decision-making

by [Betsy Damon](http://www.plymouth.edu/webapp/courses2/user/view.php?id=20904&course=16493) - Sunday, September 1, 2013, 3:22 PM

Why do I want to make an ePortfolio? I want to connect with others. I want to have intelligent conversations with people who may have never met me but through my ePortfolio are able to "know" the me I am sharing with them. The ePortfolio I design needs to allow others to know where I've been, how I got where I am, what I am capable of doing, and help create an environment where others want me in their community - be it a physical school or group or simply as part of an e-community. I look at ePortfolios as another form of communication and you can't have successful communication without some form of mutual connection.

I made lots of notes about the readings and the videos but I think the most valuable information I found was in the 2nd video "Eportfolios for K-12 Classroom" by Traci Siegler:  She made a point that I had never thought of as a reason for using eportfolios in school. The idea that a digital project could loop from year to the next. Looking at how eportfolios are used at the elementary level in Laconia School District, documents are stored in the student's portfolio and then they fill out an electronic reflection form and the portfolio piece is finished. I like the idea that you could, for instance, start a story in gr 1 with the pictures and short sentences being scanned in and then in gr 2 use those to create a digital story that by grade 6 could be used to create a stop-motion animation or live play. Imagine the pride a student would feel when they go in to reflect on the later learning and see how they have grown from their original portolio item.

I believe Laconia uses the pre-assessment abilities of the eportfolio but I believe that most of what is put into the eportfolio is what the teacher decides should be there and what the teacher assigns the students to reflect on. It is an institution-driven object which lacks the passion necessary to truly engage the student in the reflection process, especially at the end of the year when they are reflecting on 5 recent pieces and have to stay in from recess and out of fun activities until they complete the work. In this case, the work itself may represent the abilities of the student but the reflection is just going through the motions.

Re: decision-making

by [Stephanie Haulk](http://www.plymouth.edu/webapp/courses2/user/view.php?id=9130&course=16493) - Sunday, September 8, 2013, 1:37 PM

Hi Betsy,

I like what you said in your first paragraph. 'I look at ePortfolios as another form of communication and you can't have successful communication without some form of mutual connection." Communication is such a key aspect of anything in life, so we need to make this a focus of our students from day 1. Portfolios are terrific examples of communication.

In our school, we have parent conferences in November. I would like to see the format change to include students running the conference. They could present their ePortfolio to their parents, instead of the teacher doing all the talking. This is easily doable for my students (grade 8) but more of a challenge for the younger ones. This would include the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (create, evaluate, analyze) and show student's accountability for their learning. I'm not sure if this will ever happen, but if my classes create an ePortfolio it could be a start. Someone always has to make the first move right!?

I agree with you though that students need choice in their ePortfolio. If it's all teacher/institution directed they will not have the passion for it. There are plenty of ways students can have choice. It would be nice to see an example of "choice" described in some of the readings for this week. I do unit projects with my students in class. They are required to create a project (based on the math CCSS we just focused on in class) but they can choose the standard, they can choose the type of project, and they can choose the type of technology to create that project. So, it is teacher directed in a small aspect, but it's students' choice for the rest. In my opinion that's a lot of choice. I'm not sure that's the "choice" the readings are talking about though.

Lots of food for thought!

Stephanie

Re: decision-making

by [Betsy Damon](http://www.plymouth.edu/webapp/courses2/user/view.php?id=20904&course=16493) - Sunday, September 8, 2013, 5:19 PM

It may not be the complete free-choice that adults have in creating their eportfolios but it is a very good start. At the elementary level there is almost no choice in how assignments/projects are done and no choice of which assignments/projects are included in the portfolio.

While most grades would not be able to have a student-led conference as early as November, eportfolios provide the opportunity to have students share their work outside of school. Maybe it could be a communication grade to have them share their eportfolio with a parent/guardian during the month of January (for instance) and have that parent/guardian complete a reflection on how they feel this represents their child.?Maybe even set up a family-sharing night where families can come in and use the school's computer lab to view their student's eportfolio?

So much for us to learn and explore this semester!!!

Re: decision-making

by [Amy White](http://www.plymouth.edu/webapp/courses2/user/view.php?id=10006&course=16493) - Monday, September 9, 2013, 8:37 AM

I am intrigued with your comment, "People will get to know me through my Portfolio."  I may be confused, but my impression is that my portfolio will never be seen except by a few people, those who I chose to share it with. My 'digital footprint', 'my brand', is separate from my portfolio.  I guess I imagine it as a closed software program allowing me to reflection and archiving in private -- sharing it with those I chose.  (my district being one of them if they are using it for evaluation!)

I'm not sure I am right in my ideas.  What do you think?

Re: decision-making

by [Betsy Damon](http://www.plymouth.edu/webapp/courses2/user/view.php?id=20904&course=16493) - Monday, September 9, 2013, 12:25 PM

The digital collection of artifacts is yours and yours alone, but the eportfolios that you create are targeted collections for specific audiences. At least that is my understanding. When I say that people will get to know me through my portfolio, it is because I can choose pieces that demonstrate the traits I want them to see and focus on. In essence, I can use the portfolio to make my resume come to life.

A digital footprint is less something you have or share and more a digital history of everything you do on the web. Mention of digital footprints usually involves a warning to be aware of the data trail you are leaving behind. An example would be on Facebook, you would want to be careful of "liking" to many posts or sites that highlight drinking alcohol excessively so you don't present the image that you are an potential alcoholic. School districts often look at the digital footprint of staff and future staff - at times triggering unpleasant consequences for those persons. This is a good article on the importance of watching your digital footprint: https://www.google.com/search?q=digital+personal+branding&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&hl=en&client=safari

"Branding" is discussed in the following article: http://socialmediatoday.com/mike-frey/1470831/personal-branding-tips-digital-era and is your image that others have of you. Tailoring interactions in the digital world will keep you front and center in the mind of potential employers or customers. It is very similar to inserting yourself not their memory rather than presenting yourself brand-new to them.

Re: decision-making

by [Doris Buco](http://www.plymouth.edu/webapp/courses2/user/view.php?id=2913&course=16493) - Tuesday, September 10, 2013, 9:51 PM

As our district is just beginning to explore student e-portfolios, I, too, feel that Traci Siegler's video has valuable information. I see our student e-portfolio committee sharing this video with teachers because it clearly defines an e-portfolio, highlights the benefits for both teachers and students and how it can be used for both formative and summative assessments.  I like Siegler's suggestion of starting small with perhaps one teacher or one student.

Reading about the practices used in other districts regarding student e-portfolios is quite beneficial to me as I gather ideas of what our district should consider/not consider as we begin this journey of having students move from portfolio binders to e-portfolios. The practice in Laconia of portfolios being more teacher than student directed does not appear to be supported by the two videos we watched and the readings we just completed.  What we watched and read clearly define the student as the owner of the e-portfolio with the student truly growing and learning from the selection of the artifacts and the reflection upon those artifacts.  As Barrett highlighted in her video, portfolios help one to "know thyself."

**Re: decision-making**

**by**[**Ethel Gaides**](http://www.plymouth.edu/webapp/courses2/user/view.php?id=11461&course=16493)**- Thursday, September 12, 2013, 9:25 PM**

**Hi Betsy,**

**You have made an interesting observation: "It is an institution-driven object which lacks the passion necessary to truly engage the student in the reflection process".**

**Take a look at:**[**Digital Portfolios for Primary Students**](http://plpnetwork.com/2012/02/27/digital-portfolios-for-primary-students/)**!" posted  by**[**Kathy Cassidy**](http://plpnetwork.com/author/kathy-cassidy/)**on Feb 27, 2012 in Creating Global Classrooms, Less Teacher, More Student, Making The Shift, Uncategorized, Voices. Kathy states: "Choice is an important component of any portfolio. I think my students  should have input into choosing what they have done well and should  appear in their portfolio. I also want to ensure that the students  discover how to show their learning in a variety of ways and that they  show their learning in many subject areas.  In practicality, the   
portfolios of my students are a combination of two things—student  choices and teacher suggestions" ... a good combo.**