

Activity

Timing: 2 to 4 hours

Level: Ages 15 and up

Planning a portfolio

Activity Overview

Portfolios communicate accomplishments, works in progress, or personal history. In this activity, students plan and organize content for a portfolio that will feature work they have completed and work to be completed. They determine the audience, goals, and structure of their portfolio and organize the portfolios content through creating a flowchart. As students plan their portfolios, they reflect on and evaluate their work.

Note: Portions of this activity align to the Adobe Certified Associate objectives. Within the instruction steps and technical guides, the specific learning objectives for the exam(s) are referenced with the following format: ^{1.1}

Activity Objectives

Project management skills

- Planning a portfolio
- Describing the goals and uses of a portfolio
- Creating a flowchart of the portfolio
- Organizing and managing content
- Identifying the purpose and audience for a portfolio

Design skills

- Selecting appropriate content

Research and communication skills

- Communicating information to particular audiences
- Defining the goals and uses of a portfolio
- Writing and editing content

Project Assets

- *Guide:* How to plan a portfolio

Background preparation resources

[Technical and content information](#)

[ISTE NETS*S Standards for Students](#)

[Adobe Certified Associate objectives](#)

Activity Steps

Introduction to portfolios

1. Discuss the concept of a portfolio, its purpose and its audience.^{1.1, 1.1, 1.1, 1.1, 1.1, 1.1} Some things to discuss might include:
 - What are the goals of a particular portfolio?
 - What does a portfolio contain?
 - Would it contain professional experiences? Coursework?
 - How do you use a portfolio to communicate ideas?
 - What could you use to communicate these ideas (for example: shots, images, project examples).
 - What are the long-term and short-term goals of a portfolio?
 - Who is the audience for the portfolio?
 - What situation are they creating the portfolio for? To get into school? To get an internship? A job interview?
2. Discuss the different types of portfolios and best types of portfolio depending on the format of content and the desired distribution method for the portfolio. Show the class a variety of paper-based and online portfolios. Discuss and analyze their purpose and audience with the students. Consider the following types of portfolios:
 - Print portfolios: Traditional design portfolios are often put together in a high-quality book or binder. If the design work is best showcased in the printed form, this may be an ideal portfolio format.
 - Web portfolios: Web portfolios are ideal for frequently updating content that includes videos and interactive media, online content, as well as photography and graphics. They can take several different forms:
 - Community portfolio: Services such as Behance (<http://www.behance.net/>) allow designers to very quickly create a portfolio of projects (with relevant metadata) and get feedback from the community of designers. Community portfolios allow for direct networking with potential collaborators, clients, or employers.
 - Portfolio website: A custom website where a designer can post projects, about information, contact information, and integrate social media is an ideal way to market oneself. Portfolio websites can be as simple as a customized blog (utilizing a platform like WordPress or Tumblr) or as complex as a fully custom-coded website.
 - Application portfolios: Utilizing technologies like the Adobe Digital Publishing Suite, a designer can leverage InDesign based layouts to transform a print focused portfolio into an highly interactive portfolio that can be distributed through an app store and viewed on a tablet device.
- 3 Explain that most portfolios share similar features. Some things students may think about including in their portfolios are:
 - Portfolio introduction that explains their skill set, training, projects included in the portfolio, career interests and goals, and any professional experience.
 - An image or representative visual to use on the welcome page of their portfolio.
 - Narrative introductions to each project, explaining the ways their work highlights their skills.
 - Narrative introductions including specific examples comparing their skills with the career area they are interested in.
 - A learning plan that identifies skills or concepts they might be lacking at this point but would want to learn about and focus on during the next semester

- A photo gallery of images to link to their work.
- A downloadable version, or portions of, an online portfolio.

Selecting content

4. Distribute the *How to plan a portfolio* guide. Pair students and ask them to consider the work they've done in this course and other courses with respect to the academic and/or career areas they are interested in. Ask them to determine the portfolio's audience and goals. Individually, have them select files they could include in their portfolios that would represent their best work and highlight their skills. Based on their content, have them choose the best format for their portfolio. ^{1.2, 1.2, 1.2}

Flowcharts

5. Discuss how to organize the contents of the portfolio by introducing the concept of a flowchart. Tell students they will organize their content and use the flowchart to map how viewers can navigate through the information in the portfolio. In preparation for having the students create a flowchart, discuss the kinds of items to include in the portfolio, in addition to their content:

- Introduction or mission statement.
- Titles for any menu buttons that will link to the portfolio items.
- A learning plan that identifies skills or concepts they might be lacking at this point but want to learn about and focus on during the next semester.
- A slideshow in the menu that briefly highlights the portfolio's content.

Note: You might want to explain that they can combine the slideshow with their introduction or mission statement as an opening to their portfolio.

6. Demonstrate how to create category outlines (for instance, categorizing work by project type or design principles) and corresponding flowcharts for the type of portfolio they have chosen. ^{2.5}
7. Ask students to create a flowchart for their portfolios. You might use the following information to guide them:
 - Describe the purpose of the portfolio.
 - Create a list of assets the portfolio will contain and organize projects and files into categories (skill categories, career categories, and so on).
 - Using the category outline as a guide, draw a flowchart for a print or web portfolio.

Assessment:

Portfolio flowchart	Absent or incomplete.	Flowchart is detailed and includes an appropriate organizational structure for the content.	Flowchart is detailed and includes a clear and logical organizational structure for the content. Flowchart includes all content that should go in the portfolio.
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Background preparation resources:

Portfolios

- Videos for creating print, digital publishing app, and web portfolios: <http://tv.adobe.com/show/make-it-with-creative-cloud/>
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Research and Improvement, Classroom Uses of Student Portfolios: www.ed.gov/pubs/OR/ConsumerGuides/classuse.html
- Articles on self-marketing from 99U: <http://99u.com/category/self-marketing>

Print portfolios

- Paper portfolios: 5 beautiful examples to inspire you: <http://www.creativebloq.com/portfolios/paper-portfolios-5132559>
- 6 tips for creating a stunning print-based portfolio, plus 4 examples: <http://www.thedesignbuzz.net/6-tips-for-creating-a-stunning-print-based-portfolio-4-amazing-examples/>

Web portfolios

- Behance: <http://www.behance.net/>
- 6 steps to create a knockout online portfolio: <http://99u.com/articles/7127/6-steps-to-creating-a-knockout-online-portfolio>
- Behance Pro-sites custom portfolio websites linked to a Behance portfolio (included in Adobe Creative Cloud individual membership): <http://prosite.com/>
- Advice from web professionals for building great web portfolios: www.smashingmagazine.com/2009/02/26/10-steps-to-the-perfect-portfolio-website/ and <http://speckyboy.com/2011/05/08/building-a-great-web-design-portfolio---10-best-tips-40-examples/>
- Five styles for organizing the content of a web portfolio: http://sixrevisions.com/web_design/five-popular-design-portfolio-website-styles/
- Examples of online portfolios:
 - Examples of ProSites portfolio websites: <http://prosite.com/home/examples>
 - Twenty-five recommended web portfolios: <http://sixrevisions.com/design-showcase-inspiration/25-impressive-portfolio-web-designs/>
 - Elements of great portfolios with examples: <http://webdesign.tutsplus.com/articles/general/elements-of-a-great-web-design-portfolio/>

Flowcharts

- Examples and instructions for visualizing information and using flowcharts, mostly for a website but can be applied to a print portfolio: www.jjg.net/ia/visvocab/#page

ISTE NETS*S Standards for Students

This project is aligned to the ISTE NETS*S Technology Standards. Depending on the subject and content area the student selects you may research your own state content standards to see how this project aligns to your state requirements.

ISTE NETS*S: Curriculum and Content Area Standards – NETS for Students

1. Creativity and Innovation
Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:
 - b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.
 - d. identify trends and forecast possibilities.
3. Research and Information Retrieval
Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:
 - a. plan strategies to guide inquiry.
4. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
Students use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students:
 - a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation.
 - b. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project.

Adobe Certified Associate Exam Objectives

Adobe Certified Associate, Web Authoring objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for a website.
- 1.2 Identify web page content that is relevant to the website purpose and appropriate for the target audience.
- 2.5 Demonstrate knowledge of flowcharts, storyboards, wireframes, and design comps to create web pages and a site map (site index) that maintain the planned website hierarchy.

Adobe Certified Associate, Visual Communication objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing image(s).

Adobe Certified Associate, Video Communication objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing video.
- 1.2 Identify video content that is relevant to the project purpose and appropriate for the target audience.

Adobe Certified Associate, Interactive Media objectives

- 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for interactive media content.
- 1.2 Identify interactive media content that is relevant to the purpose of the media in which it will be used (websites, mobile devices, and so on).

Adobe Certified Associate, Graphic Design & Illustration objectives

1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing graphics.

Adobe Certified Associate, Print & Digital Media Publication objectives

1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing page layouts.

For more information

Find more teaching materials for using Adobe software in your classroom on the Adobe Education Exchange: <http://edex.adobe.com/>.



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