflection (pages 15–17).

- A. Completeness
- B. Writing of the reflection and evaluation of his or her learning styles
- C. Mechanics: capitalisation, grammar, and punctuation

**Rubric Scores:**      **3 = High pass**                      **1 = Needs revision**  
   **2 = Moderate pass**                      **0 = No response**

<b>Learning Styles Rubric</b>	
<b>3</b>	Student responds to directions, writes at least three study methods, demonstrates good sentence structure, and shows good understanding of study techniques.
<b>2</b>	Student responds to directions, writes less than three study methods, demonstrates adequate sentence structure, and shows some understanding of study techniques.
<b>1</b>	Student may not follow directions, writes less than three study methods, demonstrates poor sentence structure, and shows little understanding of study techniques.
<b>0</b>	No response

**Reassessment** Students will have the opportunity to rewrite projects if they wish to improve their assessment in specific skill areas.



# Learning Styles Questionnaire

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Tick only those statements which describe your behaviour. Be honest and answer with your first thought. Then circle the numbers at the bottom of the page.

- 1. I am very quiet. I do not volunteer answers often.
- 2. I love to talk a lot.
- 3. I move my body more than I talk.
- 4. I love to put together difficult puzzles.
- 5. I move a lot and I rarely sit still.
- 6. I remember jingles and television commercials.
- 7. I dress neatly and wearing colour-coordinated clothing is important to me.
- 8. I usually touch things I see.
- 9. I notice details about the world.
- 10. I do not always worry about being messy, and my room is a mess.
- 11. I am distracted by background noises.
- 12. I have a vivid imagination.
- 13. When I am angry, I stomp and/or slam a door.
- 14. In my spare time, I would most of all like to watch television.
- 15. I can express my feelings.
- 16. In my spare time, I enjoy listening to the radio, record player, and/or tapes.
- 17. I try to touch and feel things I am learning about.
- 18. Even when I am upset, I do not tell anyone.
- 19. In my spare time, I prefer to be jumping, running, and/or wrestling.
- 20. I can put together projects without looking at the directions.
- 21. I like to solve problems by talking out loud.
- 22. I sound out new words and I am a good speller.
- 23. I think I have a fairly long attention span.
- 24. When I hear directions orally, I can follow them easily.

Circle the numbers you have ticked above and write the totals for each group on the lines.

<b>Group One</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	_____
<b>Group Two</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	_____
<b>Group Three</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	_____

Now refer to the second and third pages for ideas on how to use the information you have just learned about yourself.