

## Potential Sources for Portfolio Exhibits

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*Anecdotal Records.* These are notes that you have taken in classroom observations or during your own teaching. They may pertain to any of the following: the intellectual, social/emotional, or physical development of a child or some children; personal observations about instructional decisions that you have made; or personal observations of teachers at work. The notes reflect your assessment or child observation skills, your ability to make instructional plans, or your knowledge of child development.

*Article Summaries or Critiques.* You may have written a summary or evaluation of an article from a professional journal as a class assignment. When including these in your portfolio, choose critiques that address the desired topic very specifically. The title of the article should be reflective of a chosen domain, making a very obvious connection. This document is especially helpful in your professor has made positive remarks about your work and these remarks are about the domain you wish to document.

The article summary or critique may show your ability to analyze any number of teaching skills. For example, suppose you critiqued an article titled “Getting Parents Involved in Their Children’s Education.” If you discussed your own ideas about parent involvement in your critique, this document may be able to reflect your knowledge of school-home-community cooperation.

*Assessments.* Any forms of assessment you have used or developed to measure child performance would be included in this type of document. Examples of assessments are performance tasks, portfolios, teacher-written tests, informal observations or notes, evaluations from lesson plans, formative assessment notes or charts, or summative charts of student developmental levels. You may want to include the actual assessment instrument that you have written, with the children’s work on it, if applicable (only one copy is necessary). In addition, you may include notes in a personal journal from observations made during the administration of a standardized test. Your ability to assess children’s performance, diagnose progress, and use tests wisely are reflected in this document. In addition, your understanding of child development may be evident.

*Awards and Certificates.* Copies of letters, or certificates that verify your outstanding contribution to the field of education fit in this category. These could include honors conferred, memberships in honorary professional organizations, community recognition, and volunteer recognition. Your professional commitment is reflected in these types of documents.

*Bulletin Board Ideas.* After creating a bulletin board, make a copy of your design, or take a photograph of the board. Make sure all spelling, punctuation, and grammar are

standard English. This document can be used to show your ability to think creatively, use materials in interesting ways, or motivate students.

*Case Studies.* A case study is a thorough examination of a student's growth over a period of time. When using this as a document, make sure the student is anonymous. Generally case studies are quite long; therefore, you may want to include a specific part of the paper for documentation of a domain. Your knowledge of child development, as well as your observation skills, may be evident in this document.

*Classroom Management Philosophy.* This is a written summary of your philosophy of classroom management. Make sure to cite the research and theories that have guided you in the way you influence student behavior and encourage development of self-control. Classroom management skills are evident in this document, as is knowledge of human development.

*Community Resources Documents.* These might include copies of actual correspondence or a description of less formal contact between you and a community resource. Have you solicited a community resource to provide information in completing a course assignment or to teach a lesson in the classroom? Did you invite a guest speaker into your classroom during a field class or student teaching? These types of correspondence show that you are able to foster positive relationships between the community and the school.

*Computer Programs.* This includes examples of various programs you have utilized, developed, or have incorporated in your teaching that provide evidence of your ability to use materials in a challenging and appropriate way to encourage active learning.

Also appropriate are programs that demonstrate your ability to conduct on-line searches and research. Examples include ERIC, Education Index, and Internet programs that link teachers worldwide. You can document your abilities by providing the hard copies of these searches, along with an explanation of the reason for your computer searches. These documents reflect your willingness to seek further professional growth.

*Cooperative Learning Strategies.* Have you planned or taught a lesson using a cooperative learning technique? Cooperative learning is a method of teaching in which students work collaboratively in small groups to solve a problem. This type of group work must be obvious in your lesson. You may want to include a copy of the lesson plan and, if the lesson was actually taught, a statement assessing the effectiveness of the cooperative learning technique. This will document your ability to use cooperative learning as a strategy as well as your ability to manage and motivate a class of students.

*Curriculum Plans.* These documents are written plans and/or programs designed to organize curriculum. Your curriculum plans can reflect all experiences you have developed for the child while engaged in the process of schooling. Examples may include lesson plans, units, thematic units, learning centers, extracurricular programs, or school-community ventures. These documents portray your instructional planning skills or your ability to use many and varied instructional strategies.

*Essays.* You can use papers from education courses, English composition, or any other class in which you were required to write an essay. Examine the topic you addressed in your paper to be sure its main idea reflects one of the domains you are using.

This type of exhibit could document almost any domain. The question that you wish to answer or the topic you wish to address should be clearly stated at the beginning of the essay. You may want to highlight this, showing its obvious connection to the domain you wish to document. For example, suppose you wrote an essay in a composition class entitled “Why Susie can’t do Math: The Influence of Societal Expectations.” Because this is an essay on the differences that gender may make in the perception of students in the home, in the neighborhood, and in school, your understanding of social influences on the education of females becomes evident. This would be a good exhibit to document your understanding of the multiple contexts affecting educational decisions.

*Evaluations.* Any on-the-job performance assessment is an especially important type of evaluation to include in a portfolio. Student teaching and other field placements are places where this will occur. You might include actual observations done when you taught a lesson, feedback on a written assignment, or some kind of summative assessment (interim or final evaluation). Make sure there is a relationship between the evaluation comments and the domain.

*Field Trip Plans.* As a preservice teacher you may have gone on field trips that would be related to one of the domains you have chosen to use. Trips such as these may include visits to teacher centers, libraries, museums, innovative classrooms, other universities, youth centers, rehabilitation centers, or church-related activities. You may document this by including copies of programs, personal journals, agendas, letters of invitation, or memos. Your own notes or observational reports are also helpful. This type of document may provide evidence for a variety of domains. Your professional commitment and responsibility are reflected because of your willingness to seek information outside the college classroom.

You may have attended field trips with a student group. This experience may relate to one of the domains, depending on the nature of the trip and your reaction to it. A well-written reaction paper or journal entry would help document such a trip. For example, suppose you were invited to join your field class on a trip to the children’s theater. Your cooperating teacher did a nice job of incorporating this trip into her classroom lessons by reading a book about the play to the children, then having them act it out themselves and write an experience story about the trip. If you write an observational report about this, making notes about the interrelatedness of the activities and the importance of the subject matter to the growth of the students, you can document your knowledge of content and of child development.

If you actually planned a field trip for one of your classes, be sure to document this. Record your lesson plans, your correspondence with the community agents involved, your letter to parents, and any other communication you used. This is strong evidence of

your planning skills, knowledge of content, knowledge of human development, and school-home-community cooperation.

*Floor Plan.* A floor plan is a sketch of the arrangement of space, equipment, and materials you designed in order to meet the needs of a group of students under your supervision. Your ability to use environments and materials appropriately is most closely related to this document. If you include a statement of how this floor plan enhances your classroom management plan, then it also could document your classroom management skills.

*Goal Statements.* Professional goals are based upon your needs, interests, philosophy of education, and your perception of your role as a teacher. Goal statements assist you in determining where you want to be and provide you with information about how to get there.

Think about the important results you should accomplish in your role as a teacher and record these as goal statements. Remember that any short-term goals you establish should be tied to the longer-term goals you have identified in conjunction with your philosophy of education. Periodically review and evaluate your accomplishments in relation to your goal statements. You may wish to list your accomplishments associated with each goal. You will establish new goals as you refine your philosophy of education, your role as a teacher, and your expectations. It is important to keep your list of goal statements current. These statements might appear at the beginning of your portfolio or as documentation of your professional commitment.

*Individualized Plans.* Children with special needs sometimes need tasks to be structured in ways that will allow them to use their strengths and compensate for their specific learning difficulties. Ways in which lesson and unit plans have been adapted for specific students should be documented. Make sure the learning need is defined and clearly addressed. This artifact could document your skills in meeting individual needs, your instructional strategy skills, and/or your knowledge of child development.

*Interviews with Students, Teachers, Parents.* These include planned conversations with a specific agenda. Include a copy of the questions and answers, as well as a summary and analysis of the interview. This interview may be part of a case study for one of your classes. Interviews can yield a variety of information; for example, an interview with a student may give you some indication of his or her language development, thus documenting your understanding of human development.

*Journals.* You may have kept journals during field classes or observation assignments. Include them if they address your observations of students as they relate to the desired domain. If necessary, highlight the appropriate sections of the journals. Make sure dates and times are included, but not the names of schools or teachers visited.

*Lesson Plans.* Copies of your lesson plans should include all components of a workable plan: objectives, materials, introduction, development, closing, and evaluation.

Sometimes plans may be use for more than one domain. In this case, highlight the specific part of the plan that documents the domain. Your ability to execute instructional planning and to use a variety of instructional strategies will be most obviously documented with lesson plans; however, it is possible that knowledge of content, use of environments and materials, communication skills, and knowledge of human development could be documented here.

*Letters to Parents.* Include copies of correspondence that you sent home. This could include permission slips, weekly newsletters, requests for parental help with homework, notices about parties, notification about field trips, requests for parent conferences, student award certificates, or letters that explain upcoming activities. Such correspondence could document your cooperation with the home and community. Make sure letters contain correct spelling and standard English grammar.

*Management and Organization Strategies.* After trying a particular management or classroom organization strategy, systematically observe and code the events that occurred. This will enable you to record what is important about your experience. Write a brief summary and explanation of your observation. For example, you may have tried a chart system for classroom jobs, a record-keeping device for holistic scoring of writing, a system of recording anecdotal notes, or a way to expedite peer editing during writing classes. These types of explanations reflect your ability to manage the classroom well.

*Media Competency.* This type of document includes evidence and descriptions of the various forms of media you are able to incorporate in your instruction. This could include teaching resources such as the slide projector, camcorder and VCR, overhead projector, 16mm projector, computers and printers, interactive video, laser disks, and cable and electronic (educational) television.

You will also want to include evidence of your ability to incorporate technology into the classroom. Examples of how you have used e-mail, remote databases, and distance learning equipment to research and to communicate with students and colleagues regionally, nationally, and internationally should be highlighted. A printout or floppy disk of your Internet address(es), listing of professional on-line “news group” and “listserve” memberships you hold, and examples of printed texts will provide documentation of your ability to share and retrieve information via the internet.

Media competency reflects you ability to utilize a wide range of communication resources, environments, and materials appropriately. Therefore, you may wish to include a checklist of the various media and other “state-of-the-art” technology you are able to incorporate into your classroom.

*Meetings and Workshops Log.* If you have attended meetings or listened to speakers who discussed a topic related to a domain, include a reaction paper, plus a copy of the program. These logs would be a good way to document your professional commitment and responsibility.

*Observation Reports.* Systematic, regular noticing and recording of behaviors, events, and interactions in the classroom should be a part of every field experience you have. Include brief descriptions of your observations in a variety of grade levels. Reports could be in paragraph or checklist format. Depending upon the focus of your observations, your reports may reflect your knowledge of a variety of domains.

*Peer Critiques.* This encompasses formal and informal assessments of you by your fellow classmates. This could include score reports that are made out by classmates during your class presentations. The domain that you document with this artifact depends upon the presentation that your peers critique. If it was a lesson demonstration, your planning or instructional strategies skills would be evident. Your use of materials, communication skills, or knowledge of human development might also be evident. Make sure that the comments made by your peers reflect the domain that you are documenting.

*Philosophy Statement.* This is a brief position paper or statement of your philosophy of teaching. Make it clear and concrete. It is recommended that you preface your entire portfolio with this statement. Sometimes it is an assignment in a class, but if not, write one on your own. It should include your underlying beliefs about the teaching strategies and practices that are best for students. Either leave out or explain educational jargon; do not include such terms because they “sound good.” If you include the philosophy statement in more than one section, highlight the part that pertains to the specific domain.

*Pictures and Photographs.* Include photographs that show active learning in progress, special projects, field trips, or artistic expressions that cannot be physically included in your portfolio because of size. Bulletin boards, puppets, learning centers, and trips to museums are just some of the many ideas and activities you may want to photograph.

Depending on the photograph, you could document a variety of domains. If it is of a field trip that you took to a professional meeting or conference, document your professional commitment. If it is of a field trip or other related activity in which you participated with a class of students, you may want to document your use of instructional strategies, depending on your involvement in the planning process.

*Portfolio (Student).* A student portfolio is an organized collection of a child’s work that demonstrates the students’ achievement and performance over time. Various kinds of evidence might be used, including the student’s projects, written work, learning journals, and video demonstrations. A sample student portfolio would document your ability to use a variety of assessment strategies.

*Position Papers.* Include scholarly papers that were written to present an educational issue, viewpoint, or controversy. Be sure that sources are up to date. (No source should go back more than 5 years.) Papers such as these could document your professional commitment, as well as your knowledge of philosophical and social influences.

*Problem-Solving Logs.* As you identify professional problems or challenges, record them. It would be helpful to include a clear statement of the problem, alternative strategies for dealing with the problem, the chosen strategies, and the results of the implementation of each of them. Depending on the problem that you solved, you can document your use of instructional strategies, classroom management skills, or your cooperation with the home and community.

*Professional Development Plans.* Include a short paragraph or list explaining your short- and long-term plans for professional development. This could include efforts to improve knowledge or performance in specific areas of teaching, attendance and participation in professional organizations or workshops, and plans for earning additional credits in graduate school. This area should reflect where you are now in terms of your profession and where you plan to be within the next few years. Such statements document your professional commitment and responsibility.

*Professional Organizations and Committees List.* List and briefly describe your involvement with an organization, committee, or other group that you feel has had an impact on your professionally or personally. Examples could include participation in campus and community organizations. Be sure to include some sort of evidence of your participation in these groups, such as a membership card, a letter of acceptance, or a program from an activity. Such memberships show that you actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally.

*Professional Readings List.* Keep a list of professional readings that you have done and include your reactions to the issues and concepts discussed. Your professional commitment and responsibility are reflected in professional readings lists.

*Projects.* Projects can include any type of assignment that involved problem solving, group presentations, creating materials, investigating phenomena in classrooms, or researching current information. In a presentation portfolio include paper copies only and make photographs of anything too large to fit in a notebook. If this is a group project, make that clear, but indicate the extent of your input. (Be careful about this one; it is not helpful to brag about “doing all the work”!)

The documentation possibilities of this artifact depend on the project. Examine the domains to determine if the project reflects instructional planning skills, professional commitment, the ability to meet individual needs, or knowledge of content.

*References.* References might include statements and/or evaluations from your supervisors of your academic work, experiences in the classroom, other work experience with children, or outside employment.

Try to connect the reference with one of your required domains. For instance, the reference might describe a lesson you taught in a field course or in student teaching. Therefore, you could use this document to illustrate your competence in the area of

multiple instructional strategies. In addition, you may want to place reference letters from your cooperating teachers in a special tabbed section of the notebook.

*Research Papers.* When selecting a research paper to include in your portfolio, you will need to consider several factors. The content of the paper might make it appropriate for inclusion under a particular domain. It might, for instance, highlight your knowledge of an academic subject, and therefore be appropriately placed in Domain I: Content and Subject Matter expertise.

*Rules and Procedures Descriptions.* While you were student teaching or perhaps during field experiences, you may have had the opportunity to write your own classroom rules or procedures. This document should describe the regular, repeated guidelines or routines for behavior that give your classroom predictability and order. These descriptions of rules should give some evidence of your ability to manage the classroom and create an environment conducive to learning and positive interaction.

*Schedules.* During student teaching you were probably asked to complete a daily schedule. If you use this as a document, be sure that it clearly describes your format for the events of the day for students under your supervision. The order of events and the length of time allotted to each should be clear and concise. Classroom management skills are reflected in this type of exhibit.

*Seating Arrangement Diagrams.* A particular seating arrangement (such as having students sit in groups) might complement a particular teaching strategy (such as cooperative learning). It might also reflect a particular classroom management need, such as having students seated apart from the rest of the class. Your ability to plan for instruction, use environments, and manage the classroom could be documented with this exhibit.

*Self-Assessment Instruments.* This includes results from instruments, rating scales, surveys, or questionnaires that provide feedback about your performance. This shows your professional commitment and responsibility. Self-assessment instruments also include examples of instruments that you developed to engage students in measuring their own performance (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor). These could document your assessment skills.

*Simulated Exercises.* Include an explanation of educational experiences in which you learned through the use of simulation as a teaching method. A simulation is an activity that represents a real-life experience. This activity could include teaching an elementary lesson in a methods class, dramatizing a simulated classroom management scenario, or some other type of role-play experience. Describe the simulation, its purpose, and what you feel you learned from the experience. The simulation itself will determine the domain that you can document here.

*Student Contracts.* You may have the opportunity to write individual (one-on-one) contracts to help promote a student's academic achievement or improved behavior. The

actual “contract” should look formal—it should be typed and should specifically spell out the conditions under which the terms of the contract (achievement, behavior, etc.) will be met. In addition, it should include a space for the teacher and the student to sign, date, and confirm their agreement to the conditions. You may not have the need to draw up contracts until you student teach, but you may see some in use during your field experiences. (Classroom management rules that all students are expected to follow do not qualify under this category.) This type of exhibit reflects your ability to develop learning experiences on the basis of diagnosis and observation, or perhaps sit can document your classroom management skills, depending on the reason for the individual contract.

*Subscriptions.* If you subscribe to a journal that specifically addresses the standard in its title, include a copy of the cover of the journal, along with the address label showing your name. You might also briefly mention any ideas, instructional techniques, or other helpful information you gathered from reading the journal. Generally, professional commitment is well documented with subscriptions; however, you may find other domains to document with this exhibit, depending on the type of journal to which you subscribe.

*Teacher-Made Materials.* These materials may include games, manipulatives, puppets, big books, charts, videotapes, films, photographs, transparencies, teaching aids, costumes, posters, or artwork. Because many of these items are cumbersome, include only paper copies or photographs of the materials. If you do not have copies of the actual materials that you have made, you may want to highlight sections of a well-designed lesson plan that show how you would use some creative teaching materials. Materials that support learning theory and were designed to suit this purpose are most helpful. Your materials should reflect your ability to encourage active learning and a variety of instructional strategies.

*Theme Studies.* This is a set of lesson plans or resource materials that fit a central theme. Theme studies integrate many subjects, which might include math, science, health, physical education, English, social studies, reading, art, music, and spelling. Make sure that your plans contain all elements of good lesson plans and are obviously related to your overall theme. Your knowledge of a variety of instructional strategies should be evident through your use of computer programs, children’s literature, manipulatives, films, charts, or concrete materials. In addition, your instructional planning skills will be evident.

*Transcripts.* A copy of your official transcript can be used in a variety of ways. You may wish to use it to document your knowledge in subject areas such as chemistry or geography or in education courses. Highlight the courses and the grade you wish to document. Include a brief, word-processed explanation of why this transcript is included. You may even include other information such as a syllabus from the course you have highlighted, to show that you have taken essay or other types of tests on the subject.

*Unit Plans.* A unit plan is an integrated plan for instruction on a topic that is developed over several days or even weeks. Often units are developed within a discipline and lessons are organized so as to build on knowledge acquired in previous lessons. Unit plans generally include purposes, objectives, content outlines, activities, instructional resources, and evaluation methods. (Interdisciplinary units have been described under the Theme Studies entry.) Unit plans are particularly good for documenting your ability to use a variety of instructional strategies and instructional planning skills.

*Video Analyses.* You will be asked during one or more of your field placements to view and critique a videotape of actual classroom teaching. If you wish to include a critique you have completed, be sure to describe the scenario and give its bibliographical information. Make sure the critique speaks to the domain you plan to document. Depending on the nature of the video, there are several possibilities for document.

*Video Tapes.* You will be asked to videotape yourself teaching actual lessons in your field placements. You should use these tapes, along with peer or faculty critiques, as documentation in one or more domains of the conceptual framework. Be sure to include appropriate information as to the setting and type of lesson being taught. You should also include your written lesson plan to help the reviewer understand what is being seen.

*Volunteer Experiences Descriptions.* This document might include a list and brief description of volunteer experiences and services provided to the school and community. You should focus on how these activities have enhanced your abilities while providing a contribution to society. You should also emphasize the importance of maintaining positive school-community collaboration through teacher, parent, and student interaction. Depending on what you learned from these experiences, make sure they address the standard under which you have placed this document.

*Work Experience Descriptions.* These are statements that you have written to describe work experiences. These might include work with students in both traditional and nontraditional settings and work for which you were either compensated or that you performed on a voluntary basis. To be of most interest, these statements should include not only a summary of the setting and your responsibilities, but also a reflective statement addressing the intangible aspects of the work experience. In writing these statements, be sure to show how these work experiences related to the specific domain.