

Reflecting, Learning and Growing: A Writing Portfolio

“A writer is not so much someone who has something to say as someone who has found a process that will bring about new things he would not have thought of if he had not started to say them. That is, he does not draw on a reservoir, instead, he engages in an activity that brings to him a whole succession of unforeseen stories, poems, essays, plays, laws, philosophies, religions, or – but wait!

But writing itself is one of the great, free human activities.

Working back and forth between experience and thought, writers have more than space and time can offer. They have the whole unexplored realm of human vision.”

- William Stafford – A Way of Writing

For this final major assignment, submit a portfolio of your writing, made up of five to seven selections representing various genres of writing and aspects of your writing. When making your selections, consider in-class essays, analysis essays, arguments, and creative work. Make sure you are including significant work that shows your progress. You may include something you have written in another class this year and/or writings from previous years. The idea is to create a compilation that allows you (and me) to accomplish the following:

-  reflect on what you have accomplished as a writer,
-  make discoveries and observations regarding your progress,
-  determine your strengths and weaknesses related to writing and thinking, and
-  present, in a professional manner, the depth of your skills.

As you assemble your pieces, reflect on your progress as a writer and thinker, measuring your growth. You may wish to include some “rough” pieces, with my comments, along with the revised efforts, or select your best, “clean” pieces. You may wish to present a combination of approaches—it is up to you, as long as your collection presents a comprehensive view of your writing, and the reasons for your selections are obvious in your portfolio (with explanations) and introduction.

In addition to the writing selections, your portfolio must include the following:

-  **An Introduction:** An essay of personal assessment, approximately 4 pages in length, in which you reflect on yourself as a writer (primarily) and learner (secondarily). Write about your writing, considering what you have learned, what you have found most significant, how you have grown, and the problems or challenges you’ve faced **this school year**. This is a personal essay, and should be written in 1st person, but should still reflect your sophisticated, intelligent writing style. Throughout the essay, use **specific** references, primarily quotations (specifically taken from your portfolio selections) as evidence of your assessment. You need to quote yourself in this essay. Your structure should align with multi-paragraph essay expectations: introduction with a hook, thesis and method statements, 3 body paragraphs and a conclusion
-  **Preface written by a classmate:** When your portfolio is ready (but prior to the due date), exchange portfolios with a classmate who will read yours and write a one-page preface, while you do the same for a peer. You may choose to exchange portfolios within a small group as long as each person writes a preface and has a preface written for his/her portfolio.
-  **Professional or Artistic Presentation:** title page (with a creative title), binding, table of contents, etc.
-  **Epilogue written by a parent or other significant (but non-teacher) adult** [for extra credit]: After your portfolio is finished, have an adult respond to your writing. Consider asking him/her to focus on what stands out most about your writing or where the most growth is evident.

Your portfolio is due on Monday, June 10th.