

Writing Your Reflective Pieces

First, please look at the portfolio guidelines from Class Measures under the reflection notes:

“The reflection pieces should touch upon the teacher’s thoughts as he/she started teaching and the changes and growth within the standard area that has occurred over the teacher’s time in the classroom. Finally, teachers should address how they want to grow in this standard area in the future. Length of reflections should be about one page and be included at the beginning of each standard in the portfolio.”

In general, think about organizing your reflections in this manner:

First section or paragraph – Where were you (in relation to this standard) as you began your teaching? For example, if you are writing about Standard B, did you have any ideas or knowledge or experience about engaging ways to begin lessons? Did you know how to measure student achievement? The reflections should be directed to the standards with some specifics to make your writing interesting.

Second section or paragraph – Where are you today (in relation to this standard)? For example, if you are writing about Standard A, you might include how you are using technology more now than when you began and specifically, what you are doing (PowerPoints, internet use for research projects). Maybe, you have grown in the area of Standard B by developing engaging ways to begin lessons, say with a competitive quiz game.

Third section or paragraph – Where do you hope to be tomorrow (in relation to this standard)? This is where you can dream and express your ideas for future classes or for your own professional development. For example, if you are writing about Standard E, you might have some specific ideas for involving parents in your program or you might be aware of a new theory that you hope to study.

Your point of view should be first person. By that, I mean use the first person pronoun as much as possible so that the reflections convey your “self” and not the ideas you may have read in a book. Here is an example of third person translated into first person:

If you wrote something like this: “It is very important that students see the relationship between effort and achievement,” try to rephrase it like this: “Because I believe in rewarding students for class participation, I have designed several rubrics as feedback so that students will realize that their efforts are valued and reflected in their grades.”

Obviously, you do not want these reflection pieces to be too long, so you have to pick and choose for each standard where you want to be more specific. Ask yourself the three questions: where was I, where am I, where do I want to be? And listen to yourself. There is no right or wrong here, only what you want to reveal.