Credit Options: Collections of Evidence

This document provides information about using collections of evidence (e.g., portfolios) as a part of awarding credits. For more information about awarding credit, please see Division 22, OAR 581-022-2025 and Oregon Department of Education's Credit Options webpage.

Collections of Evidence

Collections of evidence (portfolios) have three primary strengths:

1. Rubrics provide clarity about the criteria that will be used to evaluate collected evidence;
2. Students are empowered to select the evidence they feel is the best reflection of their learning (collections of evidence vary from student-to-student); and
3. Educators can look at the whole picture of student learning, rather a single assessment or piece of evidence.

What is a Collection of Evidence?

A collection of evidence is a compilation of student work that demonstrates the student's mastery of knowledge and skills over time. Some examples of the artifacts that could be included in a collection of evidence follow:

- Reports, journals, and/or reflections
- Summary and documentation of a project related to school, a student organization, or a workplace activity, evaluation and documentation of a workplace activity;
- Summary and documentation of a community-based project related to a community problem or need;
- Work Sample;
- Technical or research report with documentation of work and reflection;
- Reflection piece or personal statement accompanied by a sample of work;
- Storyboard, artwork, photo collection, or PowerPoint display accompanied by a description of the work;
- Video or audio presentation

Collections of evidence should be scored by rubrics that clarify for students the criteria the collection of evidence will need to meet. At their best, collections of evidence will offer students an opportunity to become more reflective and self-directed. Through the use of rubrics and peer and teacher feedback, students have a much better idea of how to improve and students can continue to extend their learning when they have an opportunity to develop and revise the evidence they submitted.

Student Choice and Flexibility

Key to this process is the inclusion of student choice, student voice, and flexibility; including collections of evidence as an option to earn credit *is* student-centered learning. At its best student-centered learning will provide every student the chance to identify their unique strengths and challenges, and cultivate their cognitive and emotional growth, reaching their own highest outcomes.

The options for collections of evidence allow for deeper, authentic learning while taking into account the learner's skills and interests, thereby fostering a sense of ownership over their learning experience. When students have the opportunity to shape and guide their own learning, more meaningful connections are made to the material and

Options for student creativity or flexibility should be accompanied with clear criteria, aligned to the scoring rubric. Although group work may be incorporated, the parts of the collection of evidence that the student uses to demonstrate proficiency should represent what the student independently knows and can do.

Rubric Development and Scoring

To develop a strong collection of evidence, either start with the rubric or write the rubric early in the process of development. A high quality rubric assists educators in identifying:
- the purpose of the collection of evidence,
- the knowledge and skills students will demonstrate at each level of performance/achievement (criteria).

The [SCALE Checklist For Quality Rubric Design](#) is a helpful resource for evaluating and creating high quality rubrics.

Whenever possible, the scoring should be completed by the student's teacher of record. The scoring of the collection of evidence should be done as a holistic view of the evidence. Some pieces may meet the criteria for certain essential learnings while other pieces meet the criteria for other essential learnings.

Organizing the Collection of Evidence

Student collections should be arranged in such a way that maximizes an educator's ability to find evidence of each essential learning. Prompts, such as those below, may help students determine an appropriate way to organize their work.

- Think about all the components of your collection. Which parts do you consider the most important?
- After you have identified what you think are the most important parts of your collection, make a table of contents or outline to direct those looking at your collection to the places where they can see evidence of the essential learnings.

Student Reflection

Below are guiding questions that may help students reflect on their experience building the collection. Students may be encouraged to use the questions to help them create a narrative reflection piece or present a reflection in another format.

- Which parts of your collection give you the most pride? Why?
- As you completed your collection, what kinds of challenges did you face? What did you learn from those challenges?

Example: *High School Reading*

Following is an example of how this process could play out in a high school reading course:
1. Educator selects one essential learning from each section of the reading standards: Key Ideas and Details; Craft and Structure; Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.

2. Educator discusses with the student what a collection of evidence is and the different kinds of evidence (artifacts) that could be submitted.

3. Educator offers a range of texts and/or student selects texts based on specific parameters.

4. Educator reviews the rubric with student, discussing the language used in the criteria and sharing exemplars or descriptions of evidence that would and would not meet the criteria.

5. Educator and student develop a preliminary list of the artifacts the student will include in the collection of evidence, though this can change as needed.

6. Educator and student connect on a regular basis as the student shares work that is in progress and discusses evidence under development.

7. Teacher provides the student with the prompts for planning how to organize the collection and developing a reflection.

8. Students organizes the collection and develops a reflection to accompany the collection.

9. Student submits the collection and the teacher scores it.

10. Teacher connects with the student to share scores, including providing feedback on the areas that met the criteria and indicating those criteria that were not yet met (if applicable).

11. If there are areas where the collection of evidence has not yet provided sufficient evidence, the educator and student can determine whether additional learning needs to occur or if the student is ready to develop a new artifact to include as evidence.

12. The educator and student work together, repeating the cycle of teaching, adding in new artifacts, and scoring until the collection of evidence has met the criteria.

Resources

For additional resources, please visit the ODE Credit Options web page.