

Preparing an Effective Portfolio

(From Julie McCall, Madison #1 School)

1. Follow the directions in the student textbook pages 24-32.
2. Make sure the display boards are no larger than 32” wide by 40” high. The documentation binder should be no larger than 2” thick. Complete instructions are on page 5 in the teacher’s manual.
3. Give students a copy of the portfolio judging sheets with judging rubric. Go over the rubric until the students understand each criterion.
4. Recruit a couple of students who will monitor the class’s work daily and remind others what information they need to have in their section.
5. Have one person in each portfolio group be in charge of their portfolio group.
6. Every few days review what the text is asking the students to do. This is important because it is easy to overlook a crucial element.
7. Copy the reflection guidelines on page 35 in student text and go over it with the students. Remember that the reflection piece must be a part of the documentation portion of the portfolio. The reflection can be done in a number of ways:
 - ◆ Every student writes a reflection and places it in the documentation binder.
 - ◆ Every student writes a reflection. A couple of students take the reflections and compile the information into one document.
 - ◆ The entire class brainstorms what they learned. This is captured for the documentation binder.
8. Each group must identify their sources and display the bibliography on the display boards.
9. Judges are instructed not to deduct points for typographical and grammar errors. However, they leave an undesired impression on judges so encourage students to proof their work carefully.

Some tips about graphics:

1. All charts and graphs must have a specific title that tells who, when, where, etc., when applicable. No questions should be in the mind of the reader who knows nothing about the graphic, i.e., how many people were interviewed, how many received the survey instrument, etc.
2. All parts of the display must be labeled.
3. Make sure that all charts and graphs are the same design and color grouping from panel to panel.

4. Make sure that every picture or graphic has a purpose and the purpose is explained in the caption. Judges look for substance, not glitz.

In the Documentation Binder:

1. Have copies of all graphs, charts, graphics, photo, surveys and data compilation in the documentation binder in the section that corresponds to the display.
Note: If an item appears on the display, you must have a copy in the documentation binder along with all relevant research.
2. Pay attention to all specifications regarding size, number of pages, line spacing, etc.
3. Make a complete copy of the binder so that your students have all information they need to prepare for the hearing. (If you send your portfolio to the state competition. If not, you don't need to make a copy.)

Preparing for the Oral Presentation

1. All students must have some role in the four-minute oral presentation.
2. Go over the judging criteria for the oral presentation on page 35 of the teacher's manual. Make sure students understand what they will be judged on. The criteria listed on the score sheet is the rubric used for evaluation.
3. Have students determine the critical elements of the portfolio to testify on. Once these have been determined, have them outline their presentation. Divide the presentation into sections and assign each group member a role. Give students 3x5 cards to make notes on.
4. Prepare a strong beginning and conclusion. Have strong speakers do the introduction and conclusion with other students filling in the body of the presentation.
5. Practice timing of the presentation in their group. Practice presentation in front of peers. Invite other teachers and parents to hear the practice testimony and give feedback. Also have them ask follow-up questions.
6. Address the members of the judging panel as described in the "Speaking Before a Legislative Committee" Handout.
7. Continually encourage your students by telling them they can do this, they can answer any question the judges will ask them. *If they believe it, they can do it!*